University of Stavanger

MASTER'S THESIS

International Hotel and Tourism Leadership

Religious Tourism in a Tibetan Temple:

The Case of Jokhang Temple

Stavanger, 2017

Universitetet
i Stavanger

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
NORWEGIAN SCHOOL OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT**

MASTER'S THESIS

STUDY PROGRAM: International Hotel and Tourism Leadership – Master's Degree Programme	THESIS IS WRITTEN IN THE FOLLOWING SPECIALIZATION/SUBJECT: IS THE ASSIGNMENT CONFIDENTIAL?

TITLE: Religious Tourism in a Tibetan Temple: The Case of Jokhang Temple

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ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF 2 BOUND COPIES OF THESIS

Stavanger, ……/…… 2017   Signature   administration:……………………………

ABSTRACT

Since 1984, Tibet has become a destination for tourists and since then tourism has become an important factor in Tibet economy and society. Tibet has become a significant tourism destination in China and is famous as the "last Shangri-La" in the world, attracting an increasing number of tourists. However, the researches of Tibet tourism have focused either on macro policies or the construction of otherness. Little attentions is paid to religious tourism, in particular, specific features that characterise religious tourist motivations and the perceived authenticity of a religious site as well as how tourist satisfaction and loyalty can be formed at the site. The thesis sheds light upon the prospects and challenges of religious tourism in Jokhang Temple through in-depth interviews with informants, participant observation and other data. Interviews were conducted with tourists as well as an official working in the Tourism Department and a temple Guru. The results show that tourists in Jokhang Temple have different motivations which can lead them to take part in various activities during the visiting time. The study indicated that perceived authenticity is a determinant of tourist satisfaction at the temple. Issues include improving the professional skills of tour guides and avoiding an "over-commercialisation" of the site in order to improve tourist satisfaction and loyalty.

The findings are discussed in the context of destination management with reference to two considerations-namely: to combine the religious tourism with cultural heritage in order to form a strong travel attraction and travel competitiveness; and how to manage growing numbers of tourists in order to reduce negative impacts.

Key words: Jokhang Temple, Religious Tourism, Tourism Motivation, Perceived Authenticity, Satisfaction, Loyalty

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FOREWORD

This thesis is written as a completion to the Master of International Hotel and Tourism Leadership, at the University of Stavanger. The subject of this thesis focuses on the prospects and challenges of religious tourism with a Tibetan Buddhist temple as a case (Jokhang Temple). There is a lack of research regarding religious tourism in Tibet; this unique religious culture is a fascinating phenomenon to study, which is the main motivation that I chose this topic.

I would like thank my supervisor Professor Leif Selstad for his permanent advice, great support and continuous encouragement to enable me to complete my project and to be more scientific and academic. I can always get useful information and suggestions from every discussion with him. I do appreciate him and it is my honour and luck to have him as my supervisor.

I am also extremely thankful to all the participants in the interviews, for providing me with sufficient information and individual attitudes. I would also like to express my gratitude to the officer in the Tourism department and the tour guide in Jokhang Temple. With their help, I can analyse the prospects and challenges of religious tourism in Jokhang Temple from different but comprehensive perspectives: inner and outer. My special thanks and gratitude also to my Guru who is not only a helper during the fieldwork in Jokhang Temple but also a mentor in my life.

Special thanks go to my grandparents, my parents and my friends. Without their encouragement and constant support, I could not have completed the thesis.

CHAPTER1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive description of the background of the research in question, where it also explains the case of Jokhang Temple. Next, the research problem focuses on the prospects and challenges of religious tourism with a Buddhist temple as a case. Finally, a thesis outline presents the disposition of the study.

1.1 Background

Tourism as a business is frequently considered as an effective way to promote marginal economies and promote people's livelihood in developing countries, particularly in isolated and remote areas (Zeng & Ryan, 2012; Yang, Ryan & Zhang, 2014). Specifically, as one of the booming industries worldwide, tourism can not only raise the gross national product but also provide locals with a number of work opportunities (Donaldson, 2007).

Since the 1980s, Tibet has been opened to tourists and tourism has played an important role in the development of this region (Cingcade, 1998). The opening of the Qinghai - Tibet railway in 2006 has provided tourists with a convenient means of transportation and led to a notable growth in tourist numbers (Wu & Pearce, 2012). Nowadays, there is no doubt that Tibet is one of the most vital tourism destinations in China (Chio, 2014); at the same time, it is also perceived as the last "pure land" and "mystery land", therefore, it has attracted more and more tourists (Kolas, 2007). Tourists' arrivals to Tibet reached to 3.43 million in the first half of 2013 and most of them are Chinese tourists (Zhi, 2013).

Figure 1: Qinghai-Tibet Railway Map - the highest railway in the world! (Tibetdiscovery.com, 2017)

This study was undertaken at Jokhang Temple which is located in the town of Lhasa in Tibet, a well-known destination of pilgrims and tourists, Jokhang Temple is one of the holiest sites in Tibetan Buddhism and listed as an UNESCO World Heritage Site, where a great deal of religious tourism takes place (Buddhist Tourism, 2007). The temple was built in the 7th century and has been open to tourists since 1999.

Why people travel to religious sites is a significant question in the study of tourism (Timothy & Olsen, 2006). According to recent studies, there is no distinctive line between the activities of tourism and pilgrimage; on the contrary, several studies show that there is a link between them in the light of both the trip and the experiences (Smith, 1992; Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005). Compared with other fields of tourism, religious tourism somehow is unique because other tourism activities may not offer a spiritual feeling in mind (Harnisch, 2012). Some academics considered religious tourism as a part of cultural tourism and it can also be connected with heritage tourism (Raj & Morpeth, 2015). Hence, based on the management of culture and heritage tourism in previous studies, many scholars presented that there are several strategies

to develop and manage religious sites and stressed that many factors can play a role in effecting the tourist experiences. These include infrastructure, accommodation, cleanliness and security, transportation, worship activities, shopping activities and visitor management. By analysing the previous studies, several aspects of religious tourism sites are listed: history, heritage attractions, parking, accommodations, activities, friendly employees and professional tour guides. Some of the elements that may have a negative effect are weather, parking, unhelpful employees, poor transportation, too crowded and too commercial facilities (Norman, 2014).

As mentioned by Turner & Turner (1978, p.20), "a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist." Contemporarily, pilgrims are more similar with general tourists because they almost share the same needs and visit tourist-frequented places, such as shops, historical sites, and restaurants, apart from the religious sites (Timothy & Boyd, 2006). MacCannell (1976) claimed that it is wiser to treat religious tourists today as "pilgrims of modernity" because their motivations are more composite than mostly religious ones. A variety of different motivations drives people to choose a pilgrimage trip, especially in the context of the worries and concerns distinctive of the modern society (Timothy & Olsen, 2006). Consequently, it is necessary to figure out the motivations of religious tourists; in other words, it also can provide several suggestions to the tourism planners about developing the programs and activities which can meet various needs of tourists and enhance their satisfaction.

An argument has risen in several tourism studies focusing on the tourist who hunts for *authenticity as a contrast to modernity* (Boorstin, 1964; Cohen, 1988; Wang, 1999; Everington, 1996; Campbell, 2012). When it comes to the tourists visiting the religious and/or historical sites , a number of researchers considered that their main purpose is to seek for authenticity, the desire to communicate, see, or experience the "real thing" (Boorstin, 1964; Everington, 1996);

conversely, tourism planners and related stakeholders at these places have devoted themselves to offer this experience (Campbell, 2012).

While academics according to the constructivist theory of authenticity pointed out that the authentic original does not exist, just a designed experience or item, postmodernists affirmed that the difference between the copy and the original no longer exists (Bruner, 1994; Wang, 1999; Mkono, 2011; Wang & Wu, 2013). However, tourists, as well as tourism planners of Jokhang Temple, have diverse motivations and do not agree with this opinion of constructivism (Zhang *et al*., 2007; Shepherd, 2013). From their point of view, it is asserted that an original authentic object or the "real" experience is found to be present. Travellers to the Temple make great efforts to build the connection with the authentic originals and be involved in the "real" experience (Timothy &Olsen, 2006; Campbell, 2012). Both pilgrims and tourists visiting Jokhang Temple search for a "hotter" authenticity, which entails that the tourism developers of the temple are obliged to present the "real thing/experience" rather than a staged experience or a post-modern simulation (Andriotis, 2011). Hence, to meet the challenge of constructivism to the perception of authenticity by religious tourists entails developing a well-thought management plan which can be beneficial not only for tourists but for all stakeholders.

Despite the growth of religious tourism, no study has delineated the specific features that characterise religious tourist motivations and the perceived authenticity of a religious site, nor outlined how tourist satisfaction and loyalty can be formed at the site. In addition, most of the current studies on religious tourism and tourists have adopted a primarily descriptive tone (Zhang *et al*., 2007; Andriotis, 2011; Wu & Pearce, 2012). For example, Zhang *et al*. (2007) pointed out that there was a relationship between religious tourism and cultural pilgrimage and analysed it from a Chinese perspective; however, they did not discuss the issue in detail.

Additionally, Andriotis (2011) connected the concept of authenticity with pilgrimage which can be considered as a basic tenet in religious tourism study but the effect brought by the perceived authenticity to the tourists' satisfaction and loyalty was not mentioned. Furthermore, although the research from Wu & Pearce (2012) did study tourism in Tibet, it basically provided primary information about the regional tourism industry. Consequently, there is a need for a more specialized study about the prospects and challenges of religious tourism in Tibet, which can examine the experiences of tourists more in detail.

1.2 Research Problem

Based on a Tibetan case, this thesis aims to enter into a closer discussion of the prospects and challenges of religious tourism, and the effects brought by a religious site to tourists' experiences of satisfaction, loyalty and authenticity. Case research can be useful in developing or extending theoretical assumptions (Yin, 2013). In the present work, Jokhang Temple is used as a case study because it is not only a holy site of Tibetan Buddhism but also a cultural and heritage site, which means that the motivations of tourists visiting there can be various and diverse. Through the study of religious tourists visiting Jokhang Temple, there will be an attempt to outline the range of tourists' experiences in relation to the temple setting; furthermore, the case will enable the researcher to examine and discuss various ways in which the expectations of tourists can be met without disturbing the temple as a religious site.

This thesis relates to discussions of the implementation of authentic experiences in tourism; which kinds of authenticity the visitors can be found to experience. Additionally, by individual interviews, an attempt is made to discuss tourist satisfaction and loyalty. The aim is for the thesis to make a contribution to the current study of religious tourism, its development and challenges.

Taking all the aforementioned problems into consideration the research question can be formulated as:

What are some of the prospects and challenges of religious tourism at a religious site?

In order to provide some answer, the following subordinate questions will be used:

- *How can the experiences of tourists be adapted to the temple setting?*

- *How can the expectations of tourists be met without disturbing the temple as a religious site?*

- *In what ways does a visit to the religious site affect tourists' experiences of satisfaction, loyalty and authenticity?*

1.3 Thesis Outline

To answer the research question and sub questions, this thesis will first build on a literature review, where the theory will span from broad to more specific topics. Hence, first a topical review will discuss the theoretical foundations of the religious tourism literature, where the situation of Jokhang Temple will be considered. Secondly, a review of tourist motivations will go deeper into tourists' interests from the view of religious tourism. Thirdly, perceived authenticity and tourist satisfaction as well as loyalty will be discussed separately and the relationship between tourist satisfaction and loyalty will be examined. Next, the methodology will elucidate the way the research was conducted, its philosophy, and research strategy.

The research was conducted as semi-structured interviews, supplemented by field observations and literature studies. The analysis part consists of findings and discussion. First the findings from the temple Guru and an officer through interviews will be given, after which the findings from the tourist visitors through observations and interviews will be provided. In the discussion, the findings from the interviews and gathered literature are integrated and discussed. In this

sense, the discussion attempts to answer the sub questions firstly and then the main research question. The conclusion will give a short recapitulation of the findings and discussion. Some theoretical and managerial implications, possible future research and limitations of this research will be also noted.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction of Jokhang Temple

Tourism resources in Tibet are not only abundant but also unique, especially religious tourism resources, which are beyond comparison within the world. Religion plays a vital role in Tibet and has a powerful effect on each aspect of Tibetans' lives. Meanwhile, because of the geographic and historical factors, Tibetan Buddhism is totally different from the other kinds of Buddhism in China. As of 2016, the UNESCO Website lists 1031 sites around the world, three of which are found in Lhasa, namely, Norbulingka Summer Palace, Jokhang Temple and Potala Palace (Tibetpedia, 2016).

Jokhang Temple, the spiritual symbol of Tibetan Buddhism as well as one of the foremost religious sites in China, was founded in the 7th century (Tibetpedia, 2016). Its ancient name is Rasa Thrulnag Tsuklakang which means "House of Mysteries" or "House of Religious Science" (Dalton, 2004). Located in the centre of the old town in Lhasa, it has been considered as the holiest destination for all Tibetan Buddhism (China Highlights, 2015).

There are five different types in Tibetan Buddhism and each of them has its special temples for worships. However, Jokhang Temple is the only temple in Tibet which opens to all sects of Tibetan Buddhism (Gyurme, 2010). There are plenty of pilgrims "kowtowing" in front of Jokhang Temple day and night. Compared with Potala Palace, which has completely become a place for sightseeing, Jokhang Temple is still the host site for the annual Great Prayer Festival and any other ceremonies of initiation for the Dalai Lama and Panchen Llamas as well as worships and religious activities (China Highlights, 2015). Jokhang Temple is not only an ancient architecture but also can be considered as a "documentary" which recorded the cultural and social system of Tibet as well as a "dictionary" of Tibetan Buddhism.

Figure 2: Location of Tibet in China (Tibetdiscovery.org, 2017)
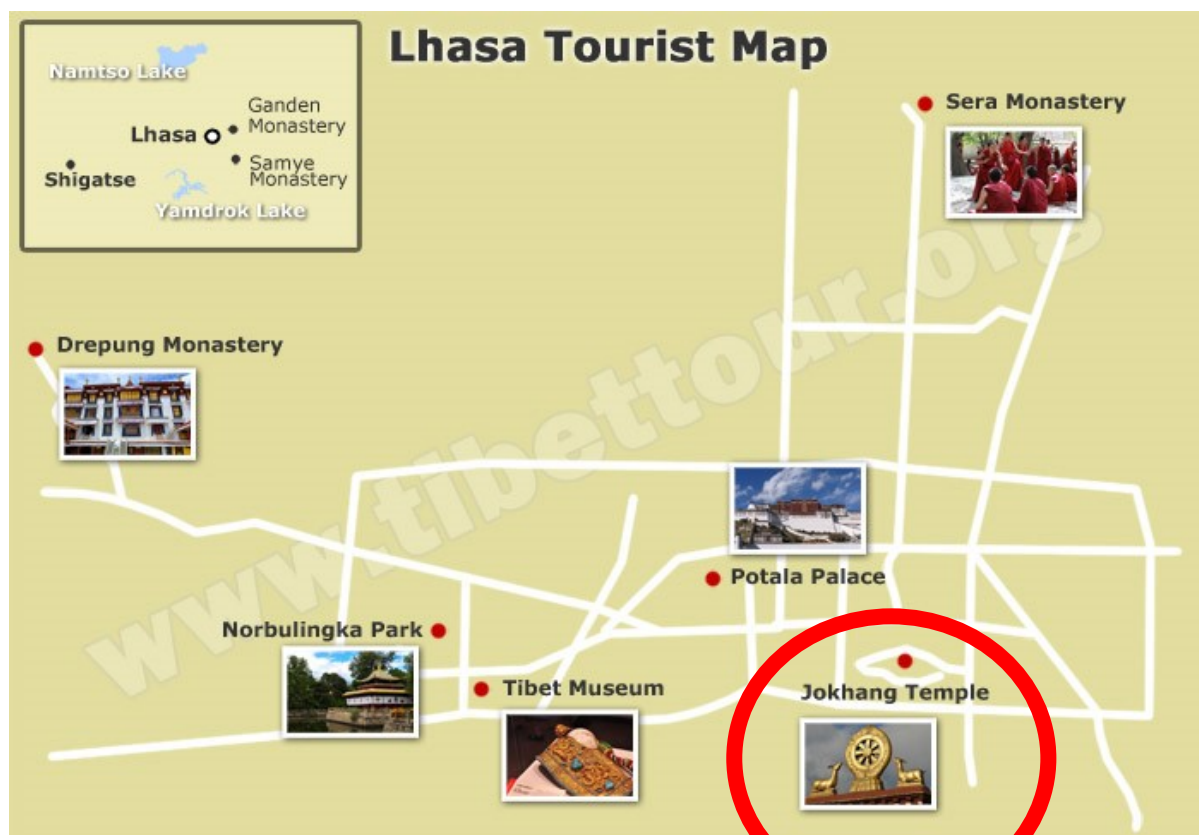
Figure 3: Lhasa Tourist Map (Tibetdiscovery.com, 2017)

