

STUDY REGARDING VISIBILITY OF ALBA COUNTY MAIN TOURISTIC OBJECTIVES

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Abstract

The present study investigates the familiarity of main touristic destinations that are present in Alba County from the tourist's point of view. In order to respond to the purpose of the paper the authors formulated a series of objectives. With the help of the first objective, the authors identified if the respondents visited Alba County as tourists; the second objective investigated regards the familiarity of the main objectives included in the study from the point of view of the respondents and the third objective studies the reasons that determine the tourists to return to visit the same objective multiple times.

Keywords: visibility, touristic, objectives, familiarity, motives

JEL Classification: M31; Z32;

1. Introduction

Alba County, located in Transilvania, Romania has an important number of touristic attractions that contribute to it being on the touristic map with a large number of touristic attractions. For the present study the authors choose to investigate the following touristic objectives: "Alba Carolina Citadel", "Red Ravine", "Scarisoara Glacier Cave", "Cathedral of the Nation's Coronation", "Roman Catholic Cathedral", "Museum and Union Hall", "Princely Palace", "Roman Galleries of Rosia Montana", "Snail Hill", "Cathedral of the Holy Trinity from Blaj".

The research was conducted with the help of a questionnaire distributed online. The first part of the questionnaire was designed to obtain the results for the studied theme and the second part of the questionnaire gathered socio-demographic data about the respondents. The obtained results are presented in the third section of the paper.

2. Theoretical insights

The potential analytical importance of familiarity has been somewhat overlooked in tourism. Despite its potential importance to marketing, surprisingly little is known about its role in relationship building (Prentice, 2004).

Destination familiarity is thought to critically influence tourists' decision-making processes. Yet the role of familiarity in shaping tourists' and residents' image of, and loyalty to, a destination remains uncertain (Casali, Gian Luca & Liu, Yulin & Presenza, Angelo & Moyle, Char-Lee. (2020).

Cohen (1972) defined familiarity as preference for the tourist bubble. That is, essentially as comfort. Familiarity is the basis for comprehending how people perceive a destination (Soliman, 2021) since it can potentially impact travel decisions and visitors feel more secure in familiar surroundings (Chi et al. 2020).

Motivation is a theoretical concept utilized to clarify human behaviour. The motivation provides the motive for the human beings to react and fulfil their needs. Motivation can also be

defined as one's route lead to behaviour, or to the construct that trigger someone to desire to replicate behaviour and vice – versa. Motivation is defined as the process to make a start, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviours. Basically, it leads individuals to take action to achieve a goal or to fulfil a need or expectation. (Gopalan, Abu Bakar, Zulkifli, Alwi (2017).

A number of tourism based motivation specialists have specified what is required of theory in this area. The requirements include a treatment of the multi-motive drivers of tourist behaviour, an ability to consider the dynamic and changing nature of an individual’s motivation across their tourism experiences and the need for theories and conceptual systems to function as integrative and predictive but also empirically accessible foundations for research (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Hsu & Huang, 2008; Pearce, 1992, 2005).

Travel motives are the starting points of the decision making process (Crompton and McKay, 1997).

3. Results and discussions

From the first question of the questionnaire, we wanted to know if our respondents visited Alba County as tourists. The results obtained are presented in figure no.1.

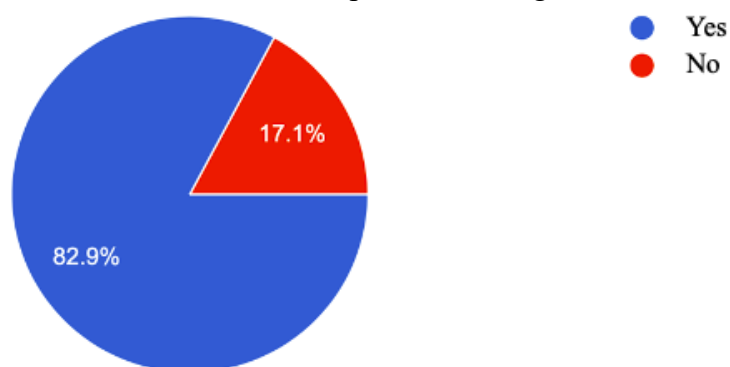


Figure no.1 Confirmation for visiting Alba County

Source: authors computation

From the results presented in figure no 1., we can observe that 82.9% from the total number of respondents visited Alba County as tourists. This result is important for our investigation because it can mean that our respondents are familiar or very familiar with the touristic attractions from Alba County and that the County is attractive as a touristic destination.

