The relationship between quality of governance and foreign tourist numbers

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Abstract

Foreign tourists' visits potentially constitute a valuable contributor to the gross domestic product and foreign currency reserves of the host country. Governments seemingly acknowledge this and often introduce specific programmes to attract foreign tourists. This research proposes that general good governance alone relates to the number of tourists to be expected and that countries with good governance attract larger numbers of tourists than those who display poor governance. A hypothesis was tested where six proxies of good governance were used to predict tourism numbers in 158 countries. The data revealed that four of these proxies predicted tourism numbers, declaring 18.7% of the variance in tourism numbers. This research is important as it shows that tourists are attracted to countries which show high levels of good governance. When programmes to attract tourists are designed, this type of information should be included. These results should, however, be interpreted with caution, as at the time of testing the model, predictions were not particularly accurate for some countries.

Keywords: Tourism, Governance, Rule of Law, Corruption, Accountability

Introduction

The economies of countries such as Mauritius and the Seychelles depend heavily on tourism. In Mauritius 11.3% of the GDP is attributed to foreign tourist visits whilst in the Seychelles this percentage is 21.2% (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2016). Tourism is not only important for small island economies. In France 3.9% of the GDP is attributed to foreign visitors and the number for Germany is 1.7%. For South Africa, this number is 3.0%, whereas in the case of a country such as Brazil it amounts to 3.5% (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2016). Irrespective of the size of the contribution to the GDP, tourism aggregates to large amounts of potential income for governments and is thus of critical importance as an industry in most nations.

Governments are seemingly aware of the importance of tourism (Choi, Lehto and Morrison, 2007) and initiatives to attract tourists are often operationalised through creating tourism ministries or organisations. In Mauritius, for example, the local entity is called the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority. In Seychelles, it is known as the Seychelles Tourism Board. In South Africa the function is performed by the National Department of Tourism and its counterpart in Brazil is Embratur, the Brazilian Tourist Board. The importance of promoting tourism lies in the fact that it is labour intensive, earns foreign revenue and tax income, as well as cultivate infrastructure development (Oh, 2005; Lee and Chang, 2008; Naudé and Saayman, 2005).

In a country such as South Africa active campaigns to attract foreign tourists are sponsored by government comprising 0.5% of the national budget. Brazil, on the other hand, allocates 2.9% of its budget to prioritise travel and tourism. The smaller island economies, such as the Seychelles and Mauritius, are very dependent on tourism, and they allocate a considerable higher portion of their budgets to promoting travel and tourism, namely 22.4% and 16.4% respectively. The developed economies of France and Germany promote tourism with allocations of 3.0% and 2.1% of their national budgets towards that purpose. The aforementioned emphasises governments' eagerness to attract foreign tourists.

Creating ministerial departments and tourism campaigns are capital-intensive and can undoubtedly present a burden to the state and the taxpayer, particularly so in the absence of public trust in the tourist institutions and political support therefore (Nunkoo, Ramkissoon and Gursoy, 2012). Though the importance of traditional marketing initiatives is not denied in this article, it is proposed that if a government goes about doing its day-to-day job well, and provides good governance, tourists will be attracted to the particular destination. It will thus hypothesised that good governance is related to tourism numbers, and that good governance plays a role when tourists decide on visiting a foreign country. Tourist are not attracted to countries with an absence of political stability and when in a state of war (Lepp and Gibson, 2003).

Good governance

Good governance, at national level, can be described as a government that operates through capable, efficient, open, inclusive and accountable institutions (World Bank, 2016a). Aligned with the aforementioned, Bramwell (2011: 459-477) defines good governance as having "good mechanisms for the coordination of collective action". Moscardo (2011: 67), focusing on tourism specifically, states that good governance is typified by processes and institutions where groups of people make effective decisions, including tourism management. Central in all of the aforementioned definitions is the importance of satisfying groups' needs and the formalisation of processes such as the processes by which the authorities are appointed and replaced. This suggests a just world (Furnham, 2003).