The architecture in Jokhang Temple has typical features of the Tibetan Buddhist style and most walls of the buildings have been covered by historical and religious paintings. It is not only a remarkable Buddhist religious complex but also a masterpiece of Tibetan Buddhism art (Lonely Planet, 2016). The beauty and novelty of the designed architecture of Jokhang Temple, with a rich variety of decorations and harmonious integration in nature, add to its historical and religious value.
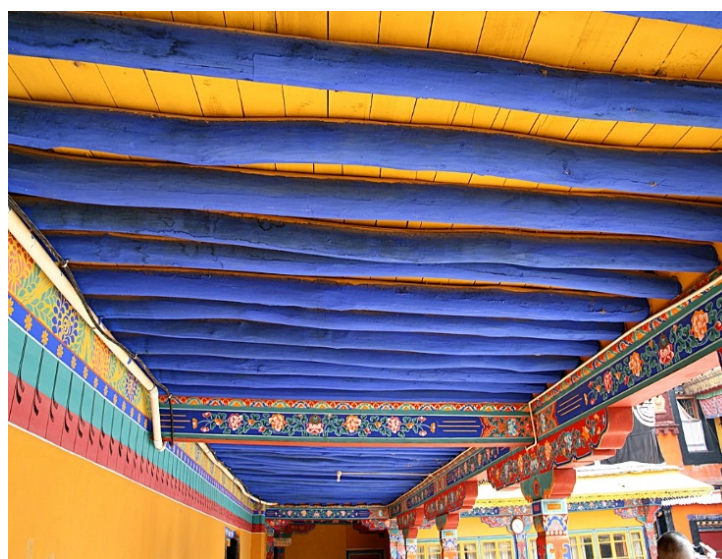
Jokhang Temple is a fabulous compels which is composed of chapels, courtyards and accommodations of Gurus and lamas. Additionally, it is also famous for the gilded canopy roofs in which the gold decorations are the donations of pilgrims.

The temple is separated from the surroundings by a processional lane, which is named as Barkhor, a sacred path that over time has become lined with stores selling yak butter, Tibetan traditional accessories and ritual items as well as restaurants and accommodations (China Highlights, 2015).

On the other hand, Jokhang Temple is also a popular destination since it is classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in a historic ensemble of the Potala Palace in Lhasa from 2000 (China Highlights, 2015). It is listed as an "AAAAA National Tourism Destination" by the China Tourism Administration which is stated as the highest classification in China (Liu, 2013). The population of daily visitors is more than 3,000 currently and when it comes to peak tourist season, the number will be twice as high (Huang, 2015). The number of visitors to Lasha in 2015 was 11,790,300 and in 2017, the number is expected to increase (Wang & Zhou, 2016).

Recently, in connection with efforts to develop the tourism industry in Tibet, Jokhang Temple has been left to provide the tourists with several opportunities to participate in some specific

worships as well as sightseeing (Dai, Jiang, Yang, & Ma, 2017). Currently, lectures in Jokhang Temple also expound the texts of Buddhism to the public and offer some short-term courses about meditation. Otherwise, visiting youths can be volunteers in Jokhang Temple which can not only help disadvantaged groups in Tibet but also develop and strengthen their own minds (Chen & Huang, 2017). Consequently, Jokhang Temple has become one of the most compelling religious tourist attractions in Tibet (Zhang, 2017).

However, since becoming one "member" of the world heritage site by UNESCO, the sacred and quiet life of lamas has been broken by an increasing number of tourists. Thus, the local tourism administration tried to handle this and related issued in order to keep a balance between the holy and mundane. For example, the entrances to Jokhang Temple are separated based on the identities of visitors. The left entrance is only for the pilgrims and the right entrance admits tourists. Otherwise, the tourists only can enter the temple in the afternoon in case they will interpret the morning worships. By doing this, the holiness of the temple and the daily life of lamas can be better-protected.

But, it remains an urgent task to find a positive way of living for the lamas before the booming tourism industry in Tibet may damage the unique and non-renewable cosmos of Jokhang Temple. Therefore, more comprehensive and effective measures have to be presented and enacted as soon as possible.

2.2 Religious Tourism

Religion can be seen as a motivation for tourists in many ways (Timothy & Olsen, 2006; Hyde & Harman, 2011; della Dora, 2012). As mentioned by Smith (1992), Shackley (1999; 2002; 2003; 2006) and Gedecho (2015), most religions encourage followers to visit holy lands. Based on the long history of religion, it would seem that religious tourism is one of the oldest forms of tourism and travelling (Gedecho, 2015). What is interesting in relation to religious tourism is that it is one of the least explored tourism areas (Timothy & Olsen, 2006; Triantafillidou, *et al.,* 2010), and it also lacks a specific definition (Karar, 2010).

According to Novellia (2005), religious tourism is considered as a segment of niche tourism, that includes an interchangeable description between religious tourism, cultural heritage tourism, cultural tourism and spiritual tourism (Nieminen, 2012). The argument behind this combination is that tourists are interested in visiting religious sites from different reasons (Nieminen, 2012; Wong *et al*., 2013; Gurung, 2016). For example, Digance (2006) indicated that visitors may come to a religious site in order to satisfy the curiosity about sacred sites to travel with friends and family, or for an interest in the cultural or historical significance of places. Otherwise, the motive also can be a wish to experience the natural and cultural landscapes of the sacred sites (Shackley, 2001; Sutton & Kang, 2010; Wong *et al*., 2013).

Some authors argue that religious tourism is different from the other types of cultural tourism because the purpose of it is not only for relaxation, as there is also a spiritual feeling related to the religious sites (Aspinall *et al*., 2011, Long & Morpeth, 2016). Moreover, Nieminen (2012) stated that a tourism package including a visit to a religious site, like a temple or a cathedral, cannot be considered as a cultural trip rather than a religious trip, even if the visit to a temple is just a part of their itinerary and they do not travel for religious purposes. However, Timothy & Boyd (2013) hold an opposite view that there is no particular difference between religious tourism and other cultural tourisms because religiously motivated travels are also multi-purpose travels with several motivations besides fulfilling religious and spiritual needs (Rinchede, 1992).

Accordingly, in the recent decades, researchers have drawn attention on distinguishing the pilgrim from the tourist in the terms of their behaviour. Blackwell (2007) and Pavicic, Alfirevie & Bertarelli (2007) presented that during the trip, a pilgrim focuses more on building the spiritual relationships and reinforcing the beliefs. Otherwise, Shinde (2007) noted that there is no apparent deviations of behaviours between the pilgrim and the tourist because of the time

spent on the other activities besides religious ones; sometimes, even more time is spent on secular activities such as souvenir purchasing and eating (Wong *et al*., 2013). Furthermore, in *Secular Ritual,* Moore and Myerhoff (1977) considered that ritual is not restricted to religion; MacCannell (1976) and Graburn (1983) discussed that there are common elements shared by tourism and rituals related to the quality of life (Wong *et al*., 2013). Therefore, a connection between tourism and pilgrimage has been created. Nowadays, it is frequently claimed that the differences between tourism and pilgrimage are narrowing because their similarities are increasing, and they often have the same travel patterns (Collins-Kreiner & Gatrell, 2006; Timothy & Olsen, 2006; Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Timothy & Boyd, 2013). Therefore, based on the World Tourism Organization's (WTO) definition, Timothy & Boyd (2013) presented that pilgrims and tourists are somehow becoming identical from perspectives of system and spaces; they employ tourists' services and facilities.

In this study, the focus will be on religious tourism, loosely defines as tourism in relation to religious sites, or as Yeoman (2008, p.181) simply puts it: "travelling to visit a place, a building or a shrine, which is sacred". Some of the issues that are raised by recent views on religious tourism will be discussed later in the thesis.

2.3 Tourism Motivation

2.3.1 Motivation

Motivation is considered as an inner-directed driving force and it can be influenced by the individual's perceived values (Gnoth, 1997). According to Kotler (1997) who stated that motivation is the prime driver of consumer behaviour. Goossens (2000) also acknowledged that motivation can be an explanation of individual actions. Additionally, motivation is noticed as the driving power caused by the interaction between internal determinants and external determinants which impels individuals to actions (Lee *et al*., 2004; Schiffman & Wisenblit,

2015). Motivation plays a role in influencing the tourists' perceived authenticity and satisfaction as well as their loyalty as customers in the tourism industry (Moutinho, 1987; Molina &Martín-Consuegra, 2010).

2.3.2 Tourism Motivation

In 1982, Iso-Ahola & Allen explored the tourism motivation as a driving force which can encourage tourists to cater for various needs; in other words, it can be viewed as the main cause and subjective factor of tourists' actions. In addition, tourism motivation also can be considered as a series of needs compelling tourists to travel (Pizam, Neumann & Reichel, 1978). Tourism motivations are mental orientations characterizing a tourist's approach to choosing the destination, which is vital to tourism marketing because they determine tourist behaviour, are relatively constant and therefore are relevant to market segmentation (Manning ,1986).

Some scholars classified tourism motivations into different hierarchies. The dominant motives are leisure, vacation and escaping from daily routines. The second motives are to learn new things, call on relatives and friends as well as visit historic sites (Rittichainuwat, 2008). However, several researchers hold an opposite opinion that there is no master-subordinate relationship among motives (Crompton, 1979; Moutinho, 1987; Baloglu & McClearly, 1999; Dwyer & Kim, 2003). Crompton (1979) listed nine factors of tourism motivations: escape, self-exploration, relaxation, prestige, regression, kinship - enhancement, social interaction, novelty and education (Jang & Wu, 2006; Rittichainuwat, 2008; Mohammad & Som, 2010).

Moreover, a couple of literatures presented that it is necessary to take destination appeal into consideration when it comes to analysing the tourist behaviour; therefore a 'Push - Pull' model has been built up. In the terms of this model, the 'push' factors are mainly about the inside needs such as the personal willingness to leave home and travel to other places; while, the 'pull'

factors are about the attractiveness of destinations to the tourists (Dann, 1977; Cha, McCleary & Uysal, 1995; Cai & Combrink, 2000; Kim & Lee, 2002; Klenosky, 2002).

Furthermore, Yoon & Uysal (2005) brought out a more comprehensive research model with regard to the causal relationship among the 'push' and 'pull' factors, satisfaction as well as destination loyalty. According to this model, the 'push' items consist of escape, leisure, and social interaction; the 'pull' items include destination entertainment and knowledge. Additionally, the destination loyalty is defined as the intention to revisit the destination and/or recommend it to others (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Zhang *et al*., 2014).

With the development of tourism and rational exploitation of tourism resources, an increasing number of tourists come to religious sites which can be regarded as a scarce opportunity for the communication and prosperity of religion as well as the protection and renovation of religious cultural relics and historic sites (Kim *et al*., 2003; Hsu *et al*., 2009; Ramkissoon *et al*., 2011).

In religious tourism motivation, people who visited holy places were found to have diversified motives such as pilgrimage, joining in religious events, having spiritual feelings, obtaining peace, joining others in ritual acts, as well as other motives (Nolan & Nolan ,1992; Bar & Cohen-Hattab, 2003; Collins-Kreiner & Gatrell, 2006). Based on considerable in-depth researches about tourists at religious sites, it was found that a large number were motivated by religious beliefs (Bond, Packer & Ballantyne, 2015). There are also many other motives mentioned by Eid & El-Gohary (2015) like prayer for health of family, to be attracted by the landscape and to redeem a vow to god. A numerous part of people in China experience a lack of religion, therefore, a large number of them visit temples for relaxation, satisfying curiosities and learning as well as making wishes (Shepherd, 2013; Wong *et al*., 2013; Olsen, 2014). After they "get in touch with" Buddhism, there is a tendency that they take it as their religion (Wong, *et al.*, 2013).

Yoon & Uysal (2005) used the 'Push & Pull' model to study the connections between tourism motivations, satisfaction, and destination loyalty. The result showed that the push factors of motivation have a significant effect on satisfaction and destination loyalty, while satisfaction in turn also has an appreciable influence on destination loyalty. Consequently, in this study, some push factors will be selected to test the relationship between tourism motivations, satisfaction, and destination loyalty, in order to explore more closely the drive towards religious tourism.

2.4 Authenticity

The concept of authenticity has been widely studied in the academic literature for several decades (MacCannell, 1973; Cohen, 1988; Bruner, 1994; Theodossopoulos, 2013), however, it is still ambiguous (Cobb, 2014). One of the reasons is that the term "authenticity" includes various disciplines, for example, anthropology (Bruner, 1994; Tomaselli, 2001; Theodossopoulos, 2013; Li *et al*., 2016), sociology (Erickson, 1995; Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Li *et al*., 2016), geography (Luykx & Van Ruth, 2008; Li *et al*., 2016); art (Kenyon, 1991; Moore, 2002; Small, 2011); and tourism (Mauss & Halls, 2000; Medlik, 2003; Cohen, 2007; Zhu, 2012; Li *et al*., 2016).

From the perspective of tourism, Boorstin (1964) regarded mass tourists as pursuers of "pseudo-events", who not only are the immediate cause of the "inauthentic" phenomenon of tourism but also led to the commoditization of cultures subsequently. Additionally, MacCannell (1999) pointed out that tourists were 'quasi-pilgrim' seeking authenticity. Both authors claimed that the expected authenticity cannot be found by tourists because as carriers of modernity in a world of mass tourism, they have already destroyed authenticity (Cohen, 2014). Because of modernity, tourists have to face commoditization of tourism and declining authenticity; however, what becomes apparent is that commoditization is not the only standard by which to

measure perceived authenticity (Cohen, 1988, 2014; Wang, 1999, 2000; Mauss & Halls, 2000; Jackson, 2002).

Increasing numbers of researchers have focused on the tourist's experience, where the relationship between object authenticity and subjective authenticity has become an issue (Wang, 1999, 2000; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Cohen, 2007; Zhu, 2012). Authenticity can be distinguished as objective authenticity, constructive authenticity, postmodern authenticity as well as existential authenticity (Cohen, 2007). This has led to considerable discussion that can be briefly outlined.

Views on *objectivism* are also known as "cool" authenticity stressing the perceived authenticity and properties of original objects that tourists can observe or/and "touch" during their sight viewing (Selwyn, 1996; Cohen-Aharoni, 2017). In this view, the quality of the copy cannot be the same as that of the "real" (Cohen-Aharoni, 2017). Therefore, on the basis of objective criteria, the originality can be distinguished from the fake (Bruner, 2005; Cohen, 2007; Belhassen *et al.*, 2008; Zhao & Li, 2012; Cohen & Cohen, 2012).

Perspective of *constructivism* argues that authenticity is a process as well as a result of social construction which means that it has to be evaluated in relation to different viewpoints such as tourists and local stakeholders (e.g. local developers, local government, and travel agencies). Views on constructive authenticity indicate that this perspective embraces negotiable, flexible, mutable, plastic, fluidity, relative, and contextual as well as pluralistic aspects of experiences (Wang, 1999, 2000; Olsen, 2002; Bruner, 2005; Cohen, 2007).

Perspective of *postmodernism* is characterised by the deconstruction of authenticity (Wang, 1999, 2000; Leite & Graburn, 2009; Zhao & Li, 2012; Cohen & Cohen, 2012). According to Wang (1999, 2000), "post-tourists" view that the original authenticity has been replaced by the

peculiarity and uniqueness of tourist attractions. Moreover, due to the help of high-tech facilities, many "fake" things appear as more authentic visually (Leite & Graburn, 2009). Thus, some scholars consider that some tourists seek for simulations brought by artificial landscapes on purpose (Leite & Graburn, 2009; Zhao & Li, 2012; Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Zhu, 2012; Theodossopoulos, 2013).