The following question investigated the familiarity of our respondents with each touristic objective taken into

analysis.

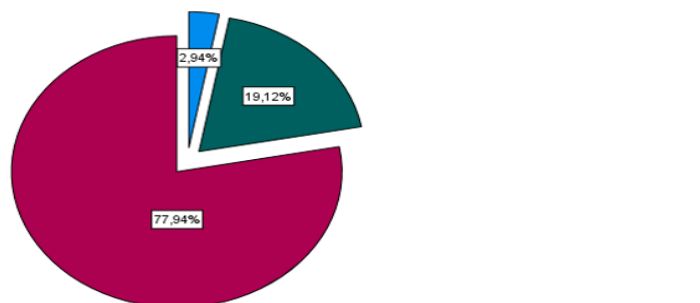


Figure no.2. Familiarity with "Alba Carolina Citadel"

Source: authors computation

Alba Carolina Citadel is the most important touristic objective from Alba County, confirmed by the results obtained where we can see that 97,06% from the total number of respondents are very familiar with this touristic destination. We recommend that, in order to maintain this touristic objective on the map of the tourists, a continuous promotion on social media and on specialized website should be made and attractive events should be developed in order to attract an increasingly number of tourists.

The second touristic objective taken into analysis is "Red Ravine". The results obtained are presented in figure 3.

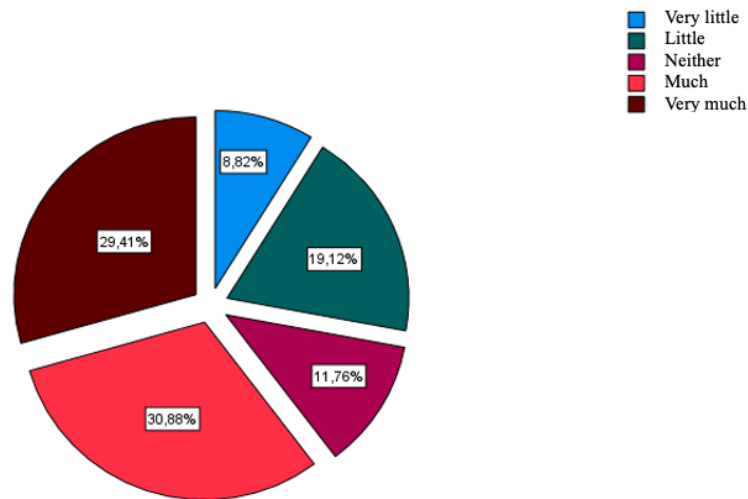


Figure no.3. Familiarity with "Red Ravine "

Source: authors computation

Regarding Red Ravine we can observe that the answerers are very divided in all the five dimensions of the scale. 27,94% from the total number of respondents say that they are not familiar with these touristic destinations, 11,76% don't have an opinion about this touristic destination while 60,29% are familiar with this destination.