Several elements are proposed to form part of good governance at a national level. Andrews (2008) and Leftwich (1993) list elements of good governance which are worth noting here. These include fiscal discipline, decentralisation, proper discernment and response to citizens' needs, composed of politically neutral managers, a liberal-democratic policy, protection of human and civil rights, as well as a competent, non-corrupt, accountable public administration. Mkandawire (2007) includes development that maximises economic growth, sustainable and responsible use of resources, as well as democracy with respect for citizens' rights in his list of elements of good governance. The World Bank (2016a) suggests that good governance relates to the traditions and institutions by which authority is selected and replaced, the capacity to formulate and implement policies, and the respect of citizens - and the state - for institutions that govern interactions among them. Though these lists differ somewhat, good governance seems to equate to the capacity of governments to formulate and implement policies which will benefit the public which they are supposed to serve. This implies that government should be accountable to its citizens and uphold the rule of law.

Investors, and perhaps also tourists, are interested in good governance, as this may affect the benefits they receive from their investments (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2012). To assist investors with the determination of good governance in a specific country the World Bank (2016a) calculates six aggregate indicators (Kaufmann and Kraay, 2016) presented below in Table 1.

Table 1: Governance and measurement indicators

Governance aspect	World Bank Indicator
The process by which those in authority are selected and replaced	Voice and accountability
	Political stability and the absence of violence
The capacity of government to formulate and implement policies	Government effectiveness
	Regulatory quality
The respect of citizens and the state for institutions that govern interactions among them	Rule of law
	Control of corruption

Source: Kaufmann and Kraay (2016)

The scheme presented by Kaufmann and Kraay (2016) is useful in assessing good governance, where countries with higher rankings on these elements display higher levels of good governance.

Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to ascertain whether the quality of governance plays a statistically and practically significant role in the holiday destinations that international tourists frequent. It is, however, acknowledged that the nature of the destination - the attractions associated with the destination - plays an imperative role in country selection. It is therefore not suggested that the matter of governance occupies a commanding role, but it is proposed that it does contribute to the decision-making of potential tourists. More specifically, the hypothesis of this research is that governance, in addition to the attractions associated with a specific country, influences the number of international tourist arrivals and is worthy of investigating as this may be overlooked.

Methodology

Data were collected on the six variables associated with good governance, namely Control of Corruption, Government Effectiveness, Political Stability and Absence of Violence / Terrorism, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law as well as Voice and Accountability. Data were also collected on the Number of Arrivals of International Tourists (NAIT). Only data collected by the World Bank were used in this analysis. It was decided to use World Bank data exclusively as the data are collected by one organisation and the rigour and precision should therefore be similar for both independent as well as dependent variables.

Once the data was collected, the information was analysed to assess the amount of variance in NAIT, which is explained by the governance variables and also the extent to which each element of good governance contributes significantly and uniquely to the declared variance.

Measurement instruments

Data on six independent variables were captured and the definition of each is provided below (Worldbank, 2016b: no pages)

- CC – Control of Corruption – The World Bank defines Control of Corruption as follows: "Control of Corruption captures perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests".
- GE – Government Effectiveness – Government Effectiveness is defined as follows: "Government Effectiveness captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the

quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies".

- PV – Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism – The definition of this variable is: "Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism measures perceptions of the likelihood of political instability and/or politically-motivated violence, including terrorism".
- RQ – Regulatory Quality – According to the World Bank regulatory quality refers to the following: "Regulatory Quality captures perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development".
- RL – Rule of Law – Rule of Law is defined as follows: "Rule of Law captures perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence".
- VA – Voice and Accountability – The World Bank defines this as follows: "Voice and Accountability captures perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media".

Data on each of the above variables are presented in the data bank as a percentile rank, indicating the country's rank among all countries, with 0 corresponding to the lowest rank, and 100 to the highest rank.

The dependent variable was the Number of Arrivals of International Tourists (NAIT). The NAIT concept is defined as follows: "International inbound tourists (overnight visitors) are the number of tourists who travel to a country other than that in which they have their usual residence, but outside their usual environment, for a period not exceeding 12 months and whose main purpose in visiting is other than an activity remunerated from within the country visited" (World Bank, 2016c: no pages). When data on the number of tourists are not available, the number of visitors, which includes tourists, same-day visitors, cruise passengers, and crew members, is presented instead (World Bank, 2016c). Data on the NAIT are presented in the data bank as the actual numbers, per year.