Views on *existentialism* insist that it is possible for tourists to perceive both intra-personal authenticity and interpersonal authenticity through participating in special activities and events as well as communication to stay in a "liminoid state" (Urry, 1992; Wang, 1999, 2000; Cohen, 2007; Zhao & Li, 2012; Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Bauman, 2013).

Generally speaking, these four approaches of authenticity exist together with or emanate from tourist practices. Therefore, when researching and analysing questions of authenticity, multidimensional perspectives should be taken into consideration, as long as the subjective experiences are still connected with observations on authenticity (Cohen, 2007; Zhao & Li, 2012; Cohen & Cohen, 2012).

A couple of researchers mentioned that the motivation of tourists visiting a historical or religious place is to seek for authenticity, the desire to "touch", experience, or enjoy the "real thing" (Boorstin, 1964; Cohen-Aharoni, 2017). In addition, MacCannell (1999) observed that the stakeholders of a site are devoting themselves to create a "real" and inviting space for visitors (Cohen-Aharoni, 2017).

According to constructive authenticity, this perspective claims that the only authentic thing is "a constructed experience" or "object" (Bruner, 1994; Cohen-Aharoni, 2017). From the perspective of postmodernism it can be claimed that there is no difference between the "fake" and the "real" (Eco, 1986; Leite & Graburn, 2009; Cohen-Aharoni, 2017). Nevertheless, as

reported by Peng *et al*. (2011), tourists and related stakeholders of religious sites in Tibet show contrasting motivations and opinions that cast doubt of postmodern reductionism (Bruner, 1994; Cohen-Aharoni, 2017). Additionally, the views expressed contest a denial that the authentic object or real experience exists (Peng *et al*., 2011). Those who pay a visit to a Tibetan Temple aim to be involved in "real" originals such as can be experienced in Tibetan Buddhism and the Tibetan social code (Zhang, et al., 2007; Cohen-Aharoni, 2017), in contrast to views on postmodern tourists.

Speaking of the assessment of authenticity, Bruner (1994) distinguished four types of authentic reproduction as "credible and convincing", "complete simulation", "original", and "certified" (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Li *et al.,* 2016). These four aspects of authenticity have been aligned with design, materials, workmanship, and setting (Assi, 2000; Li *et al.,* 2016). What can be seen is that authenticity is a complex concept that has to be investigated in a context of local settings and experiences such as at Jokhang Temple.

2.5 Satisfaction & Loyalty

The term "satisfaction" was brought into the public and academic lens originally by Cardozo (1965), at the same time, he claimed that satisfaction varies according to personal preferences, expectations, perceptions and motivations; additionally, satisfaction can influence the possibility of repurchase. Hempel (1977) argued that satisfaction was the pleasure and cheerful feeling which customers obtained from purchase. Churchill & Surprenant (1982) claimed that satisfaction had a connection with the purchase cost (e.g. money, cost, vigour) of consumers and the use value of products. At the same time, Swan & Comb (1976) regarded satisfaction as an evaluation of the degree of matching between product expectation and perceived performance. Sweeney & Soutar (2001) claimed that consumer satisfaction was an emotional reaction provoked by specific purchases in particular situations. Satisfaction also relied on the

performance of the expected products or services; in other words, it depended on the matching degree between expectations and the actual outcomes of purchases (Kuo, 2011).

According to Kotler & Scheff (1997), satisfaction was an individual's experience formed by the perceptual difference between perceived performance and expectations (Kuo, 2011). Satisfaction, in psychological and emotional aspect, can be viewed as personal reaction based on individual experiences (Chin & Lo, 2017). Consumer satisfaction not only concerns the purchased products or service but also the product or service suppliers, where satisfaction can be affected by the handling of service guarantees (ibid). Therefore, when measuring and analysing tourist satisfaction, it is necessary to consider both product and the service products (Chi & Qu, 2008; Zhang, et al, 2014).

Due to the various motivations and unique role of tourists, the triggers of satisfaction for travel experiences are diverse (Chi & Qu, 2008; Zhang & Yan, 2016). Most researchers concur that satisfaction for travel experiences is a psychological emotional evaluation measured by the visitors (Pizam, *et al.,* 1978; Chi & Qu, 2008; Zhang, *et al.,* 2014; Zhang & Yan, 2016; Prayag, *et al.,* 2017). Choice of destination and pattern of traveling as well as the travel experiences will be affected and shaped by tourists' needs, preferences, educational levels and social backgrounds as well as motivations (Chi & Qu, 2008; Zhang & Yan, 2016). Additionally, environmental features, travel information, personal recreational experience, and the quality of provided facilities and services also play a vital role when tourists assess the level of satisfaction about the entire trips (Burns, *et al.*, 2003; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Žabkar, *et al.,*2010; Zhang & Yan, 2016). Consequently, from the perspective of tourism, satisfaction can be considered as a psychological reaction to specific situations which results from the service that tourists are provided and the feeling of the travel that they participate in (Chi & Qu, 2008; Zhang, *et al.,* 2014; Prayag, *et al.,* 2017). With the development of high-tech equipment and the growth of

feed products, the competition in the tourism industry has turned intense (Kuo, 2011). Tourists will measure their personal demands or inclination to be satisfied based on their former experiences (Kuo, 2011). There is a need examine the perceptions of tourists at Jokhang Temple in order to assess the service or/and product quality in relation to the satisfaction and motivation of tourists, as part of religious tourism at the sire.

While satisfaction have become a part of tourism product assessments, researchers have also associated satisfaction with loyalty (Bolton & Drew, 1991; Prus & Brandt, 1995; Berman, 2005).

Customer loyalty has been defined as the intention to repurchase, recommend to others and praise a product. Loyalty means that the intention to reproduction is limited to specific products or services in certain places or conditions (Jang & Feng, 2007). Customers can choose one company that could satisfy their needs much better than others and the quality of the service could not be replaced (Jang & Feng, 2007). Similarity, tourism destination loyalty could be defined as the tourists' repurchase intention in a specific tourist site (Shoemaker, 1989). Jang & Feng (2007) noted that the tourists' tendency to revisit a certain place or country can also reflect visitors' loyalty to the destination. All in all, the tourists' destination loyalty is defined from two perspectives which are: behavioural and psychological. At the same time, the tourists' destination loyalty can not only be helpful to lower the turnover of tourists but also play an important role in creating and maintaining a competitive edge (Drake, Gwynne & Waite, 1998). Tourists' destination loyalty can be regarded as the intention to recommend to others and positive word-to-mouth marketing (Jang & Feng, 2007). In this study a note will be made of the tourists' destination loyalty as an intention to revisit Jokhang Temple and to recommend Jokhang Temple to others.

2.6 Tourist Attractions Marketing

2.6.1 **Heritage Tourist Attractions**

Attractions are the core product for tourism and have a considerable effect on the tourist's decision to travel (Gee et al., 1984; Richards, 1996; Prideaux, 2002). To put it more simply, tourism cannot exist without attraction. MacCannell (1976) defined an attraction as a place, event or site with a unique or/and significant value; meanwhile, the travellers are able to perceive the value by the means of interpretation and promotion (Prideaux, 2002).

Contextualizing visitor attractions is difficult because the concepts are complicated and enormous (Lew, 1987, 2000; Swarbrooke, 1995; Swarbrooke & Page, 2012). A plenty of scholars has attempted to define the attractions (Lew, 1987; Swarbrooke, 1995; Prideaux, 2002); among them, the most comprehensive as well as widely accepted definition was presented by Walsh-Heron & Stevens (1990). In the light of Walsh-Heron & Stevens (1990), a visitor attraction is a feature of a particular place with the purpose of attracting tourists and providing appropriate facilities or services that can create an enjoyable experience to meet one or more of visitors' specific leisure-related needs. There is no strict rule about the admission fee of visitor attractions.

Meanwhile, the size of visitor attractions is also flexible which can be range from very small (a religious temple) to enormous (a national park). Otherwise, built attractions and natural attractions are two basic types. Moreover, attractions can be gathered into clusters (ancient architectural complex) or be alone (a museum); as well as the location is not restricted (Swarbrooke, 2012). From the perspective of cognition, Prideaux (2002) classified attractions into four categories which are: educational, recreational, authenticity and adventurous (Olsson, 2010). With the booming of the tourism industry, an increasing number of researchers has

focused on the critical factors that can influence the success of visitor attractions (Swarbrooke, 1995; McKercher & Du Cros, 2002; Prideaux, 2002; Swarbrooke & Page, 2012). Swarbrooke (1995) assumed that there are four factors with the significance of visitor attractions: the organization and the related resources; the product; the market; the plan and operation of the attraction.

Following by Leask and Yeoman (1999), more factors such as quality, productivity, management of supply and demand, visitor management and technology are also added to the list.

Although a continuing study of heritage tourist attractions, it is still a relatively new subject in tourism research (Hertzman *et al.,* 2008); therefore, the serious academic analysis of the marketing skills, available information, and visitors' experiences, perceptions, and evaluation in those sites are still lacking (Smith & Smith, 2009). Otherwise, there is a stereotype about tourist attractions that the knowledge of culture and history is not able to produced, communicated and consumed particularly in these places (McKercher & Du Cros, 2002 Hertzman *et al*., 2008).

With the research of heritage tourist attractions is getting deeper, an increasing number of scholars has argued that the importance of heritage tourist attractions in the tourism industry (McKercher & Du Cros, 2002; Timothy & Boyd, 2006; Hertzman *et al.,* 2008). The heritage representation is not only about helping individuals to remember what happened but also about reminding individuals of who they are now from both sides of real and imagined (Anderson, 2008).

Recently, it is widely acknowledged that heritage representations play an indispensable part in the social, political and cultural landscape. Additionally, they can be considered as the potential attractions with unpredictable values in the terms of economy and culture (Hertzman *et al.,* 2008). However, what cannot be denied is that it is not a simple mission to transform these into heritage tourist attraction. Several problems are waiting for being dealt with such as the competition and funding (Prideaux, 2002; Smith & Smith, 2009).

2.6.2 **Cultural Heritage Marketing**

Recently, it is common to consider the cultural heritage as a commercial product, particularly in the tourism industry (Osborn, 2001). According to Hewison (1989) and Apostolakis (2003), it is far from acceptable to treat cultural heritage such as museums and historic sites as a product. Nevertheless, Osborn (2001) explained that when taking the inherited nature of culture and heritage into account, what cannot be neglected is the related economic and cultural value; therefore, it makes sense that tourism planners view the cultural heritage assets as products (Ho* & McKercher, 2004). Additionally, Pearce (1991) assumed that the cultural heritage itself is not a tourist attraction, in other words, it is just a place with the potential to be a tourist attraction. Gunn & Var (2002) defined attractions as the places which have been developed and are ready to offer activities and services of interest to tourists. Although it is possible for a destination to have a lot resources as potential attractions, they cannot be viewed as a true attraction until they have the ability to satisfy the various needs of visitors (Carbone, 2016). Hence, it is necessary to make sure that there is a line between cultural heritage resource and cultural heritage tourist attraction. Although, as noted by Sharpley & Sundaram (2005), it is quite improper and commercial to use "a service product" to describe a travel experience in a sacred religious site, the relevance of such as perspective cannot be denied. Moreover, because the value of heritage assets is incalculable and much more complicated than normal goods and services, how to exploit and manage the heritage resources properly and carefully plays a vital

role in tourism sustainable development (Ho*& McKercher, 2004). When improving the process of transformation from a heritage resource into a tourist attraction, it is convenient for the tourism planners to treat it as a product; meanwhile, it also can enhance the effectiveness of the management (Carbone, 2016).

The opinion of analysing and managing cultural heritage assets as tourism products is fairly novel and the essential element of this opinion is to offer the tourists a top-level quality experience for the aim of meeting their diverse needs (Ashworth, 1994; Shackley, 2001; Ho*& McKercher, 2004; Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005; Malek & Mohamed, 2014; Carbone, 2016). Traditionally, after analysing and segmenting customers' needs and using several marketing skills, corporations cab develop such products (Wang & Bramwell, 2012). Obviously, these methods generally are feasible in the tourism industry. However, the question also is raised about to what extent the cultural heritage sector and even the tourism sector can turn experiences into commercial products (Ho*& McKercher, 2004). The reason behind this circumstance is the ultimate aim of the tourism industry to smooth the way for traveling and to create an enriching experience for visitors (Ung & Vong, 2010; Wang & Bramwell. 2012; Carbone, 2016). Consequently, regarding cultural heritage assets as potential products does not translate easily into a price and selling in the market. As noted before, the challenging point is to transform cultural heritage assets into cultural tourism products also known as tourist attractions which can be consumed by tourists (Ho*& McKercher, 2004). Theoretically speaking, it is sensible and logical to treat cultural heritage assets as a product. Practically speaking, it is much more difficult to implement and achieve (Carbone, 2016).

A demand that needs to be satisfied is the premise of a product's existence. Understanding the market demand will determine the degree of the match between potential customers and

products, such as at heritage sites (Ho*& McKercher, 2004; Ung & Vong, 2010). Hence, the core of a product is not what it is but who needs it. Likewise, the cultural heritage tourism products, the existence, and development of them results from the interests of tourists (Ho*& McKercher, 2004; Carbone, 2016).

Following Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois (1999), four elements that can make an effect on the the product development in cultural heritage tourism are presented (Ho*& McKercher, 2004):

- ➢ The values and objectives of stakeholders;
- ➢ Cultural heritage assets' traits from the view of morphology;
- ➢ Accessibility and capabilities;
- ➢ Assimilation with other activities and advocating factors in tourism industry

Due to the fragility and non-renewability of the cultural heritages, the cautious investigation of the market demand is indispensable in order to avoid issues related to not enough space or too many visitors. This procedure is significant, a tiny negative tourist influence will lead to conflictual issues for the assets. For example, an overwhelming tourist presence strains the carrying capacity of the cultural heritage which can bring irretrievable damage to the sites; it will also lower the destination satisfaction of tourist (Shani *et al.*, 2007).

Scholars pay attention to the development of the destination in terms of sustainability and competitiveness (Moraes, 2006; Carbone, 2016). Additionally, some researchers focus on the modality of involvement of the local community (Malek & Costa, 2015; Carbone, 2016). At the same time, the topic about the centrality of culture in tourism experience has also been discussed by proposing a shift from the 3-S Tourism (Sun, Sand, and Sea) to the 3-L Tourism: Leisure, Landscape, and Learning (Carbone, 2016).

In conclusion, based on the empirical evidence and theoretical knowledge, it is necessary to put the cultural heritage resource into an improved process in order to make it attractive, accessible and intelligible to tourists. The process critically reflects on the strategy that the tourism industry to choose in order to transfer a resource into a product that travellers want to visit (Hertzman *et al.,* 2008). The process facilitates the cultural heritage as a unique representative of a destination and should in the charge of the flow of travellers from others places to destination districts.

The line between the religious tourism and cultural heritage tourism is relatively blurred; therefore, in this paper, the management of the religious site: Jokhang Temple, is considered as the management of a cultural heritage tourist attraction.

2.6.3 **Interpretation**

One of the general factors in tourism is to offer tourists information and the purpose of interpretation is to inform or/and educate the travellers as well as manage their behaviours in places they are in. Consequently, the relationship between interpretation and tourism is significantly tight (Moscardo, 1998; Pearce, 2005).

There is much debate in the academic literature about the definition of interpretation. According to Tilden (1977), interpretation is an educational activity with the purpose of explaining the meanings and values of original objects by the mean of first-hand experience and interactive media. Meanwhile, Pizam *et al*. (1978) assume that the aim of interpretation is to help the visitors to gain insights and understanding about the interesting signals given by the world. Otherwise, interpretation can also make an effort to create a good understanding of the natural, cultural and historical values attached to places (Alderson & Low, 1985). For the purposes of this paper, a simple approach will be taken. Interpretation is a special kind of communication

which not only can provide the tourists with information about the destinations but also can encourage them to show appreciation and care in their behaviours and may have a considerable influence on visitor enjoyment (Moscardo, 1999; Pearce, 2005; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). Otherwise, the information offered at leisure may be the only chance for the tourists to build the connection with the destination (Moscardo, 1999; Bond *et al.,* 2014). Therefore, effective interpretation plays a vital role in the tourism and recreation industry.

Firstly, it is able to enhance the perceived quality of experiences and create interests for tourists continuously; moreover, it can contribute to economic sustainability (Moscardo, 1999; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). There are three ways that interpretation can enhance visitors' experiences.

