

Factors Affecting the Selection of Tour Destination in Jordan: An Empirical Analysis

Dr. Khaled Adas¹, Dr. Saeda Afaneh², Dr. Salim Khanfar³

¹Assistant Prof. Tourism Management Dept, Middle East University, Jordan, Faculty of business.

^{2,3}Associate Prof. Tourism Management Dept, Middle East University, Jordan, Faculty of business.

*Corresponding Author:

Dr. Khaled Adas

Email: kadas@meu.edu.jo

Abstract: Although multifaceted problems are causing the frustrating scenario of the country's tourism sector, Jordan has the potentials to develop its tourism sector and earn huge foreign currency and generate employment opportunities like the neighbouring countries, such as The Holy Lands, Egypt and Turkey who attract substantial number of tourists every year and thus generates huge amount of foreign currencies. The paper looks at different preferences of the tourist and examines the tour intention in selecting different tour destination. The study utilizes both exploratory and empirical research approach. The study collects data through interview with a structured self-administered questionnaire from 165 tourists, in utilizing convenient sampling technique. A multiple regression model was estimated to examine the effects of different factors on the tourists tour intention where nine factors related to different aspects of tourism such as service quality, natural beauty, known destination, convenient lodging, adventure, security, effective and efficient transportation, safe and quality food and shopping facility were used as indigenous variables where tour intention was used as exogenous variable of the model. The regression result shows that Service quality, Natural Beauty, Security and Shopping Facility are statistically significant indicating 24.6% of the variation in explaining the intention to select a tour destination in Jordan. The study outlines some policy implications.

Keywords: Tourism, Tour intention, Destination

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a growing industry not only in developed countries, but also in developing as well as in underdeveloped countries [1]. The tourism industry generates substantial economic benefits to both host countries and tourist's home countries. According to the World Tourism Organization, 1.184 million people travelled to a foreign country in 2015, spending more than US\$ 1.5trillion. Income generated by international visitors on accommodation, food and drink, entertainment, shopping and other services and goods reached an estimated US\$ 1.232 billion (euro 1.110 billion) in 2015, an increase of 3.6% accounting for exchange rate fluctuations and inflation. International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) increased by 4.4% in 2015, reaching a total of 1.184 million [2].

Alongside international tourism receipts (the travel item of the balance of payments), international tourism generated US\$ 210 billion in exports through international non-resident passenger transport services, bringing the total value of tourism exports up to US\$ 1.4 trillion, or US\$ 4 billion a day on average [2].

International tourism represents 7% of total world export and 30% of services exports. The share of

tourism in overall export of goods and services increased from 6% to 6% in 2015 as for the fourth consecutive year international tourism outgrew world merchandise trade, which grew 2.8% in 2015 according to recent data reported by the World Trade Organization [2].

Jordan having various kinds of natural variations e.g., hilly areas (Amman is situated on a hilly area between the desert and the Jordan Valley), sea beaches (The Dead See and Al-Aqaba), mangrove forest and many historical places (Jarash), has a huge potential in the scenario of world tourism (The Jordan News). But the basic structure required for attracting the domestic as well as foreign tourists is yet to be developed. Whereas the neighbouring countries like Egypt, The Holy Land and Turkey attract substantial number of tourists every year and thus generates huge amount of foreign currencies. Though Jordan, since the industrial policy of 1999, that integrated tourism has been treated as an industry and termed it as a thrust sector [3], could not develop its various tourist destination sufficiently attractive to the foreign tourists. The performance of a tourist destination and satisfaction of visitors with the destination are of paramount importance to the destination

competitiveness since the pleasantness of the experience is more likely to influence visitors' future behaviour [4].

TOURISM AND ITS TYPES IN JORDAN

Tourism has become an essential player in Jordan economy, and recently showed remarkable growth in terms of revenues. The tourism sector in Jordan acts as the driver of sustainable economic development and is considered the second fastest growing sector in the kingdom being the largest export sector and a major employer.

Jordan is working hard on the development of the tourism sector, through adopting national strategies that are represented in developing a partnership between the public and private sectors and encouraging investments. What helped that is the presence of multiple civilizations, major kingdoms in Jordan over the ages, a good climate and excellent geographical location..., causing it to possess all the essential elements of tourism. Thus, Jordan has become the face of the tourist that attracts foreign tourists coming to Jordan.

Since Jordan is considered the cradle of past civilizations and the headquarters of monotheistic religions, as well as since Jordan has an important strategic location that sets it apart from other neighbouring countries, where it is a link connecting the states with each other, then, Jordan has strengths by which a competitive advantage could be created to attract foreign tourists to Jordan. So, there are several types of tourism in Jordan:

- Archaeological and historical tourism:

Traveling with a view to find the ancient civilizations and their locations and times, including:

1. Petra: is one of the most famous landmarks in Jordan, which has been designated as one of the 'New Seven Wonders of the World' by the for-profit New Open World Corporation. Other major sites of interest in Petra include the Monastery, the Roman Theatre, the Royal Tombs, and the High Place of Sacrifice. Petra was rediscovered the Western World by Swiss explorer Johann Ludwig Burckhardt in 1812. It was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985 [5].
2. Jarash: is famous for its ancient Roman architecture, with colonnaded streets, Corinthian arches, outdoor Roman Theatres and the Oval Plaza.
3. Al Karak: contains an important castle from the time of Salah al – Din, known as Al – Karak castle.