As stated before, World Bank (2016b) Worldwide Governance Indicators and World Bank (2016c) International Tourist Arrivals data were used exclusively as the rigour and precision are considered to be similar for both independent and dependent variables, therefore limiting sampling bias.

Statistical analysis

All statistics were calculated using SPSS software. The Pearson correlation between the variables was calculated and presented first, as to assess for possible multicollinearity among the independent variables. A simple linear regression was then performed to assess the possible influence of good governance variables on foreign incoming tourists' numbers, using the "enter" option in SPSS. The procedure was repeated using the "stepwise" option. The "enter" option allows for the inclusion of all the dependent variables in the model and the "stepwise" procedure includes variables based on the probability-of-F-to-enter ≤ .050 and the probability-of-F-to-remove ≥ .100. In this way, the software adds variables to the model based on the specific variable's ability to contribute to the model, using aforementioned guideline.

All good governance indicators were used in predicting incoming tourists. This analysis answers the question about the extent to which good governance, in general, predicts the

number of incoming tourists, and secondly about the extent to which each of the good governance indicators individually predicts the number of incoming tourists. It also provides answers on the best combination of independent variables predicting NAIT.

Decision strategy

The correlation matrix is presented to describe the data, to gain an intuitive picture of possible multicollinearity among the independent variables, as well as to determine the magnitude of the correlation of the independent variables and NAIT. Statistically significant correlations ($p < .05$) with values of up to .20 would be interpreted as being of small practical significance, correlations between .20 and .50 as being of a medium effect and correlations larger than .05 will be seen as having a large practical effect. With reference to the regression analysis, models will be deemed as statistically significant when the analysis of variance test of the model result in p-values smaller than .05. With reference to the practical significance of the regression coefficient, where R-square represents the per cent variance explained in the dependent variable, a value of .60 or more will be considered very good and a value of .30 as acceptable (Evans, 2013). When it comes to decisions concerning the independent variables making a significant and unique contribution in declaring the variance in tourism numbers, significant t-values for the beta coefficients would be deemed as indicative that the specific element of governance plays an important and independent role in determining the number of tourists who visit a country. Last-mentioned decision is only necessary in the "enter" model, where all independent variables are included. In the "stepwise" model the SPSS software removes these variables automatically. By eliminating variables which does not independently contribute to the model in a unique way the software takes care of the problem of multicollinearity.

Results

The World Bank (2016c) possesses data on all countries, but the data is incomplete in many cases. Data sets for 158 countries were found which include all the independent variables, related to the period 2007 to 2014. This period was used as it yielded the richest amount of data. For clarity's sake: Data on all seven variables, pertaining to the period 2007 to 2014, were available for only 158 countries.

Correlation analysis

In Table 2 the correlation between the independent and the dependent variables is presented. In this table the correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable is presented in bold.

Table 2: Correlation matrix (N = 1 264)

	GE	PV	RL	CC	RQ	VA
GE	1	.680**	.927**	.910**	.899**	.736**
PV	.680**	1	.772**	.771**	.594**	.698**
RL	.927**	.772**	1	.936**	.867**	.786**
CC	.910**	.771**	.936**	1	.816**	.764**
RQ	.899**	.594**	.867**	.816**	1	.729**
VA	.736**	.698**	.786**	.764**	.729**	1
NAIT	**.337****	**.041**[#]	**.286****	**.243****	**.325****	**.178****

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
[#] $p = .141$
Note: GE – Government Efficiency; PV – Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism; RL – Rule of Law; CC – Corruption Control; RQ – Regulatory Quality; VA – Voice and Accountability; NAIT – Number of Arrivals of International Tourists.

From Table 2 it is clear that the correlations between the good governance variables are high, ranging from .594 to .927, with p-values smaller than .001. This suggests the possibility

of multicollinearity. Five of the six good governance variables correlated positively with NAIT. The exception was Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, where the correlation was small.

Regression analysis

The results of a simple linear regression using the "enter" option in SPSS are presented in Table 3i to 3iii. As mentioned earlier this procedure allows for the inclusion of all good governance variables in predicting international incoming tourist numbers, irrespective of multicollinearity.