➢ Alternatives and Options

The tourist satisfaction can be considered as the result from a positive match between what the tourist expects and what the destination offers (Moscardo, 1998; Pearce, 2005; Ballantyne *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, one feasible and effective way to encourage such a match is to offer sufficient information about the available alternatives so that they can make full use of their time as well as make a well-thought travel plan (Pizam *et al.,* 1978; Green, 1997; Pearce, 2005).

➢ Comfort and Safety

Effective interpretation can provide the travellers with useful information about safety and comfort (Moscardo, 1999; Pearce, 2005). Safety messages are one of the dispensable parts in tourism and recreation communications (Moscardo, 1999). However, people with different cognitive abilities perceive different messages from the given signs (Pearce, 2005; Hughes, *et al.*, 2014). Therefore it is necessary to make sure all safety or warning messages are effective.

➢ Creating the actual Experience

As noted by Moscardo (1999), communication or interpretation is either central elements of the perceived experience or is the perceived experience in the tourism industry such as a guided tour and self-guided trails. Meanwhile, Poon (1993) and Buhalis & Law (2008) present that the new trends in tourism lead to a new type of tourists which is more experienced and destination oriented as well as independent. Additionally, Urry (1992) mentions that there is an interaction between the demand to seek educational elements and the booming number of museums and heritage attraction in the UK.

In consequence, according to some researchers, tourists who perceive the effective interpretation during the trips have a significantly higher degree of satisfaction about their experience (Moscardo, 1999; Pearce, 2005; Buhalis & Law, 2008). Secondly, it is feasible to use effective interpretation to manage tourists and change or affect their behaviour (Moscardo, 1999; Moscard & Woods, 1998). There are four ways that effective interpretation can make a contribution to the visitor management (Pearce, 2005).

➢ Impact on the route of tourists

By providing alternative places or activities, it is handy for tourism planners to attract tourists to other surrounding districts (Moscardo, 1999; Moscard & Woods, 1998). In other words, it is a strategy to minimise destructive impacts at those places which are fragile and "non-renewable" (Roggenbuck, 1992; Moscardo, 199; Pearce, 2005; Hughes, et al., 2014).

➢ Providing a visual experience

Signs and information can guide visual experiences. Following Green (1997) and Moscardo (1999), effective interpretation is able to provide a substitution experience to satisfy the travellers who may not go to the sites actually.

➢ Managing the tourists' behaviours

As noted by Krippendorf (1987) and Moscardo (1999), it is vital to tell people how to act in a certain way. Although there are several behaviours seeming like common sense, from the perspective of the tourism industry, it is necessary to provide the information and rules about appropriate behaviours to tourists (Pearce, 2005; Bond *et al.,* 2014; Hughes, *et al.,* 2014).

➢ Developing tourists' consideration

Effective interpretation not only can offer positive and unforgettable experiences to travellers but also is able to develop their concerns about the destinations such as the local environment and the local social stability. Additionally, it is an effective approach to improve the behaviours of tourists (Moscardo, 1999; Moscard & Woods, 1998; Pearce, 2005; Buhalis & Law, 2008).

All the functions mentioned before are based on the assumption that the interpretation is effective. Therefore, let us consider the factors and variables that can influence the success of interpretation. Falk *et al.* (1985) present that one of the most important factors in creating the successful communication is to provide various experience choices for the visitors. In other words, it is necessary to break the monotony of pace (Moscardo, 1999). For example, the planners can change a space or the style of the exhibition in an interpretive setting. Otherwise, Tilden (1977) mentions that the effective interpretation can help visitors to build up their own links with the destinations as well as to be one part of it. Meanwhile, an individual connection plays a considerable role in affecting visitor satisfaction (Moscardo, 1999). Additionally, the effective interpretation "is not instruction, but provocation" (Tilden, 1997, p.9). It is necessary to encourage travellers to participate in the activities and let them feel a sense of control over the experience (Moscardo, 1999). Meanwhile, an effective interpretation must have a clear content which is easy to be understood (Pearce, 2005). Last but not least, due to the various

types of tourists, it is necessary to provide the personalised interpretation in the light of demographics such as age and sex (Moscardo, 1999).

When it comes to interpretation, tourism planners cannot underestimate the intelligent quality of tourists and therefore should offer as well as support high-level interpretation. Such as the information about Jokhang Temple in brochures in Chinese; some signs in English. This serves as interpretation at the site, and can be expanded as storytelling by guides and tourists operators. In conclusion, there are many ways to expand the information of Jokahng Temple in the future but what should be paid an attention is how to interpret the information in different ways to attract visitors with various interests and needs. Meanwhile, tourism planners also cannot neglect the power of tourism participators to spread conservation messages worldwide (Moscardo, 1999; Pearce, 2005).

2.6.4 Storytelling

According to Bransford & Johnson (1973), the context plays a critical role to allow an individual's representations to be well-understood by others; meanwhile, the psychologists consider this context as a scheme (Moscardo, 1999). Schemata which are based on individual's experience are the tools that people use to function in the world (Bransford & Johnson, 1973; Pearce, 2005). Consequently, the more we experience, the more particulars the schemata have (Moscardo, 1999). Traditionally, there are two ways to build or revamp the tourists' schemata which are: interpretation and communication (Moscardo, 1999; Pearce, 2005). From the perspective of tourism planners, it is necessary to provide the tourists with a schema in order to build their own knowledge about the destination or change the existed one (Moscardo, 1999; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). By giving the sensible information, tourists can be guided in their consecutive dealings with some places or topics (Moscardo, 1999; Richards, 2001). Compared with making individuals mindful, it is much more difficult to change what they know or believe;

especially, the provided information and messages are seen without context (Kuo, 2002; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). In consequence, research on the traveller's preference about the topics and ways of organizing information is useful in order to fill in the context (Moscardo, 1999; Kuo, 2002; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006).

Following Prince (1982), Light (1995) and Herman (2013), the information that is offered in a cause-and-effect relationship or as a story related to the current surroundings are widely accepted by tourists (Moscardo, 1999). Additionally, Walker (1998) presented that tourists preferred the exhibits to be introduced in a story with an appropriate context (Moscardo, 1999).

As mentioned before, schemata are the core frameworks when we function in the world by organizing perceived experiences and information; meantime, they can be created and rebuilt by the new information (Moscardo, 1999; Pearce, 2005; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). Traditionally, there are two ways to change schemata which are assimilation and accommodation (Moscardo, 1999; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Herman, 2013). The former is explained by Myers (1986) as the process to add the new information into the existing frameworks. On the contrary, the aim of accommodation is to change the frameworks in order to fit the new information (Moscardo, 1999). It is acknowledged that stories are a good example of accommodation which is to borrow the structure of an existing schema (Moscardo, 1999; Herman, 2013). However, it is not easy to tell a story without any objects or/and abstract concepts as well as concrete examples, particularly in those areas that the visitors are unfamiliar (Moscardo, 1999; Tung & Ritchie, 2011).

Accordingly, the tourism planners should draw attention how to improve tourists' understandings with the help of the design information (Moscardo, 1999; Pearce, 2005; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006).

Lehman & Lehman (1984) and Kuo (2002) agreed that some mental orientations or overviews of the destinations can help the travellers highlight the main to vital spots to be learned (Moscardo, 1999). Meanwhile, the most effective way to encourage mindfulness is to ask several questions to the visitors before the experience (Pearce, 2005). Additionally, another method to enhance traveller's learning efficiency is to use of the pre-visit instructions (Gennaro, 1981; Moscardo, 1999). Furthermore, an increasing number of advance organizers has been developed in recent decades (Moscardo, 1999; Pearce, 2005; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). Healy (1989) and Spiegel & Barufaldi (1994) viewed the advance organizers as the tool to facilitate the travellers to understand the structure or the organization of information (Moscardo, 1999). For example, a map is an advance organizer that can offer an introduction and overview of the destinations to the visitors (Moscardo, 1999).

Nowadays, there is a worldwide tendency in the experience industry to use a story as the foundation to "bite" the whole "cake" or parts of the "cake", particularly in the tourism industry (Mossberg, 2008). For example, it is popular to organize various kinds of guided tours and dramatic guided tours based on the stories for the purpose of catering for different needs (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Hsu *et al.*, 2009). Tourism planners argue that the story is not only a tool to communicate the cues of tourist attractions but also a helper to create a holistic image of the destinations and generate the perceived experience for travellers by cooperating with storytelling (Kuo, 2002; Mossberg, 2008; Hsu *et al.*, 2009; Tung & Ritchie, 2011).

2.7 Destination Marketing

Nowadays, it is acknowledged that destination marketing has increasingly become the keyword in the extremely competitive global tourism industry (Buhalis, 2000). Destination marketing not only can facilitate the coordination between the tourism policy and the local development strategic plan but also is able to lead the tourism to make a breakthrough contribution to regional

benefits (Buhalis, 2000; Pike & Page, 2014). Meanwhile, following Leiper (1979) and Buhalis (2000), destinations are considered as a fundamental unit which is composed of tourism products in order to provide experiences for tourists. Otherwise, Hankinson (2004) mentioned that in the light of the tourism industry, it is necessary to regard the destinations as the most remarkable brands. Moreover, a majority of countries has paid attention to establish the Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO), which plays an important role in managing the destinations as well as attracting travellers (Pike & Page, 2014). Consequently, as a broad field, destination marketing has been discussed in relation to a diversity of research topics.

Traditionally, when it comes to destinations, it is normally about the geographical definition, such as a country, a city or a town (Buhalis, 2000; Middleton *et al.,* 2009; Hall & Page, 2014). However, Pike (2015) proposed that from the perspective of consumers, a destination can also be viewed as a perceptual concept, which can be calculated by the various travel motivations, patterns, backgrounds as well as educational levels of visitors (Buhalis, 2000). An example of that is, Seoul can be a destination for a Chinese plastic surgery traveller, while the Europe is possible to be a destination for a group of leisure Chinese tourists who are in a package of eight European countries in a twelve-day-tour. Furthermore, in terms of political and geographical issues, there are several barriers that have to be faced by tourists in some destinations (Pike, 2015). For example, in this paper, Tibet is often perceived as a place with a number of restricted areas, such as the traditional culture and the government policies.

As noted before, a package of tourism products and services take place in destinations; at the same time, they also use the destination as a marketing brand (Buhalis, 2000; Pike & Page, 2014). Dredge (1999) noticed that destinations are places where tourists choose to stay, for the purpose of experiencing the unique regional attractions. Following Buhalis (2000), Leiper

(2000) and Wang & Pizam (2011), the aim of destinations is to offer products and services to satisfy the needs of travellers. According to Buhalis (2000), there are six components of destinations which are: Attractions (e.g. natural, artificial, heritage), Accessibility, Amenities (e.g. accommodations and restaurants, shopping places), Available packages, Activities, Ancillary services (e.g. banks, telecommunications). Hence, a destination not only can be regarded as a unit of all products, services and perceived experiences offered regionally but also allows individuals to take part in evaluating the impact of tourism locally as well as provides stakeholders with the opportunity to maximise interests (Buhalis, 2000; Pike & Page, 2014; Pike, 2015).

For the purpose of this paper, Jokhang Temple is considered to be the destination which is defined by the tourists as a unique religious site, with the feasible framework for tourism planning and marketing by the related stakeholders.

Generally, the marketing strategy has been based on the concept of 4Ps, which was presented by Borden (1964): product, price, promotion, and place. Shoemaker & Shaw (2008) and Morrison (2013) applied it to the tourism and hospitality industry with four extra factors which are: partnerships, people, programming and packaging (Pike & Page, 2014). According to Pike & Page (2014), destination marketing has become the determining factor in global tourism markets. It is urgent to improve the effectiveness of destination marketing from internal and external perspectives such as lower production costs and provide more innovative methods to destination development. Marketing at such sites like Jokhang Temple has to be sensitive to the religious nature of the location.

2.8 Visitor Management

At present, when it comes to the fields of service and quality management, increasing attention has been paid to the service blueprinting which is able to highlight problems and opportunities in the service delivery process in both high-contact and low-contact services (Laws, 1999; Lovelock et al., 1999; Bell *et al.,* 2003). Obviously, service design and resourcing decision are important factors in the tourism management and have a tight relationship with the customer satisfaction (Laws, 1999; Lovelock *et al.,* 2002).

Following by Williams & Buswell (2003) and Chen & Tsai (2007), an appropriate service design can not only decide whether a service delivery can be successful or not but also minimize dysfunction as well as maximize effective service transactions. Additionally, it also can satisfy the needs of tourists and offer amazing experiences in the case to promote the organizations to achieve the goal (Laws, 1999; Williams & Buswell, 2003).

Otherwise, service blueprinting also plays a vital role in controlling the flow of people in large number, particularly in heritage sites (Shackley, 2001; Ho*& McKercher, 2004). By using a sequence of signs and activities, it can provide an enjoyable trip to the tourists; meanwhile, it also can minimize the congestion and ensure the safety both of travelers as well as of the places (Laws, 1999; Chen & Tsai, 2007).

According to Lovelock *et al.* (1999), there are two procedures to develop a service blueprinting. Firstly, the managers should safeguard each interaction that a specific type of traveller has during a special service. Secondly, all the identified interactions have to be set into a line in which they occur (Lovelock *et al.,* 1999; Lovelock *et al.,* 2002). Based on the research given by Laws (1999), a blueprinting can not only provide the managers with an opportunity to

understand the customer's behaviors but also can increase the individual competitively in the heritage tourism industry (Lovelock *et al.,* 2002; Williams & Buswell, 2003).

Additionally, by improving the delivery process and simplifying the steps to avoid unnecessary moves and wasted time this also can enhance the overall satisfaction of tourists (Lovelock *et al.,* 2002; Chen & Tsai, 2007). As will be seen, steps are taken at Jokhang Temple to direct tourists via a route separate from worshippers through the site. Hence visitor management has a role to play in the development of religious tourism heritage sites.

CHAPTER 3

METHDOLOGY

3.1 Methodology underlying the study

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a better understanding of how the material has been collected, and how this material has been interpreted and analysed. The chapter is concluded with ethical considerations and some words on the trustworthiness of the results.

3.2 Research Design and Methodology

In the research process, the author decided to do a literature review and conduct interviews. Both methods were done with the focus of answering the main research question: what are some of the prospects and challenges of religious tourism at a religious site? And the following sub-questions: How can the experiences of tourists be adapted to the temple setting? How can the expectations of tourists be met without disturbing the temple as a religious site? In what ways does a visit to the religious site affect tourists' experiences of satisfaction, loyalty and authenticity? For the ability to collect primary material for the study, a methodological foundation was developed.

The author completed a literature review, in order to find out what had been previously explored, what academia had to say on these issues and on disputed point (Bryman, 2015). Through the literature review, the author searched for explanations and interpretations hoping to answer the research questions. Therefore, a literature review of existent theories and research within the fields of religious tourism, tourists' motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty constituted an important basis for the process of the study. Several journal articles and e-books with relevance to the topic and research questions were collected to review. The method of selection

was not only according to the title, the subject matter and the abstract of the articles but also in light of the keywords or combination of words, including: religious tourism, tourists' motivation, perceived authenticity, satisfaction, loyalty, tourist attraction marketing and destination marketing as well as visitor management. The sources were found mostly using Google Scholar and the UiS database as well as LUB database. Moreover, there were a plethora of choices and articles available so it was a major task to sift through everything in order to find those most well-matched and those which could help me answer my questions.

Based on the literature review, studies indicate that the relationship between perceived authenticity and other factors are not well understood; therefore it seems clear that if the author wishes to understand the relationship between these factors, then the studying of individuals' motivation and attitudes is indispensable.

The qualitative research attempts to explore the complexity and multiple realities of participants' perspectives and their behaviours (Ryan, 1991). The approach for conducting the study has in turn been characterized by an "abductive" way of reasoning. Reichertz (2010, p.4) has described "abduction" as an approach "intended to help social research, or rather social researchers, to be able to make new discoveries in a logically and methodologically ordered way". By using an abductive approach to conducting this study, there have been possibilities to move back-and-forth between prior research in the area of interest and the material collected for this particular study.