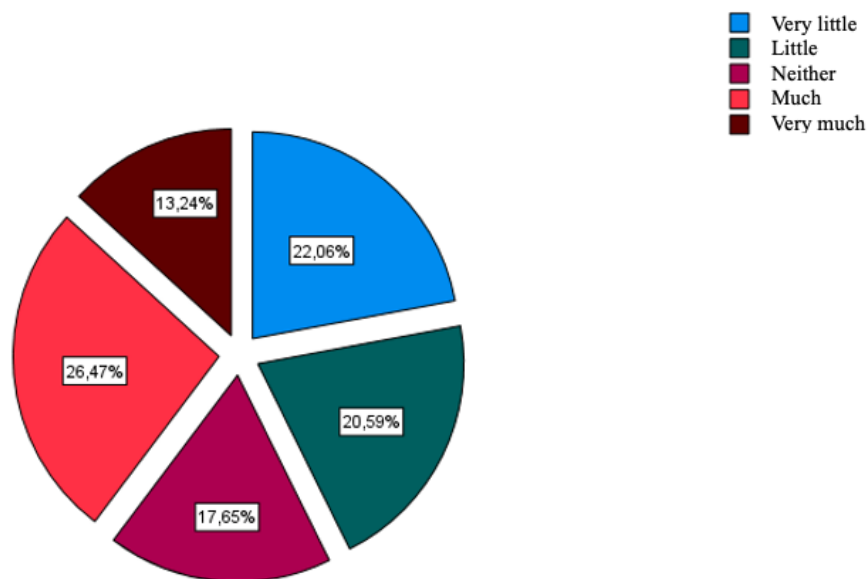


Figure no.4. "Scarisoara Glacier Cave

Source: authors computation

Regarding Scarisoara Glacier Cave we can observe that 42,65% from the total number of respondents cannot form an image about this touristic objective and 39,71% have a formed image about this touristic objective. In order to increase the familiarity among the tourists we suggest that the local authorities increase their involveness in promoting Scarisoara Glacier Cave.

The next touristic objective taken into analysis was "Cathedral of the Nation's Coronation".

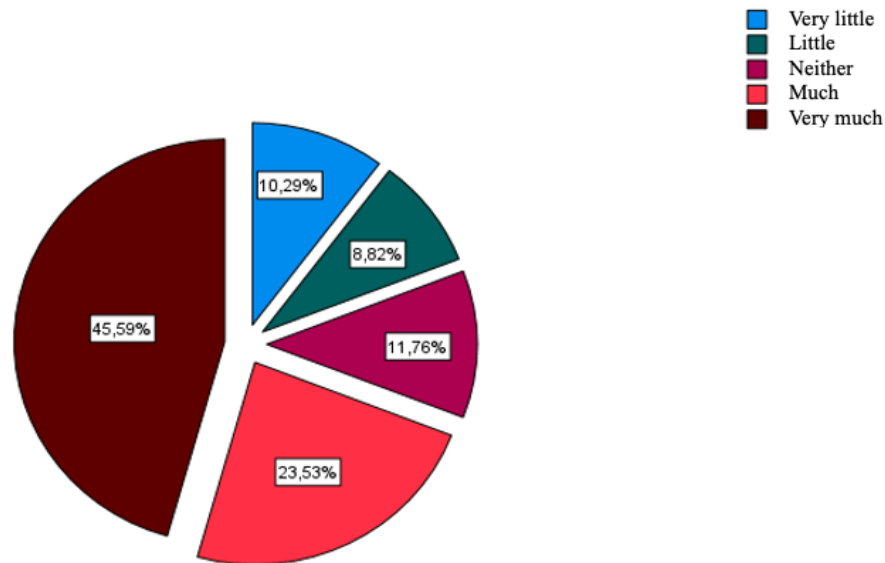


Figure no.5. "Cathedral of the Nation's Coronation"

Source: authors computation

Because this touristic objective is in the middle of Alba Citadel, it's one of the most famous among tourists, due to its unique architecture and size. This fact is also confirmed by the obtained results, presented in figure no 5, where we can observe that for 45,59% from the total number of the respondents consider that this touristic objective is very familiar and for 23,35% of the respondents the objective is just familiar.

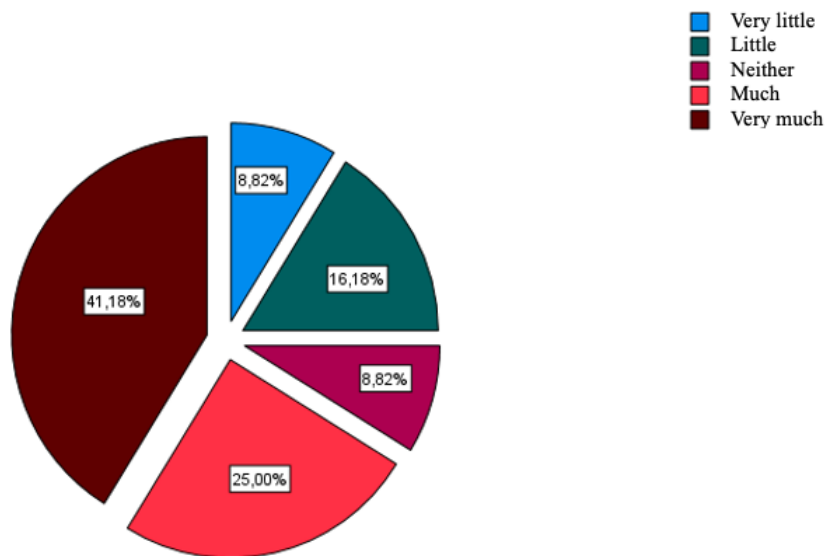


Figure no.6. "Roman Catholic Cathedral"