Table 3i: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.436	.190	.186	10 840 079.600

In the model presented above the predictors of NAIT are VA, PV, RQ, CC, GE and RL. The model explains 18.6% of the variance in NAIT. The ANOVA below provides information on the significance of the model.

Table 3ii: Model significance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.465 e16	6	5.776 e15	49.159	.000
	Residual	1.477 e17	1257	1.175 e14		
	Total	1.823 e17	1263			

The model was significant, with a p-value smaller than .001. The regression coefficients are presented below.

Table 3iii: Regression coefficients

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(C)	-202 851.586	750 234.334		-.270	.787
	CC	-91 725.295	34 725.657	-.212	-2.641	.008
	GE	210 278.678	38 510.336	.468	5.460	.000
	PV	-160 160.434	19 300.039	-.365	-8.298	.000
	RL	147 110.171	41 289.469	.333	3.563	.000
	RQ	12 506.506	27 835.999	.028	.449	.653
	VA	-13 889.892	19 057.342	-.032	-.729	.466

Note: (C) – Constant; GE – Government Efficiency; PV – Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism; RL – Rule of Law; CC – Corruption Control; RQ – Regulatory Quality; VA – Voice and Accountability.

Next the results of the "stepwise" procedure and the optimal models are presented.

Table 4i: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.337	.114	.113	11 316 269.196
2	.424	.180	.178	10 892 304.246
3	.430	.185	.183	10 863 140.986
4	.435	.190	.187,	10 834 120.867

In Model 1 above the predictor of NAIT is GE, in Model 2 it is GE and PV, in Model 3 GE, PV and RL are the predictors and in Model 4 it is PV, RL and CC. Note that VA and RQ were not included in any of the models "proposed" by the SPSS software. The model with one independent variable explained 11.3% of the variance in NAIT, the model with two independent variables explained 17.8% of the variance in NAIT whilst the other two models

were responsible for 18.3 and 18.7 per cent respectively. Model 4 therefore yielded the best results. The ANOVA below provides information on the significance of the different models.

Table 4ii: Model significance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.075 e16	1	2.075 e16	162.092	.000
	Residual	1.616 e17	1262	1.280 e14		
	Total	1.823 e17	1263			
2	Regression	3.275 e17	2	1.637 e16	138.055	.000
	Residual	1.496 e17	1261	1.186 e16		
	Total	1.823 e17	1263			
3	Regression	3.367 e16	3	1.122 e16	95.125	.000
	Residual	1.486 e17	1260	1.180 e14		
	Total	1.823 e17	1263			
4	Regression	3.458 e16	4	8.646 e15	73.666	.000
	Residual	1.477 e17	1259	1.173 e14		
	Total	1.823 e17	1263			

All the models were significant, with p-values smaller than .05. The regression coefficients are presented below, per model.

Table 4iii: Regression coefficients

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(C)	-2 225 130.369	724 734.437		-3.070	.002
	GE	151, 689.021	11 914.444	.337	12.732	.000
2	(C)	-319 115.626	722 865.978		-.441	.659
	GE	258 698.655	15 643.538	.575	16.537	.000
	PV	-153 511.428	15 263.289	-.350	-10.058	.000
3	(C)	-131 127.292	724 074.194		-.181	.856
	GE	184 161.593	30 944.337	.410	5.951	.000
	PV	-179 084.226	17 770.294	-.408	-10.078	.000
	RL	97 785.592	35 058.586	.221	2.789	.005
4	(C)	-243 964.511	723 275.159		-.337	.736
	GE	218 189.480	33 191.476	.485	6.574	.000
	PV	-164 442.315	18 485.905	-.375	-8.896	.000
	RL	146 540.710	39 101.216	.332	3.748	.000
	CC	-95 467.006	34 272.699	-.221	-2.786	.005

Note: (C) – Constant; GE – Government Efficiency; PV – Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism; RL – Rule of Law; CC – Corruption Control.