According to Bryman (2015), a qualitative explorative research is considered to be an appropriate way to obtain in-depth knowledge; in this case of the tourists' motivations and attitudes about religious tourism in relation to the research questions that are the object of

inquiry in this study. Thus, a qualitative research strategy is able to achieve an understanding of the tourists' motivations and attitudes about the perceived authenticity as well as the trip at the religious site. Semi-structured interviews are known to be an inherent part of the qualitative research method and the purpose of them is to describe the meanings of central themes from key informants (Schänzel & Mcarthur Santosh, 2000). Considering the time limit and resources, the author decided to conduct twenty-six interviews during the period, each of which included about 10-15 questions (see Appendix 1) running 60 - 90 minutes long. The prerequisites for the interviewees were that they were visiting Jokhang Temple. All the interviews were semi-constructed; that is, the interviews contained some pre-determined questions designed to gauge the motivations and attitudes about the perceived authenticity and the trip to the religious sites. During the interviews, several open-ended questions were picked up to stimulate different and overall perspectives of the research topic. The interviewees included sixteen males and ten females, with an average age of 27 approximately. Six of the participants were identified as Tibetan Buddhists (they are also labelled as ashram tourists), and one of them is Christian. All the interviews have been subjected to qualitative content analysis (Timothy & Groves, 2001). At first, a pilot study was conducted for the purpose of testing if the interview questions are clear, understandable and cannot be misinterpreted. This was followed by the necessary editing or recording of phrases and questions before conducting the real interviews. These interviews were recorded then transcribed for the analysis. The content items were identified by the open codes and labels; in order to make them easier to interpret, these items were clustered under common themes. In this research, investigator triangulation was used to limit interviewees' bias in data analysis and avoid missing information (Oppermann, 2000).

With the implementation of such methods, efforts were made to follow Bryman's (2015) guidelines of ethical principles throughout the entire research. These principles include

informing the participants about the purpose of the research, that the participation is voluntarily and that they have the right to drop out at any time. Consent was also included as one of the most important principles. Moreover, the author attempted to remain objective during the interview as to avoid swaying their comments in one direction or another and so that the interviewees would not feel uncomfortable or as if they were being judged by their answers. Another considered guideline was that of confidentiality and anonymity (de Guchteneire, 2016). Every recorded interview was deleted as soon as the interview was transcribed. The transcript has been kept in a password-protected computer, in order to respect the confidentiality. Finally, the results of the study were made available for the participants of the study, as suggested through one of the other guidelines offered by UNESCO (de Guchteneire, 2016). Thereby, the interviewed informants were offered the opportunity to highlight potential misinterpretations made by the author, in order for such misinterpretations to be corrected.

3.3 Methodological Considerations

This research has a qualitative approach, which means that this paper aims to understand a specific phenomenon in a context-specific setting, a real-life setting (Golafshani, 2003). In this research, the approach was to collect qualitative data and try to derive theoretical information from them (Bryman, 2015). By using this approach, an attempt is made to gain a fairly comprehensive understanding of how travellers' satisfaction and loyalty are affected by the motivation and perceived authenticity at religious sites. One of the most common methods used in qualitative research is an interview (Golafshani, 2003), which is a main method of choice alongside the literature review. It is important to be reflexive and think critically about oneself when doing a project work of this nature. This involves coming to know the author self, being aware of the stances taken and having a critical subjectivity throughout the process (Beerli & Martín, 2004; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Lee et al., 2007). As soon as aspect of qualitative research,

both the constructivism and ontological stances were taken into consideration in this process. In general terms, constructivism sees knowledge as socially constructed, which also implies that knowledge can change as the circumstances change (Golafshani, 2003).

Since the aim of the study involves communication and reception of information, a constructivist stance is underlying the study. "Understanding is constructed through interpretations in the world" is a statement made by Howell (2013, p.91). This statement is similar to the idea underlying this particular study since it reveals that interpretations are necessary for the construction of understanding. According to Howell (2013), constructivism considers that individuals give meaning to the world; which is one reason why interviews were a way for me to find out how individuals give meaning in this context. What is of particular interest in this research is to find out how tourists with different motivations think and respond to the religious site; their attitudes and behaviours in this religious tourism context.

Furthermore, it is necessary to consider the values and bias that can influence the final results. The perception is that the reality - the real world - changes whether the researchers want it or not; which implies that there are diverse constructions of reality (Golafshani, 2003). The epistemological stance in this research is interpretivism since the aim of this paper is to understand tourists' motivations in Jokhang Temple and their attitudes about the perceived authenticity as well as their satisfaction and loyalty through the interpretation of the empirical data collected. This stance emphasises the importance of how social scientists try to understand and interpret the subjective meaning of social actions (Bryman, 2015). It is important for the researcher to know that there are reasons behind tourists' attitudes and behaviours toward the travel experience and that tourists' attitudes and behaviour change as the socio-political context changes. It can be claimed that what has been found out in this research is socially constructed

and is presented as such, according to the approaches of interpretivism and constructivism applied in this particular research.

Since the aim of this study was to reach an understanding, rather than to reach generalizable results, the method for conducting the study is considered suitable and adequate for reaching a basic interpretation. As stated by Howell (2013, p.188-189), the strive in qualitative research should be for trustworthiness, involving whether "access to knowledge and meaning has been realized", rather than for accurate measurements. Since the collected primary and secondary material contributed to a comprehensive analysis, the research questions can be reflexively answered. Howell (2013, p.190) has further stated that the aspect of trustworthiness incorporates four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Furthermore, according to Howell (2013, p.190), triangulation is an important aspect for credibility, and the use of two methods can be viewed as one kind of triangulation.

Further, opportunities for transferability of the study have been created through transparency in how the study was conducted, together with thorough descriptions of the collected material in the analysis chapter. The aspect of auditing, which is stressed by Howell (2013, p.190) in connection to dependability, has therefore been constantly present during the entire study process. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the topic and the somewhat personal questions into visitors' religious or /and political attitudes, it is important to acknowledge that the data may not be completely reliable.

The main period of research involved a visit to Tibet in the spring of 2017. The research was conducted as a field trip in which the researcher joined a tourist trip from Beijing to Lhasa for 12 days in March during which time the interviews were conducted. Daily notes were kept

during fieldwork in addition to recorded interviews and assembling other information such as photos and other materials. Before and after fieldwork, there was preparation work and studies conducted about the temple as a tourist site. The research is a Tibetan Buddhist and also has visited Jpkhang Temple before.

In the following chapter, the comprehensive analysis of this study is presented together with an assessment and discussion in relation to the research questions. This discussion is further developed in the concluding chapter, in order to offer a broader understanding of the studied topic.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

The basic information of interviewees				
No.	Gender	Age	Job	Religious Perference
T01	M	40+	Offcial	YES
T02	M	23	Student	NO
T03	M	27	Student	NO
T04	M	24	Company employee	NO
T05	M	23	Student	NO
T06	F	/	Company employee	NO
T07	F	24	Company employee	NO
T08	M	25	Ashram tourist	YES
T09	M	25	Voluntary teacher	NO
T10	F	30+	Voluntary cader	NO
T11	M	27	Company employee	NO
T12	M	30+	Company employee	NO
T13	F	25	Company employee	NO
T14	M	35	Company employee	NO
T15	M	40+	Company manager	NO
T16	F	30	Company employee	NO
T17	M	30	Company employee	NO
T18	F	25	Student	NO
T19	F	45	Ashram tourist	YES
T20	F	35	Company employee	NO
T21	M	30	Company employee	NO
T22	F	30	Phtotgrapher	NO - YES
T23	M	59	Guru	YES
T24	M	25	Freelance	YES (Christian)
T25	F	20	Student (Gap year)	NO - YES
T26	M	23	Student	NO

Figure 5: List of Informants/Interviewees

4.1 Tourists' Experience

4.1.1   The Purpose of Visiting Jokhang Temple

From the 26 participants' response to the question: 'Why did you choose to visit Jokhang Temple?' it was indicated clearly that there are several significant differences in the motivations of visitors and those motivations can be catalogued into three elements which are: interpersonal relationships, leisure, cultural experiences, and religious atmosphere. As will be seen these motivations come cross over into each other. As mentioned in Literature Review part, tourist motivation is a mixture; particularly in religious tourism, motivations are overlapped. Otherwise, the various differences in motivations call for different expectations and behaviours of tourists.

- *Leisure*

We, human beings, are born with deep curiosity and we are obsessed with digging things just because we want to know. Similarly, curiosity is also a major and common motivation in tourism, especially when it comes to something or someplace unfamiliar.

 "*(Jokhang Temple) is on the have-to-do list recommended by the lonely planet.*" (T26 - M)

 "*I am curious about the difference between the worships of Tibetan Buddhism and Christian.*

 And I have been told the rituals in Jokhang Temple are the most sophisticated." (T24 - M)

Otherwise, escape from the daily routine also was emphasised occasionally.

"The company just finished a big project successfully and this trip is a treat to the group members. Meanwhile, I do think I need a break." (T12- M)

At the same time, some respondents also considered that the atmosphere in the temple can help them to calm down and sort out several issues.

"I am confronted with a glass ceiling in my career, then I think maybe it is a good time to take a rest. Furthermore, the solemn and Zen atmosphere here can cool my head. Maybe it's possible for me to make a well-thought decision about the future." (T10 - F)

Additionally, due to the uniqueness and the professional preservation as well as maintenance of the architectures in Jokhang Temple, "enjoy history" became another factor that encouraged the tourists to take an "adventure". Incidentally, one of the interviewees talked about the landscape and natural view.

"I do appreciate the temple architecture, they are fantastic and impressive. In my opinion, a culture can be recorded not only in its own language but also by the specific architectures. Jokhang Temple can be considered as an epic of Tibetan culture. Besides, another attraction

to me is the landscape. I mean, of course, it could be limited in Jokhang Temple, But, you see, Tibet is really a dreamland and a place only in fairytale."(T03 - M)

In this study, almost all of the participants mentioned that "leisure" is one of the core motivations for them to visit Jokhang Temple. Meanwhile, they also explained that from their perspectives, the trip to Jokhang Temple was no difference compared with other trips, in other words, they considered all trips were on the purpose of "leisure".

- ***Interpersonal Relationships and Blessings***

According to the interviews, another information can be extracted which shows that prayer to Buddha/ making a wish is also a purpose of visitors in relation to their families. Moreover, two of the respondents headlined that this was the second time to visit here, respectively. This revisit is for the purpose to "*fulfil the promise and reward of the earlier stay*" (T06 - F; T18 - F).

"*I would like to pray for the family's well-being.*" (T13 - F)

"*I would like to get a blessing from Buddha about my promotion and my son's school work.*" (T14 - M)

- ***Religious Atmosphere***

However, none of the participants who mentioned about making a wish has a stated religious affiliation. There were seven respondents with a religious preference in this study; except for one who is a Christian, the others are all Tibetan Buddhists. Nevertheless they were taken with the religious atmosphere. When it comes to this question, most of them remarked that one of the main aims is to seek for the balance of mental and physical consolation. They treated the Buddhist prayer-wheels located alongside the wall of Jokhang Temple as a bridge to communicate with Buddha.

"*This is the nearest place from Buddha and a perfect place for my spiritual practice.*" (T08 - M)

"*I don't make a wish and I have no idea why you need to fulfil the wish. Do they try to make a deal with the Buddha? Like, I make a wish and if you help me to fulfil it, I have to pay you something back. I came here for my past karma, and I try my best to do every good things*

although some of them are too tiny to mention and I also devote myself into avoiding any

slightest harmful actions." (T22 - F)

According to the opposite actions, one of the respondents who is a Guru commented:

"This is the difference between the mundane and the Buddhist worldviews. We have different

understandings of social reality."

In this research, those participants who are Tibetan Buddhists were labeled as "ashram

tourists".

In addition, from the perspective of ashram tourists, the opportunities to join the abundant of religious lessons offered in Jokhang Temple and talk with lectures as well as get religious implications are the principal motivations.

- *Cultural Experience*

The folk customs and the historic culture are also a driving force for the tourists to visit Jokhang Temple.

"*I am kind of obsessed with the unique Tibetan culture and I have read that Jokhang Temple is a good place to get familiar with locals and get involved in the extraordinary culture.*" (T25 - F)

As will be seen some of the motivations tend to blend, such as, interpersonal relationships, blessings, and experiencing Tibetan Buddhist culture.

Clearly, the findings indicate that the motives for visitation to Jokhang temple are akin to those found at other religious sites, especially in China. Namely, such sites attract not only the devout but also others interested in heritage, culture, history, and general sightseeing. Otherwise, visitors without religious preferences are more interested in the personal benefits and religious/cultural elements in the temple (e.g., to hear sutras chanted in the morning). These are both religions and mundane aspects to these experiences. What can be observed is that the tourists' experiences are quite composite and multifaceted.

4.1.2 Activities Tourists Chose to Participate in during Their Visit

In order to analyse the results in a more systematic and logical way, the activities at Jokhang Temple were separated into two essential themes: exploratory activities and worship activities. Other activities such as observing others' worship and shopping activities, from the perspective of authors, did not belong to exploratory and worship activities. Hence, these two activities were discussed individually.

- *Exploratory Activities*

Most of the respondents who took part in religious tourism for the first time or who had no particular religious preference intended to take the interpretive Centre as the first stop. Some basic information about the Tibetan culture and Buddhism can be obtained via the offered papers. The material not only provides tourists with an approach to get familiar with the Tibetan culture and Buddhism but also can improve the quality of the tourists' experience.

"*If you go without a lot of research or without a good guide, you will be missing the point of this monastery. I learned a lot from the papers, maybe they are simple but fairly useful.*" (T16 - F).

Except visiting the interpretive centre, a bulk of tourists also chose to go on a guided tour in order to get a well-understood outline about the unique culture.

"From my perspective, it is necessary to take part in a guided tour. Before visiting here, I knew nothing about the Tibetan culture and Buddhism. I got the materials from the travel agency but they are too rough and not comprehensive. But the tour guide was amazing, he knows almost everything and he does have some skills to make stories more attractive and dramatic. I learned a lot from the guided tour." (T13 - F)

Yet it is important to note that not all the respondents were satisfied with their tour guides who were seen as a little patchy in terms of quality.

"I don't want to be mean but mine was not well-trained. Frankly, I learned nothing from this guided tour. Maybe, he is a 'fake'. If so, the related departments have to deal with this kind of issues." (T18 - F)

Otherwise, some respondents indicated that they preferred to visit Jokhang Temple with the help of the visitor services such as the signs and the electronic tourist's guide.

"I prefer to be alone when I visit some places. Therefore, I can observe things more dedicated. The signs show what you are watching in Chinese, Tibetan and English. Maybe it is not too specific, however, the electronic tourist's guide can fill the gaps." (T24 - M)

Moreover, some participants were prone to wander around the site and relax in the ground in order to embrace the cosy weather and warm sunlight.

"I haven't seen such a sparkling crystal sky for a really long time. I can spend the whole day here just to watch the blue sky." (T25 - F)

However, sometimes the tourists chose to walk around for the sake of killing time, especially as a part of a tour group.

"*I know nothing about the culture and don't want to know it because I totally lack interest about it. I walked around randomly just for waiting for the group. I couldn't sit motionless, that is too silly.*" (T15 - M)

Nevertheless, he still commented on the signs and the directions hanging on the wall. Meanwhile, he was also impressed about the tourist management in Jokhang temple such as applying the flowchart strategy to separate visitors in the light of religious belief which can not only ease the visiting pressure but also can improve the visitors' satisfaction.

"*The signs and the directions in the temple are fairly unambiguous. They clearly direct to different kinds of Buddha's places and the tourist information centre as well as the washrooms. Otherwise, there are also some signs in order to remind tourists to be quiet. Meanwhile, there are two entrances to this temple: the left one is for the pilgrims; the right one is for the tourists. This method is really smart because in my observation, I guess there*

will be thousands of tourists here in peak season. The separated entrances can facilitate to manage the visitors." (T15 - M).

In conclusion, all the interviewees without the religious preference have mentioned at least one of the exploratory activities they chose to join in. Guiding and interpretations were highly valued by the respondents. Visitors were encouraged to be quiet and to follow a well-marked route. In interviews with those who are ashram tourists, they also showed appreciation for this method and viewed it as a brilliant measure. Obviously, these activities make a crucial influence on the tourists' experience and should not be overlooked.

- *Worship Activities*

Besides the exploratory activities, the worship activities such as the taking part in service or ceremonies as well as personal prayer attracted extensive attention of tourists without religious belief.