Source: authors computation

Located next to Cathedral of the Nation's Coronation, Roman Catholic Cathedral amazes tourists by its unique architecture and legends, fact confirmed by the research results (67,65% are familiar and very familiar with this touristic objective).

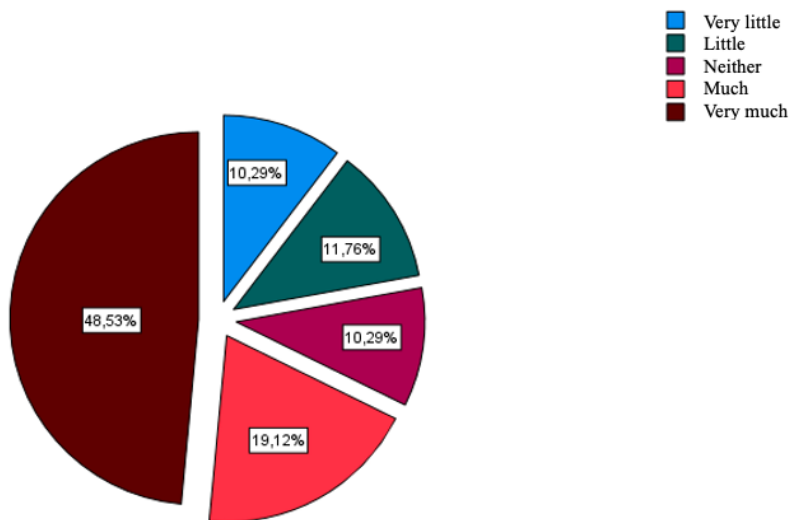


Figure no.7. "Museum and Union Hall"
Source: authors computation

Museum and Union Hall were the next touristic objectives taken into the analysis. From the obtained results, 41,18% are very familiar with these touristic objectives and 25% are familiar. In order to maintain the visibility among tourists we propose that these objectives create and held competitions and events on different themes that are related with the history of Alba County.

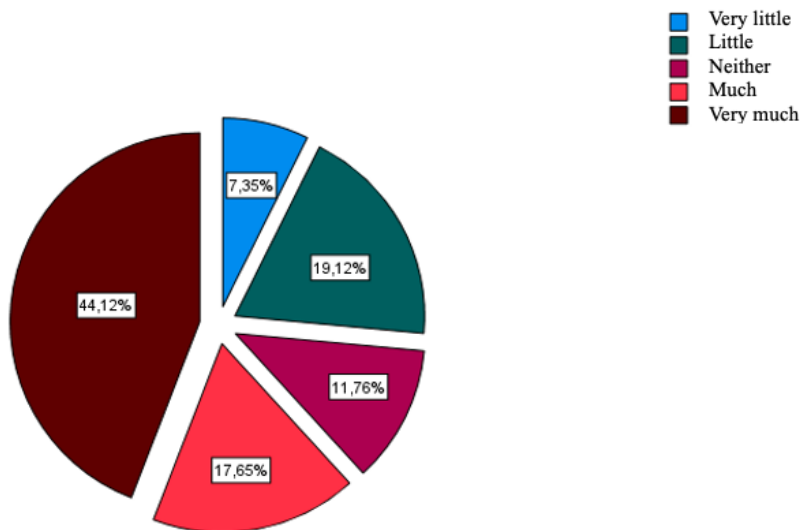


Figure no.8.

"Princely Palace"

Source: authors computation

Princely Palace is also located in Alba Iulia Citadel and its one of the newest touristic attractions form Alba Iulia due to its recent reopeing after renovation. Although it was open recently for tourists it quickly gained place in the tourists image becoming ,along other touristic objectives, an important one. This fact is sustained by the results obtained in figure no 8.,where it can observed that 44,21% are familiar with this touristic objective.