Model 4 yielded the best results and it is possible to calculate NIAT, given the formula: NIAT = -243 964.511 + 218 189.480 XGE - 164 442.315 X PV + 146 540.710 X RL - 95 467.006 X CC. NIAT increased with 218 189.480 tourists for every percentage point rank increase in the case of GE, declined with 164 442.315 visitors for an increase in PV, increased with 146 540.710 tourists based on a one point movement on RL and declined with 95 467.006 tourists based on a change in CC. From the aforementioned it is clear that GE has the most influence on NIAT, followed by PV, RL and CC. The aforementioned suggests that NAIT is dependent on high scores on Government Effectiveness, low scores on Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, high scores on Rule of Law and low scores on Corruption Control. Furthermore, tourist numbers are not (independently) influenced by the Regulatory Quality or Voice and Accountability. This interpretation is however incorrect.

The aforementioned merely indicates the way that NAIT is calculated. All the good governance variables relate positively to NAIT (see Table 4), and an increase in the

standing of these variables is associated with an increase in NAIT. In Table 7 below the abovementioned formula is tested for the six countries mentioned in the literature review.

Table 5: Testing the model

Country	GE	PV	RL	CC	Predicted NIAT	Actual NIAT	Difference
Mauritius	82.69	71.36	78.85	67.79	11 146 547	1 039,000	-10 107 547
Seychelles	68.27	60.19	62.50	66.83	7 532 783	233 000	-7 299 783
France	88.94	59.22	88.46	87.98	13 987 338	83 767 000	69 779 662
Germany	94.71	79.13	93.27	94.71	12 034 613	32 999 000	20 964 387
South Africa	65.38	43.20	63.94	54.33	11 100 446	9 549 000	-1 551 446
Brazil	47.12	45.15	55.29	44.23	6 492 283	6 430 000	-62 283

From Table 5 it can be read that in the smaller countries the model overestimated the number of tourists, whereas in the two first world countries it was underestimated. For South Africa, and particularly in the case of Brazil, the predictions are relatively good. At an application level the model seems weak and indicates that tourist arrivals are significantly affected by factors other than good governance.

Discussion

In this research, it was proposed that although governments acknowledge the importance of international tourists visiting their shores and despite spending large amounts of money in an effort to attract tourists, they may not realise that good governance affects tourism numbers. It was proposed that the Number of Arrivals of International Tourists is dependent on Government Effectiveness, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, Rule of Law, Corruption Control, Regulatory Quality and Voice and Accountability.

The results based on data from 158 countries covering a period of eight years revealed that the before mentioned good governance variables accounted for 18.7% of the variance in tourism numbers. Though statistically significant, on a practical level, given the cut off scores set before performance the analysis, this was not significant.

The linear regression calculated revealed that only some of the good governance indicators (Government Effectiveness, Political Stability and the Absence of Violence/Terrorism, Rule of Law and Corruption Control) influenced the number of tourism and that others (Regulatory Quality as well as Voice and Accountability) did not predict the numbers. This may be indicative of multicollinearity or can simply show that not all aspects of good governance affect tourist numbers as hypothesised.

When using the regression coefficients to estimate tourism numbers large differences between the predicted and actual numbers were found. This should be interpreted with full cognisance of the reported standard errors of the estimates (Table 4i - 10 834 120 tourists) and the finding that only 18.7 per cent of the variance is explained by good governance.

Conclusion

When considering the statistics generated during this research, it seems that good governance plays a substantial role in predicting tourism numbers, amounting to 18% of the variance in that number. One may therefore be tempted to state that the research shows that tourists are attracted to countries which show high levels of good governance and that when programmes to attract tourists are designed, good governance information should be included. The results also revealed that certain types of good governance information may be more valuable than others. Marketers could for example, be urged to focus on Government Effectiveness and Rule of Law when promoting destinations. Focusing only on statistical significance the abovementioned recommendations are evidence-based,

seemingly valid, and reporting would often stop at this point. However, at a practical level the picture is quite different.

Considering the rule-of-thumb heuristic on the size of the regression coefficient the coefficient is small. Also, the size of the standard error of the estimate is close to 11 000 000, which is similar to the total number of tourists who visit South Africa annually. Furthermore, differences reported when applying the actual data to regression equation revealed large differences. All of the aforementioned makes the model look weak. In light of these practicalities any recommendations based on this model should be made with some caution as the predictions were not particularly accurate for first world countries such as Germany and France, or island economies such as Mauritius and the Seychelles. Further research on this topic is required.

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