"*I won't kneel down to the Buddha but I will turn the Buddhist prayer-wheel as a pilgrim. If possible, I would like to join in some rituals. They look fascinating and interesting.*" (T16 - F)

"*I lighted the candles. Actually, I don't know why but they all did that, therefore I deducted it is a good thing.*" (T04 -F)

Otherwise, nearly all the participants intended to leave some kind of offering in terms of various reasons. A large number of respondents indicated that they would like to make a spiritual request for some help via the donations. However, those who are ashram tourists stressed that almsgiving establishes a spiritual connection among those with a common purpose, and is a way for them to show their respect for the Buddha.

Hence, it is apparent that compared with the ashram tourists, other tourists were more likely to mimic the performance of pilgrims and take part in worship activities, although they do not understand the full meaning behind those rituals and ceremonies.

- ***Other Activities***

A great proportions of interviewees at Jokhang Temple took part in shopping activities. Owing to the specific location of the temple, the purchase desire of tourists can be catered for directly.

"*The main pathway around the temple is crammed on both sides with shops selling everything for devotees and tourists alike, those alleys off to the sides are more frequently run by Tibetans. The shops offer a good place to step out of the throngs making their triple circumnavigations of the temple itself. I purchased a historical book of the temple and several special souvenirs for my family and friends.*" (T20 - F)

Additionally, an uncommon activity was noticed by the author which is involved watching others take part in religious services. A handful of participants said that when they felt bored they began to observe others worship and considered it as a positive way to delight themselves.

Lastly, the travellers without particular religious belief are more likely to buy items in the souvenir shops and observe others participate in worship activities. In contrast, the ashram tourists were more likely to put attention to their spiritual activities rather than observing others.

4.1.3. The Analysis of Perceived Authenticity

It is unavoidable that daydreaming is one part of tourism during participation in novel or unique experiences from those commonly came across daily life. However, these kind of daydreams could not be controlled by individuals; they have been manipulated by advertisements and other signs created or hinted by multimedia; moreover, it seems that they have a tight relation with many complicated procedures of social simulation. Therefore, it is vital for tourism promoters to understand what the tourists consider is authentic and to study the behaviours among them. The present study focused on how perceived authenticity is related to tourist satisfaction and loyalty.

A large bulk of interviewees took part in religious tourism for the first time and they were short of knowledge about Tibetan culture, particularly the Tibetan Buddhism. Although related information can be searched online or via books, the strict regulations and the profound meaning in Tibetan Buddhism became a mystery intriguing the visitors. Consequently, a couple of respondents mentioned that they felt authenticity as soon as they arrived Tibet, especially when they visited the Jokhang Temple. Furthermore, they were inclined to compare what they saw with the information they got in advance; in some accounts, to make sure items are authentic.

"The holy vibe here is so true. I can feel it just as I expected on the way here." (T02 - M)

"When I entered the temple, the smell of yak butter candles makes me feel that everything happening is so fascinating and real." (T13 - F)

"The architectures and exhibitions of Tibetan arts are exactly the same as what I have seen in pictures." (T05 - M)

The sacred atmosphere and the magnificent structures were considered as the main factors when visitors evaluated the perceived authenticity.

Additionally, observing the behaviours of the pilgrims is another way for tourists to seek for the authenticity. Inside or outside of Jokhang Temple, there are always crowds of worshipers either prostrating in prayer, turning their prayer wheels or bowing to Buddhist statues.

"The prayer lines extend for miles to enter the temple and I can see devote expression on their faces. At that moment, I definitely felt closer to the Buddha." (T26 - M)

Other important features identified were authentic meditation and other Buddhist activities such as debates about Buddhist scriptures and having special and vegetarian food. Moreover, according to the Ashram tourists, discussing Buddhism theory with monastic members and reciting Buddhist holy mantras were viewed as the most authentic items, followed by attending morning pujas and talking with monks as well as getting more religious instruction.

"*I have no idea what is the meaning of authenticity and I don't think there is a so-called front stage in the temple. Although there is something forbidden from the tourists, it is just because of the rules. When I can be satisfied by the Buddhist teacher, I will respect him as a Rinpoche. Well, I think he is real.*" (T08 - M)

Unlike several temples, the Jokhang Temple offers visitors the opportunity to explore some places except the rooms of meditation and some special rituals. The responses for this regulation is polarised. On one hand, the differential treatment makes the tourists feel they observe a high level of authenticity.

"We use the different gate to enter the temple. I think it is a wise measure to distinguish the pilgrims from the tourists. Anyway, we are just visitors. We shouldn't disturb them. The difference makes the temple more holy. " (T22 - F)

"The strict rules make me feel so real and I am sure I am in a holy site. Of course, there is no necessity to open all the spaces to the tourists. Although it is a tourist attraction, it is a sacred site first. What I saw was exactly matching my expectation." (T17 - M)

On the other hand, a few participants hold an opposite opinion that they asked for to be allowed more freedom to participate in rituals and walk around.

"If they don't allow us to join the rituals, I will feel all things shown here are a performance. I'm not saying the belief is not real, I just feel be concealed something." (T15 - M)

Seclusion and participation are considered as the vital traits of perceived authenticity. At the same time, the evaluation and degree of perceived authenticity will vary. The perceived level of authenticity is manipulated to a certain extend by communicated media and a certain degree by visitors who are going through it. The important distinction in the perceived authenticity among visitors in Jokhang Temple related to differences in religious preference and connections to Tibetan Buddhism. Moreover, authenticity perception in the minds of ashram tourists is geared towards Buddhism teachings.

4.1.4. Satisfaction with Service

Service is viewed as one of the vital factors in improving tourists' satisfaction and encouraging tourists' revisits, and hence for the achievement of tourism industry in any country. Almost all the participants said they were satisfied with the provided service. Most indicated a very high level of satisfaction. The interviewees evaluated the service with three alternative answers: good, acceptable and bad. After giving the general answer, the author requested some of the participants to present several examples. In general, the responses about the main services at Jokhang Temple were good. This indicated that the temple has been somehow handled carefully

by the related departments and the management is relatively forthcoming. Yet it is important to note that not all the respondents were satisfied by the service in Jokhang Temple. The following factors explain whether or not the interviewees considered that the services were good, appropriate or bad. Various sorts of serveries were presented, but accessibility, tourist interpretive centre, cleanliness and security, facilities inside the sire as well as service employees were considered as the most vital elements. The findings about the services are as follows:

- *Accessibility*

➢ Transportation

Transportation is also one of the dominant factors in the tourism industry. A transportation service can be considered as a bridge which is able to connect tourists to the preferred destinations. A comprehensive transportation system should provide the travellers with alternatives in the light of their budgets, time and interests (Cooper, 2008; Xu, 2013). Jokhang Temple is located in the centre of Lhasa which is 60 kilometres from the Lhasa Gonggar Airport and it takes about one hour and ten minutes by private vehicles and taxis depending on the traffic condition. As a Chinese tourist, there are two frequent and cheap means of transportation to reach Jokhang Temple directly from the airport, one is by an official shuttle bus (30 NOK) and another is public transport (i.e. No.7 or No. 8). All the information has been published online and can be downloaded by individuals which facilitate the tourists to design their routes and book accommodations.

"*There is no difficulty for me to arrive here. I searched and went through all the information online and printed them out. I chose to stay near Jokhang Temple because the location of it is really nice, almost every tourist attraction is within walking distance.*" (T18 - F)

However, due to several political issues, any Non-Chinese tourists have to stay in the airport until being picked up by the tour guide and take the private car provided by the specific travel agency (Zhou, 2014).

Because of the special location, the majority of visitors chose to stay in and around old Barkor Street, from which it only takes five to ten minutes on foot to Jokhang Temple.

"*My hostel is in the old Barkor Street, it only takes me 6 minutes on foot. Quite convenient.*"

(T03 - M)

Furthermore, when tourists travel on foot, it is much easier for them to get involved in the local atmosphere which can enhance the tourists' experience (Cooper, 2008).

"*Because it is a company trip, our hotel is in the centre of Lhasa and also near to the temple. After the breakfast, I enjoyed a wonderful walk in such an amazing weather. I am very delighted and feel I get familiar with the Tibetan life.*" (T12 - M)

Two of the respondents, the newlyweds, mentioned that this was their first self-driving travel. Generally speaking, they were satisfied by the clear transport signs and sufficient parking lots, however, some roads were too narrow to pass two cars at the same time which can not only cause traffic congestion but also car accidents.

"*This is our first road trip. Nervous but exciting. I found a detailed road map and attractions on the official website which is quite handy. Meanwhile, there are different self-driving travel lines on the website according to different seasons and climates and interest of participants. All of them are nice and sweet. But some roads are poorly lighted and not well maintained which can be dangerous for the drivers*." (T-20; T-21)

Clearly, the satisfaction of transportation in general was good. However, it also shows that the authorities should focus on the infrastructures such as the lighting facility and the road conditions because this has a connection to tourist safety and is the first impression presented by the whole city.

> ➤ Signs to the Site

Similar to the remarks mentioned by the road trip travellers, it was apparent that the signs to the site were quite clear and useful. The direction board was shown in three different languages and the tourist attractions were marked into striking dark brown. The display of signs was neither intensive nor scattered, but directed visitors at the right time and right places. Generally speaking, signs to the site were well-placed and were helpful to the tourists on their way to Jokhang Temple.

> ➤ Entrance Fee

The majority of the participants considered the entrance fee of Jokhang Temple as either good or acceptable. Tourism managers and promoters need to take the entrance cost into account because the relationship between an entrance fee and destination evaluation is tight, particularly in China (Ying & Zhou, 2007). The entrance fee of Jokhang Temple is much more reasonable compared with some sites in China. According to Bolton, Warlop & Alba (2003), the perceived

price fairness is defined as an assessment of the price by consumers as reasonable, acceptable and just, and is confirmed to have a positive relationship with the customer satisfaction and loyalty (Gallarza & Saura, 2006).

> ➢ Tourist Interpretive Centre

Most responses about the interpretive centre are positive and a decent number of respondents expressed that the centre was good. The service offered in the interpretive centre presents the complex background of Jokhang Temple in a comprehensible way to tourists. With the help of the centre, most participants indicated that the trip was meaningful and they felt comfortable and more agreeable to come back to the site.

> ➢ Availability of information about the site

In an interview of a tourist, he remarked that it was possible to acquire sufficient information about Jokhang Temple both from the official website and travel agency website in advance. Otherwise, he can also gain new knowledge when he arrived from the offered brochures and the tour guides. However, he suggested that:

 "*It will be much more helpful if they provide free brochures in many languages including the*

  information about all the tourist attractions in Lhasa. It is better to market those sites as a

package compared with a single one. When getting the brochure, it is much easier for the

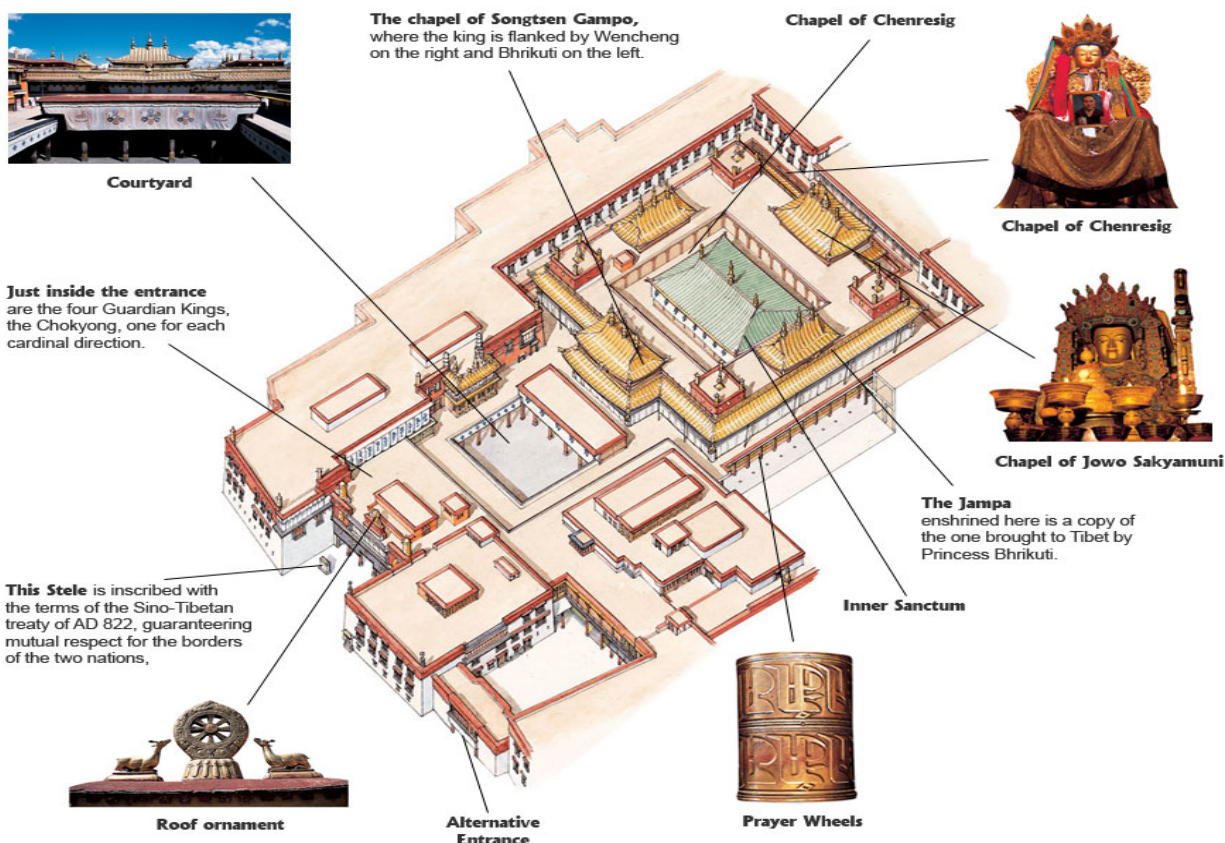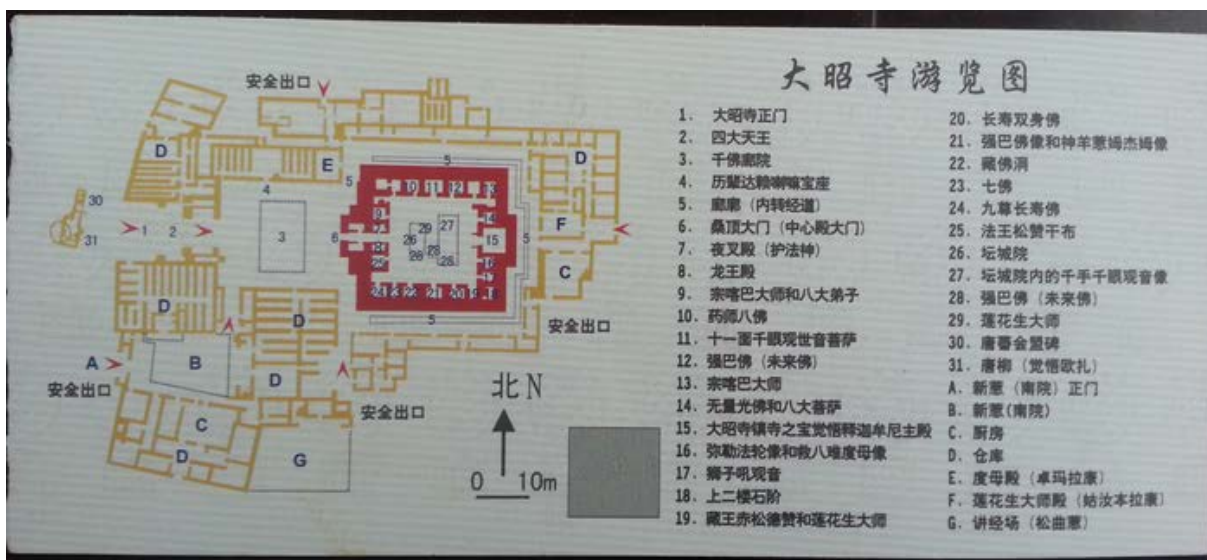*tourists to schedule travel plans.*" (T11- M)

Figure 6: Jokhang Temple Map (China Travel Guide, 2017)

According to the interviews, it was noted that participants who had done enough planning were more likely to revisit the site compared with those who did not prepare anything. Owing to the particularity of Tibetan culture and Buddhism, extensive preparation is necessary for the tourists. That is to say, the tourism promoters should pay attention to the availability of information about Jokhang Temple and try to avoid an information shortage.