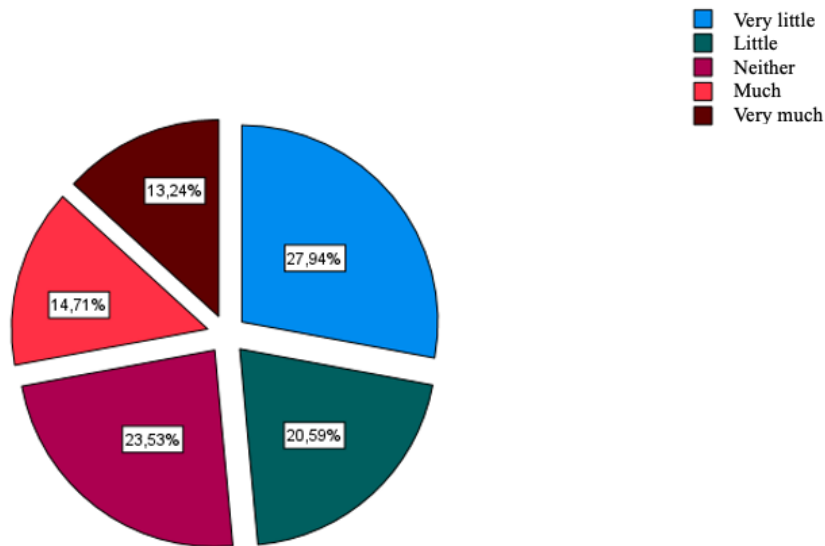


Figure no.9. "Roman Galleries of Rosia Montana"

Source: authors computation

The next touristic objective chosen was the Roman Galleries of Rosia Montana. Because its poor promotion and geographical localisation (accessibility road) this touristic objective is vaguely familiar among the respondents (48,53%). The authors encourage local authorities to develop specific activities (such as events, promotional campaigns) to increase the visibility of Roman Galleries of Rosia Montana.

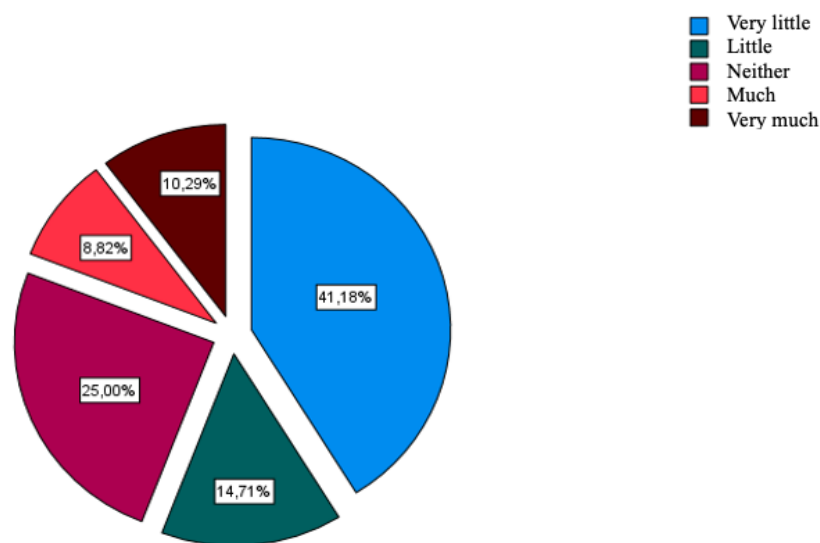


Figure no.10. "Snail Hill"

Source: authors computation

Another touristic objective that is very little familiar among tourists it is Snail Hill by 41,18%. This result can be as a consequence of this touristic objective's missing promotional activities and touristic signalistic.

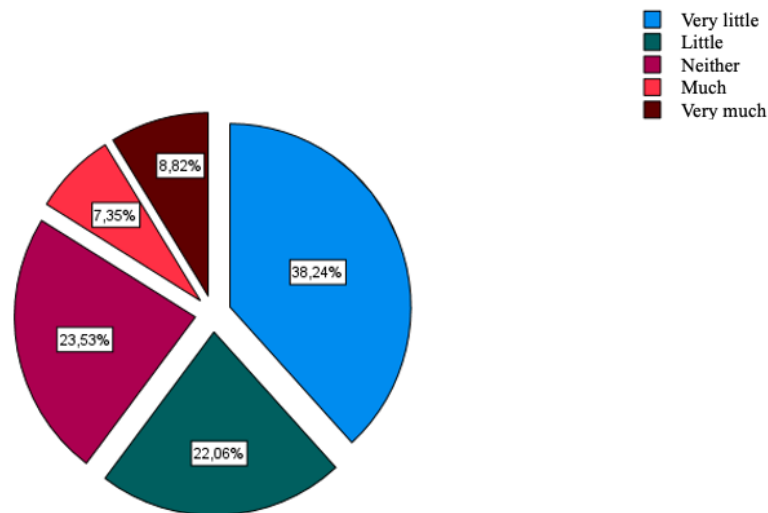


Figure no.10. "Cathedral of the Holy Trinity from Blaj"

Source: authors computation

Although it has an important historical past and an interesting architecture the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity from Blaj City is unfamiliar among tourists (60,3%).

With the help of the next question the authors investigated the motives that determine tourists to return to visit a specific touristic objective.

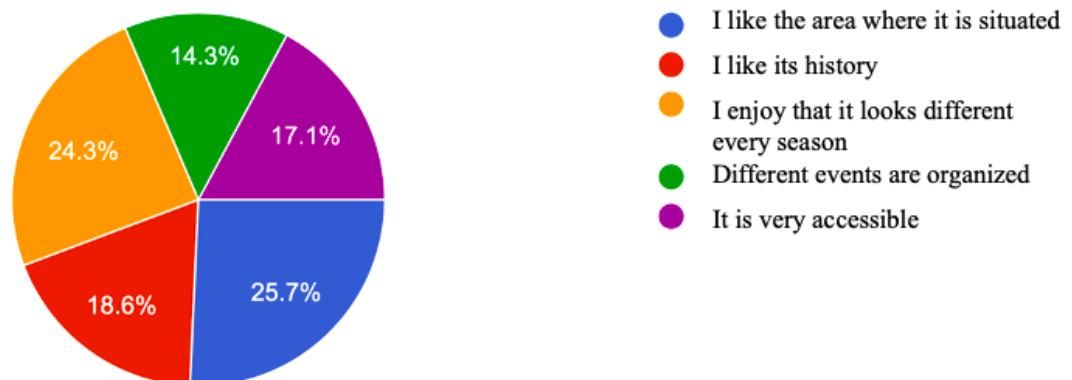


Figure no.11. "Motives for returning to visit a specific tourstic objective"

Source: authors computation

Regarding the motives that determine tourists to return to visit the same touristic more than once, we can observe in figure no.11. that the responses are almost equally divided between all the indicated motives. The first motive considered by our respondents, is the preference regarding the area where the touristic objective is located (25,7%). The second motive is that the objective presents itself differently every season (24,3%), the third motive its related to the history of that objective (18,6%). The fourth motive is the accessibility of the touristic objective (17,1%) and on last place, the organization of different events (14,3%)

The last part of the questionnaire gathered socio-demographic data about the respondents. Regarding the age of the respondents, 64,3% of the respondents are placed in the interval 18-25 years, 21,4% of them are in the 36-45 years old interval. Most of the respondents were women (84, 3%) and the respondents income was between 1500-2000 lei (36,4%) and over 4000 lei (34,8%).

3. Conclusions and limits of research

This study analyzed natural and anthropic touristic objectives from Alba County taking into consideration the influence that familiarity has over their decision to visit and revisit the analyzed objectives. For future studies we intent to increase the number of touristic objectives as well as motivational factors that contribute to the tourist’s decision to return to visit the studied objective.

For future studies, we intend to find out how the familiarity influences tourists’ decision to visit one touristic objective, and whether the residents and visitors differ in terms of their familiarity and intention to visit a place, with familiarity being more likely to influence visitors’ than residents’ intentions. Also, the authors intent to create a model that highlights the push and pull factors that influence the number of visits for a certain touristic objective.

4. References

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