➢ Cleanliness and Security

Cleanliness and security also play a vital role in tourist experiences that must be stressed by the tourism promoters. In this study, almost all of the participants said that they were satisfied with the surroundings in Jokhang Temple. For example, some signs like "No Smoking" have been at each corner in three different language (Chinese, Tibetan and English).

The respondents also felt safe at the site. This can be credited to the Chinese government's implementation of a strategy for the development of the southern-western region which makes a great effort towards the stability in this border region. Most of the interviewees indicated that

they were willing to recommend Jokhang Temple to others, and the cleanliness and security had a positive relationship with the recommendation intention.

➢ Accommodation

Accommodation plays a vital and indispensable role in the tourism industry because all the tourists need a place to stay. Because of the booming tourism industry, many developments and facilities have been added to make the accommodation services satisfy the various needs of tourists. The quality and comfort of accommodation can improve the tourists' satisfaction and destination loyalty. Many accommodation alternatives are offered in the light of the purchasing capacity and tendency of tourists. According to Cooper (2008), accommodation is able to make an indirect but significant effect on travellers about the destination decision and whether they would like to recommend the place to others.

On the basis of the interviews, the accommodation service is good near Jokhang Temple. One of the main reasons is the temple's location in the heart of the downtown. There are different

kinds of accommodation services available to choose according to the tourists' budget and their personal preference.

"*Because it's our honeymoon, my husband and I booked a luxurious room which is only 0.5 kilometres away from the temple.*" (T20 - F)

"*I am a student and my budget is limited. I choose to stay in a hostel. Actually, there are a lot of hostels near Jokhang Temple. The hostel is really a 'best buy' and the hosts are native and kind Tibetans.*" (T25 - F)

Otherwise, the price range is very diverse from 167 NOK to 2086 NOK. In the term of the season, the price can be different. There are thirty-two well-furnished hotels equipped with modern facilities and eighty-four hostels in the Jokhang Temple region. Tourists can search information and book hotels as well as hostels online (Booking.com).

"*I booked my room on Booking and the website is really handy. Of course, the price is quite acceptable. There are many choices online and most of them are not expensive.*" (T02 - M)

There is also a hostel in Jokhang Temple but only provided for the lamas who are in their spiritual practice tour.

"*Go through the enclosed passage, there is a private hostel for lamas. I couldn't stay there although I am an ashram. Literally speaking, I am still a visitor. There is also another atrium for us to have courses. For me, compared with the place to stay, I need to take care about the means of communicating with the lectures.*" (T08 - M)

➢ Facilities inside the site

Most of the respondents mentioned that the available facilities inside Jokhang Temple played an important role in their level of satisfaction, particularly the Wi-Fi service. In this study, there was a significant connection between the Wi-Fi service and tourist satisfaction. Most of the interviewees were troubled by the unstable Wi-Fi connection in Jokhang Temple. Regarding the common site facilities, namely, "toilets," "accommodation at the site," "shopping stores at

the site," some respondents said that there were some improvement spaces, which led to lower satisfaction with Jokhang Temple. However, most interviewees said the high-technology equipment, including "touchscreens with exhibit introduction," and "the electronic tourist guide" exceeded their expectations.

Additionally, two ashram tourists remarked that they paid more attention about the places of prayer and worship provided by the temple. Having a place to pray and worship inside the temple is essential and dispensable for ashram tourists. From interviews with those two ashram tourists, it was clear that Jokhang Temple preserved a sense of the holy and provided several quiet and suitable places for the pilgrims. Both of them stressed that their needs were satisfied for the most part and the aim of their trips somehow was achieved.

➢ Service Employees

A large quantity of researchers have noted that service quality is the basement of satisfaction and there is a significant relationship between service quality and tourist satisfaction (Ekinci & Sirakaya, 2004; Ma *et al*., 2013). In other words, friendly and qualified staff have a considerable effect on the experiences and emotions of tourists. "Service employees" in the tourist attractions context extend from the tourist guide to the service employees in general.

As mentioned before, one of main responsibilities of tourist guides is to help tourists to obtain a fabulous experience when they are learning historical and religious facts about Jokhang Temple during their visits. According to interviews, most respondents considered their tourists guides to be helpful and good.

It is possible to assess tourist perceptions from two different perspectives.

- ***External Perspective***

Respondents to Jokhang Temple were asked to evaluate the several employees in general by giving several examples. A group of participants felt that a few employees were neither helpful nor kind. They attributed the bad attitude to the different background in nationality.

"*Some of them are not that kind of friendly, they serve the locals promptly and I feel I can only get the second best service.*" (T11 - M)

Furthermore, the majority of interviewees also emphasized the language barriers and professional training issues.

"The employees should have the ability to speak several languages. I don't mean that they have to speak four or five different languages. In fact, the one employee I talked with, he was nice but he even couldn't speak fluent Mandarin. The purpose of a language in the main degree is to communicate and if they do want to be understood better by the others. It is necessary to practice their spoken Mandarin." (T09 - M)

"They need more permanent tourist guides who are more responsible with their jobs. Due to my observation, I am not quite sure all the employees were well-educated and got professional training. If they would like to serve the tourists much better, it is crucial to have a specific training." (T21 - M)

Clearly, from the perspective of tourists, the service employees were not professional and well-trained. Some tourist guides did not have a certified capacity, especially those who were temporary guides or part-time guides. This made it difficult for them to fulfil the tourists' needs.

- *Internal Perspective*

Among the interviewees, one of them was working as a part-time tourist guide in Jokhang Temple. He responded from the internal perspective about the quality of service employees in general. He admitted that there was a lack of trained manpower in the field of religious tourism, especially in Jokhang Temple.

"Compared with the Potala Palace which is better known as a tourist attraction, most of the religious activities and dharma assemblies are held here. In others words, the government puts more attention to manage the tourism industry in the Potala Palace. That is why some employees here don't come up to expectations. The composition of guides here is complicated. Some of them are with the certificates, a number of them, like me, is doing the

voluntary job, others are for the extra gains. The training and regulations are utterly in need. However, obviously, it cannot be controlled by the temple." (T09 - M).

Consequently, what cannot be derived is that there are several issues needed to be dealt with in the area of service employees. Respondents complained about the attitudes and language barriers, especially the spotty quality of the tourist guides. In other words, a targeted and intensive training was desired.

The results show that visitor satisfaction of the temple environment and atmosphere is high, while the level of satisfaction related to professional management and service is comparatively lower. The Jokhang temple is perceived to have a sacred and solemn atmosphere that impressed the religious tourists' perceptions. Professional temple management then becomes a challenge. A professional temple leadership can try to boith provide religious activities and to build a relationship of trust between temple and tourists. Positive and clear explanations in tourist guides can allow visitors to better understand the local culture. At the same time, good accommodation will give visitors a better impression of the temple and convenient transportation will attract more people to visit.

Developing religious tourism becomes an issue, high satisfaction levels may lead to higher recommendation from tourists; therefore, improving relevant facilities of the temple could attract more visitors and more recommendations. Whether the motivation of tourism is strong or not and the satisfaction is high or not will determine whether the visitors are willing to spend more money and time, to again or not. After a visit, if the tourists' satisfaction is higher they may think positively about their religious holiday experience. Moreover, they will share their travel experiences with others and recommend Tibetan religious culture to others.

4.1.5. Experiences Reported by Tourists to Jokhang Temple

Based on the shared views from volunteers who participated in the study, this research identified five frequent factors for the reported experiences in Jokhang Temple. The five experience factors were named discovering new things, relaxing and finding peace, engaging mentally, interacting and belonging and connecting spiritually and emotionally. From the considerable number of responses to the experience in Jokhang Temple, it became clear that they were usually delighted by experiencing something new and exciting or something out of ordinary.

"Everything here is unique for me. It is quite bizarre, no offence, it is a positive bizarre. I think this trip is worthwhile." (T10 - F)

"The purpose of this travel is to find something new, something that is far away from our daily routes. I am sure that the aim has been achieved." (T26 - M)

It is noteworthy that all the respondents were aware that they felt a sense of rest and relaxation which they haven't been through for quite a long time. A long-needed rejuvenation and relaxation seemed to satisfy their spiritual needs; Jokhang Temple becomes a heaven for them to clear the exhaustion of body and mind, to let the heart in the short period experience relief. Otherwise, some respondents expressed that they engaged in some activities mentally, especially in the cognitive or learning experiences. The high-quality interpretations can not only feed their curiosity but also enable them to acquire more knowledge.

"I was fully absorbed and fascinated by the guided tour and those stories were so attractive. It was really satisfying." (T02 - M)

It is worth noting that in the interviews, the participants gave a new factor of experience other than the author assumed. They also described that during the trip, they can feel a sense of interaction and belonging. In other words, they experienced social interaction and built relationships as part of their mental or spiritual needs.

"I considered this trip as a non-traditional team building which can help us to promote trust, increase the sense of belonging and unite us as a team. We can calm down and get to know each other much better." (T13 - F)

"It's my honour to begin classes with revered lecturers. When I am here, I feel as cosy as at home. Frankly, maybe much cosier. Jokhang Temple provides a forum for me to meet like-minded people." (T08 - M)

Yet it is important to note that not all the respondents consciously gained the same experiences. Compared with the tourists without religious belief, those who were ashram tourists that presented an extra factor is that they obtained a deep spiritual experience of connecting with the Buddha when they were in the Jokhang temple. The God-given spiritual and emotional connection was exactly what they searched for and pursued.
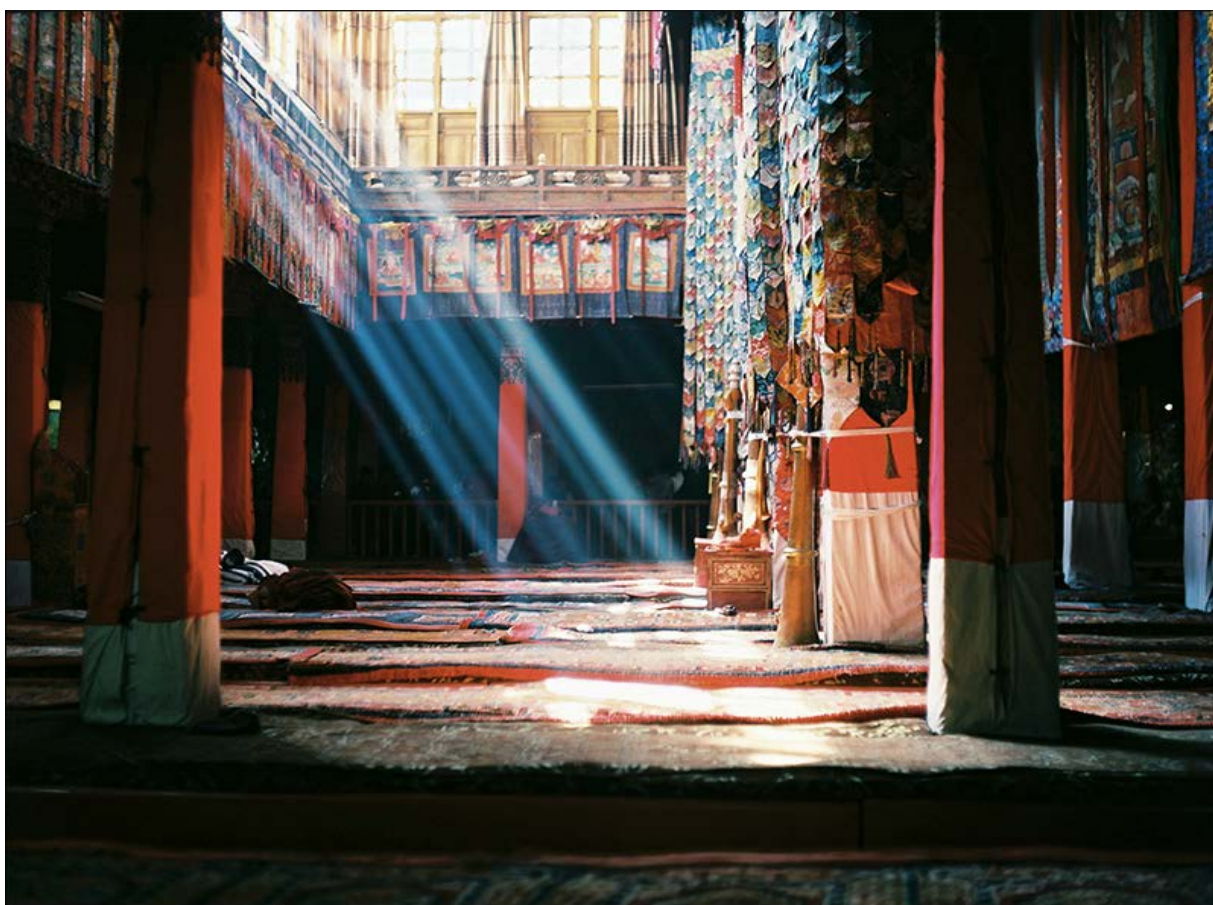
According to the reported experiences, most interviews indicated a fulfilment of individual needs such as experiencing something new and gaining more knowledge as well as understanding things more deeply. Otherwise, they also restored their physical and emotional energy and "spoil" themselves with a fantastic break from the stress of life during the trip in Jokhang Temple. In addition, the social connections with associates and companions were also improved or strengthened. From the perspective of ashram tourists, they improved the cogitative ability about his or her position in the cosmos and to achieve an unplaced sense of identity.

Certainly, there are several negative experiences reported by tourists to the Jokhang Temple. It is noteworthy that all the respondents attribute those not satisfying experiences to one word "*over commercialism*".

"*It is overly commodified. Some Tibetans treat kowtow as performance. When you are watching, they will ask you for money.*" (T22 - F)

"*Some Tibetans in those stores are so stuck-up, if you just walk around but don't buy anything, they will curse in Tibetan. And the beggars are everywhere, most of them are children. If I don't give them something, I feel bad. But sometimes, I feel I am robbed.*" (T26 - M)

The issues mentioned here are common problems happening in the tourism industry. It is necessary to face them rather than ignoring them. Although one way of learning how to use properly a thing is through its misuse, administrators should deal with the issue of becoming overly commodified. By doing this, the tourists are able to obtain high-level experience and then their satisfaction can be improved.

4.2 The Temple and The Tourist Business

In an interview with one of the officers in the Tourism Administration, he remarked that:

"*Lhasa welcome 11.79 million tourists in 2015, generating 15.49 billion Yuan in tourism revenue. The exact data for 2016 is still being calculated, however, the number of tourists surely increased. Of course, we have to admit that the booming tourism has made contributions to development of Tibet recent years. Meanwhile, I speculate that we all agree with that for Han tourists, the experience of visiting Tibet provides a valuable cultural exchange that promotes goodwill between China's different ethnic groups.*"

But he also pointed out that:

"*Every coin has two sides. Revenues brought by the tourism industry have dumped into Tibet. At the same time, it has also brought several side-effects to Tibet such as the cultural assimilation. We should pay attention to keep the cultural and religious integrity as well as stimulating tourism simultaneously. It is important for the visitors to respect the customs and traditions, for example, they should cover their bodies as properly when they enter in the temple.*"

An interview with the Guru, a leading religious man in Jokhang Temple also gave his view about the tourists' behaviours in the holy site:

"*Our culture is unique, and an invasion of different cultures will destroy it. Moreover, with a dramatically growth of tourists pouring into Jokhang Temple, even the religious practices are changed. It is time to implement several measures to protect the fragile culture. At least, tourists should be notified about the Tibetan Buddhist customs and taboos before their departure such as dressing in appropriate clothes to the temple and do not to disturb the lamas who are in the lectures. Additionally, the visitors also need to standardise the manners such as maintaining the cleanliness in the temple and do not to take photos before getting the permission.*"

Besides the way visitors behave in Jokhang temple, the officer also mentioned the way Tibetan treat visitors. He pointed out that:

"*The respect is bilateral. Until now, some Tibetans have looked at the tourists as aliens. Undoubtedly, it is rude and it reminds us about the importance of educating students in the school and local communities. Meanwhile, some Tibetans have skinned travellers such as selling counterfeits and forced transaction. Otherwise, some of them even present themselves to be beggars to cheat the tourists. To be fair, these misconducts somehow are winked and shielded by the tourists. Take an example of children beggars, an increasing number of them has gathered in the square of Jokhang Temple which has resulted from the donations of the tourists. They have tasted the sweetness of getting things from nothing. Of course, I am not blaming the tourists, I just mean that the management of Jokhang Temple couldn't do without the cooperation of tourists. Most importantly, the education to the community is needed for the purpose of maintaining the tourist satisfaction to the temple. At this point, we still have a long way to go.*"

In spite of such critical opinions, the tourist officer was confident about the development of Jokhang Temple's religious tourism. He asserted:

"*Tourism profits in Lhasa will double to 30 billion yuan by 2020 over the next five years. The future of religious tourism is bright.*"

The officer remarked that the promoting and marketing of religious tourism in Jokhang Temple is extremely vital. He said that it is necessary to connect the religious tourism with heritage and cultural tourism. He further explained that:

"*It is well acknowledged that religious heritage can be considered as a tool of promotion and coexistence. Jokhang Temple is not only a religious site but also a carrier of Tibetan Culture - a bridge connecting the past and heritage to the present - which can light the present and future as well. It is vital to keep in memory the history of and the religious heritage that is*

present at Jokhang Temple. To treat Jokhang temple as a religious and cultural heritage can provide more opportunities and strategies in tourism marketing."

The Guru also expressed similar opinions:

"*If it is done with a well-thought decision it is fine. It can be a positive proposal. It is a good idea to understand our culture as well as religion and how our value systems are created. In the other words, maybe it is a feasible way to protect the rights and interests of our culture and religion.*"

The tourist officer and the Guru here expressed similar opinions, that connection of religious tourism and cultural heritage tourism can have a positive effect on the tourism development in Jokhang Temple and also can get the locals and tourists closer together.

Otherwise, the officer in the Tourism administration also expressed a desire to enhance the experiences and satisfaction of tourists to Jokhang Temple. The tourists are the best promoter because they bring other tourists. He admitted that:

"The *quality of services in Jokhang Temple for guides need to be enhanced, particularly the local guides on the site. Most of the tour guides are Tibetans, several decades ago, the educational level here was utterly lower than the average level in China. The development of tourism is so fast and the training is hard to catch up with it; now, even it is getting better, we still have a long journey to go through. All in all, a strict rule about regulating the capacity of tour guides and all employees, in general, should be enacted as soon as possible.*"

The officer also revealed some plans for facilities in the area outside of Jokhang Temple. He claimed that:

"Owing *to the location of Jokhang Temple, we don't have any plans for adding more infrastructures, services e.g. restaurants, accommodations and souvenir shops are sufficient. We also have received the complaint about the lack of toilets on the site, however, Jokhang Temple is a heritage in the list of UNESCO which means except the repair work, any other*

works are not allowed on the site. We plan to provide the series of facilities just out of the

temple."

The Guru in Jokhang Temple also pointed out that:

"The *accommodations in the temple are provided to the Tibetan Buddhists and those people who come here for classes, likewise the food too. Because of the location, it is convenient to get lodging and food outside the temple. There is no reason to build facilities such as accommodations and restaurants in the temple. Meanwhile, that kind of facilities can not only disturb the daily life of lamas but also don't benefit the protection of the temple.*"

In the interview with the officer, he mentioned that the tourism of Jokhang Temple yields little benefit to the local population. He expressed that:

"I *couldn't say there are no economic benefits to the local community but I wouldn't say it has a significant effect on the local community. Stores near Jokhang Temple benefit to some*

extent, but others are still as they were. If things go on like this, the local stability will be affected. It is absolutely necessary to get the whole local community involved in the tourism industry and make sure the tourism to Jokhang temple can be beneficial to the locals as it could be."

The officer was also clearly against opening the whole temple to the public; it is necessary to keep the authenticity of the site and they are devoted to preventing commercialising Jokhang Temple. Mckercher & du Cros (2002) indicated that trivialization of a heritage religious site can be resulted from any inadequate activities from tourists (e.g. irrespective actions to the local culture) and authorities (e.g. commercial development). It is easy for a heritage site to lose its importance and authenticity if it is commercialised and changed for easy tourist consumption, such as the over commercialism at another siy\te in China, Shaolin Temple noted by on interviewee. This problem also noted by the tourist officer who added that:

 "With *an increasing number of tourists pouring into Lhasa, it is time to ask a question: have we done enough preparation? Jokhang temple is not a disposable product and we should maintain it as it as and protect and deliver it to the next generation, this is the definition of sustainable tourism. Of course, we are running Jokhang Temple for some commercial purposes but it doesn't mean that the appreciation of a unique culture has to be turned to exploitation. Meanwhile, the restriction of visiting places can not only keep the distance and draw a line between the tourists and lamas as well as the religious and the commercial but also can be a marketing strategy. The curiosity is the primary productive force in the tourism industry.*"

The Guru in Jokhang Temple expressed similar opinions:

"It *is absolutely necessary for the related department to balance the conflicts between the tourists and locals; the lamas and the tourists. Jokhang Temple cannot be sold as a commodity or article. It is a symbol of Tibetan culture and Buddhist culture; meanwhile, it*

is definitely improper to sell such a religious and cultural heritage as a commodity. The tourism should serve the culture not the opposite. Meanwhile, the curiosity of human beings can never be satisfied and it is not our duty to meet this kind of need. At no time and under no circumstances; the temple first should be a place for holy pilgrimage; then, it is an attraction for the tourists."

In conclusion and according to the officer in the Tourism Administration and the Guru in Jokhang Temple, both were aware of the religious and cultural importance of Jokhang Temple and its significance for Lhasa tourism. Although they were sure that Jokhang Temple can bring a lot of economic benefits, they were still unwilling to commoditize it for monetary gain.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSTION

Jokhang Temple, also known as "House of the Lord" locating in Lhasa (provincial capital of Tibet), is the most sacred site in Tibetan Buddhism, attracting thousands of pilgrims and curious tourists annually. The Great Prayer Festival is hosted in the temple every year and all ceremonies of initiation for the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lamas (China Highlights, 2015).

Hence, Buddhist tourists take it as an honour to pay a visit to this holy site. Except being considered as a religious site, Jokhang Temple also has been added into the in the list of World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 2000 (Buddhist Tourism, 2007).

According to Tibetan Buddhists, Jokhang Temple is one of the "dreamlands". Pilgrims are from every corner of Tibet, normally on feet and often confessing along the way; meanwhile, they are kowtowing in silence in order to show their respects to Buddha which they normally don not chat until the end of the day. Some the pilgrims kowtow from their hometown (sometimes times can be hundreds miles away) to the gate of the temple. In the square in front of Jokhang Temple, there is no shortage of prostrations all year around. The last ritual before entering the temple is to circumambulate the temple on the Barkhor, a holy line that many stores selling ritual items and jewellery as well as amenities (e.g. accommodations and dining facilities) are situating at.

Today, Chinese occupies the main part of tourists in Tibet and the number is in a dramatically increasing. According to figures, only in the first quarter of 2013, the visitor in Tibet reached to 3.43 million which was an increase of approximately 25% compared with 2012. The revenue

was estimated to be 1.8 billion RMB (Zhi, 2013). It is urgent for the authorities to pay attention on the incredible number of tourists visiting Tibet, particularly the given concentrated pressure in the peak season. What cannot be deniable that such a high level of passion can make a positive effect on Tibet, for instance, providing the opportunities of employment and investment, improving the infrastructure constructions and attracting others to pay attention to unique Tibet culture. Yet, there are a number of side effects which has been brought by the booming tourism industry such as over-commercialism and crowding at Jokhang Temple. Consequently, it is necessary to figure out a feasible and effective plan about the management of religious tourism in Jokhang Temple.

Past religious tourism and authenticity studies have mainly focused on quantitative methods through focus groups and questionnaires. Methodologically, this study adopts qualitative methods to study the effects of perceived authenticity on tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. Based on the in-depth interviews, the qualitative approach appears to enable a reprentative comparative analysis of in what ways a visit to the religious site affects tourists' experiences of satisfaction, loyalty and authenticity. This exploratory study addresses one gap in knowledge about the prospects and challenges of religious tourism at religious sites, the interchange between the experiences of tourists and the level of the temple setting's adaption. Various solutions can be envisioned about how to meet the expectations of tourists without disturbing the temple as a religious site, also involving the relationship between the tourists' satisfaction, loyalty and perceived authenticity at the religious site.

Based on the face-to-face interviews with 26 participants, this study identifies tourist motivations in religious tourism as diverse, however, they can be categorized into some main themes such as: interpersonal relationship, leisure, religious atmosphere and cultural

experiences. The activities chosen to participate in by the tourists can be separated into two essential themes: exploratory activities and worship activities. Additionally, several visitors also joined in observing others worship and shopping activities. The findings on tourist satisfaction and loyalty indicate that the overall infrastructure, safety and security, transportation, accommodation and other services related to tourism are on a satisfactory level; moreover, tourists who came to the temple had an overall good experience and would like to spread a positive message. Parts of the analysis was about tourist experiences and their implications for tourism industry practitioners.

The conducted interviews demonstrated that the motivations of tourists to Jokhang Temple are similar with those indicated in other religious sites, particularly in China. Specifically, such sites attract not only pilgrims buy also others interested in heritage, culture, history, architecture and general sightseeing (Wong *et al*., 2013).

Most Chinese do not have a professed religion. The main motivations of the non-religion tourists are that Jokhang Temple is a good place to experience the unique culture and relax. For the ashram tourists, the main motivations are top-standard lectures and the temple is effective for self-exploration. Therefore, the temple accommodates different kinds of motivation by providing various activities that in turn may help to build visitor satisfaction and loyalty.

The general population of participants in this study indicated a lack knowledge about Tibetan culture and Tibetan Buddhism. For this reason, they appreciated the necessity to have a comprehensive interpretive centre that provides storytelling for tourists. Moreover, a multi-media show also can be considered as one part of a tourist management program in order to enhance the sense of familiarity and improve the tourist experience. An interpretive centre can

be a useful tool to detain, inform and entertain visitors in order to reduce wider environmental impacts (Weaver, 2005; Ezebilo & Mattsson, 2010). Hence, the tourism operators should combine the marketing needs with the most proper destination management strategy that can facilitate environmental sustainability.

To summarize the other implications for destination management, it is feasible to connect religious tourism with cultural heritage tourism. To some extent it is possible to combine religious activities and tourism. However, what cannot be neglected is that the management of Jokhang Temple needs to be extremely sensitive and an effective visitor management system is indispensable. A framework of mutual respect sustains such tourism development. Tourists will be searching for authentic culture in their behaviour (MacCannell, 1999). Thus one paradox, which between the demand of tourists and tourists' search for authenticity, has come into being. However, the tourism development in Jokhang Temple is faced with combining the construction of the ecological environment, representing authentic Tibetan Buddhist culture properly and choosing a development model according to local conditions. In other words, there is no need to open "every inch" of place in Jokhang Temple to the public. It is absolutely necessary to set a limitation on tourists: paradoxically, this must be weighed against a marketing strategy to attract tourists. According to the impressions of interviewees, one of the key words about Tibet is mystery; hence, there is a challenge to develop religious tourism without destroying the perceived authenticity.

Namely, drawing a clear line between the mundane and holy can meet tourist expectations and enhance their perceived authenticity as well. Definitely, tourism can make a great contribution to promoting communication and understanding between cultures. At its worst, it is easy for tourism to ruin a culture. Hence, it is necessary to avoid the latter to become a common practice

in Jokhang Temple. As mentioned before, pilgrims in Jokhang Temple find themselves on occasion squeezed out. Consequently, the tourism developers should make a well-thought decision about the further development in Jokhang Temple about how to enhance the tourist experiences in cases where traditional pilgrimage practices will not be interrupted. Additionally, the complaint from the tourists about the sheer pressure of numbers affects the experiences as was mentioned in the interview with an officer. Several management strategies have been developed to address this issue such as separated entrances and well-marked routes.

Otherwise, the tourism operators may focus on the service quality, for instance, the cleanliness of the temple, services provided by tour guides and employees in general. The trainings can not only improve the service skills of the employees but also are able to increase the level of tourist satisfaction during trips.

Most of the interviewees expressed that they were satisfied with the tour in Jokhang temple which means the temple is an attractive place for tourism. The landscape attractiveness, the contemplative Buddhist atmosphere, accommodation, accessibility and service as well as comprehensive lectures and rituals help build high satisfaction. High satisfaction has a significant positive effect on visitor loyalty. Most of the participants indicated that they would like to revisit Jokhang Temple and recommend it to others.

From the study and the collected material, it has become evident that a variety of maintenance, reconstructions and repairs have been done in Jokhang Temple. There is still room for improvement of the management of religious tourism in Jokhang Temple. Some recommendations based on the present research can be tentatively suggested for religious tourism in the temple:

- ***Specialised Education***: individuals who aim to work in the tourism industry have to attend a specialised training course in order to obtain the professional and comprehensive knowledge about the Jokhang Temple and the context of the economy, society and culture in Tibet.

- ***Upgrading Infrastructure:*** with the purpose of facilitating the trip of the travellers, it is necessary to provide and develop the tourism services and facilities. For example, the streetlights along the road to Lhasa have to bring safety to the self-driving travellers.

- ***Implement Principles of Cultural Resource Management:*** these principles can provide standards and guidelines to the tourism promoters and planners to develop Jokhang Temple properly. Jokhang Temple is not only a Buddhist resort but also a vital carrier of the Tibetan Culture and history. It is crucial for the tourism developers to make plans for preserving and restoring the heritage and also to protect the property of the site intact in order to keep the harmony with the environment.

- ***Through sustainable development*** it can be possible to have a positive influence on the employment and standard of living of the local communities.

Last but not least and according to most of the interviewees there was concern about a potential collision between what is holy and secular. Both the tourism officer and the Guru were interested in managing conflicts and working out strategies which not only can protect the unique culture of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism but also can satisfy the tourists' various needs. In summary, Jokhang Temple is a very important tourist attraction in Tibet. It is popular in Tibet as well as across the border, in China and abroad. Managing the temple in a responsible manner seems prerequisite for religious tourism to develop in a sustainable manner.

This study has some limitations. First, it focuses on religious tourism in Jokhang Temple which is at the centre of Tibetan Buddhism. Hence, the findings are not generalizable to all types of Buddhism and to religious tourism in other places. Second, most of the participants are mainland Chinese without specific religious references. Further, due to several policies, the sample is mostly focused on a single nationality; however, the target market of tourism should be international tourists. Third, it is not sufficient to assess and evaluate tourists' satisfaction and loyalty by doing just one qualitative research. Therefore, when it comes to the future research, it is better to use a questionnaire that is based on a quantitative method to test and verify the study findings, but this also opens future opportunities for researchers interested in the topic of religious tourism who many wish to use this study for comparative purposes.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1 Interview Questions List

Life History

1. Tell me about yourself, Name, Age, Education, and Occupation

2. Why did you choose to visit Johkang Temple?

Description of Experience

1. How could you describe your experience with the following service?

  ➢ Accessibility

  ➢ Guiding and Interpretations

  ➢ Shopping for Souvenirs

  ➢ Service employees in general

  ➢ Others

2. In your opinion, how important are services in Johkang Temple experience?

3. What are the important things in each of these services?

4. What did you learn from the trip?

Reflection and Experience

1. Did you expectation match with reality?

2. How satisfied were you with the perceived service?

3. Any incident that happened to you or to someone you know in terms of services that affect the experience in Johkang Temple?

4. In Johkang Temple what is thing that needs an urgent improvement for better serving in your opinions?

5. Would you like to recommend this place to visit to your friends and relatives? Why and Why not?

Specific Questions (depends on the interviewers)

1. What do you think about temple being open to everybody?

  ➢ Benefits

  ➢ Disadvantages

  ➢ How can the temple and tourism benefit from each other?

2. Do you think tourists see only the 'front stage'?

  ➢ How can cultural differences be addressed/ paid attention to in the presentation of the temple to tourists? (Historical, Tibetan Art, Others)

3. How can authenticity be presented at Johkang Temple?

  ➢ What can be shown to tourists?

Appendix 2 Traffic Permit to Tibet