- Medical Tourism:

It is the travel with the aim of treatment and recuperation. In Jordan, there are several places in which treating body and soul together can be conducted. There is a tourist therapeutic destination that provides medical grid characterized by services which are in the advanced and specialized hospitals and with the doctors known at the higher and global level. Thus,

there is a tourist therapeutic destination in natural areas, including:

1. Dead Sea: it is the lowest point on the earth, 417 meters below the sea level [7], and it is located between the West Bank (Palestine) and Jordan. It is rich in salts and minerals and therapeutic mud. Also, its region is characterized by sunny weather, where non-harmful solar radiation and fresh air.
2. Ma'in Spa: it is located north of Amman. There are waterfalls that come out of the rocks; it is also characterized by the warm springs which are with therapeutic properties.

- Educational Tourism:

It is travel with a view to become educated. Jordan is known for its high level of education. So, in Jordan, there are many high level and well-known universities. Today there are 2787 government schools, 1493 private schools, 48 community colleges, and 27 universities [6].

- Leisure Tourism:

1. It is enjoying the various activities such as shopping, enjoying the festivals, such as the Jerash Festival, and enjoying natural sceneries, mountains, trees and outstanding climate.
2. Aqaba is a town on the shore of the Gulf of Aqaba with numerous shopping centers, hotels and access to various water sports and protected coral reefs and marine life. It has the ruins of the mediaeval town of Ayla and other Edomite ruins. Aqaba also has a vibrant nightlife scene especially on holiday weekends when thousands of wealthy Jordanians visit the coastal city. Numerous raves and concerts are held by international DJ's and artists at the major resorts and beach clubs (Kaufman, David (2006-12-03). "In Aqaba, Jordan, Sun and Sand in the Red Sea", The New York Times). Aqaba is seeing nearly \$20 billion worth of developments entered on tourism and real estate projects transforming the city into a "new Dubai".

- Religious Tourism

Travel with a view to visit religious sites in Jordan, which is for Muslims and Christians, including:

1. Muwakir (Arabic for Machaerus) was the hilltop stronghold of Herod the Great. Upon Herod's death, his son Herod Antipas inhabited the fortress, and ordered John the Baptist to be beheaded there and where the fabled Salomé daughter of Herodias is said to have danced the famous Dance of the Seven Veils thus asking for John the Baptists' head.
2. Jordan River, which is the river where Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist according to Christian tradition.
3. Madaba is well known for its mosaics, as well as important religious sites such as The Madaba Map, the oldest surviving original cartographic depiction of the Holy Land and especially Jerusalem. It dates to the 6th century AD.
4. Mount Nebo, where Moses was said to have gone to get a view of the Promised Land before he died, according to the Bible. (Al-Harbi, 2012 – from p. 29 to p.34)

- Natural reserves:

Jordan has a number of natural reserves.

1. Azraq Wetland Reserve - Azraq is a unique wetland oasis located in the heart of the semi-arid Jordanian eastern desert, managed by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN). Its attractions include several natural and ancient built pools, a seasonally flooded marshland, and a large mudflat known as Qa'a Al-Azraq. A wide variety of birds stop at the reserve each year for a rest during their arduous migration routes between Asia and Africa. Some stay for the winter or breed within the protected areas of the wetland.

2. Dana Biosphere Reserve - covers 308 square kilometres, composed of a chain of valleys and mountains which extend from the top of the Jordan Rift Valley down to the desert lowlands of WadiAraba. Dana is home to about 600 species of plants, 37 species of mammals and 190 species of birds.

3. Mujib Nature Reserve - the lowest nature reserve in the world, with a spectacular array of scenery near the east coast of the Dead Sea. The reserve is located within the deep WadiMujib gorge, which enters the Dead Sea at 410 metres below sea level. The Reserve extends to the Karak and Madaba mountains to the north and south, reaching 899 metres above sea level in some places. WadiMujib enjoys a magnificent bio-diversity that is still being explored and documented today. Over 300 species of plants, 10 species of carnivores and numerous species of permanent and migratory birds have been recorded.

4. Shaumari Wildlife Reserve - The Shaumari Reserve was created in 1975 by the RSCN as a breeding centre for endangered or locally extinct wildlife. Today, following breeding programmes with some of the world's leading wildlife parks and zoos, this small, 22-square-kilometre reserve is a thriving protected environment for some of the most rare species in the Middle East, as Arabian oryx, ostriches, gazelles and onagers, which are depicted on many 6th century Byzantine mosaics (<http://www.siyaha.org/project/overview>).

In addition, Jordan has other types of tourism, such as sports, desert, marine tourism and landscape tourism.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

In a review of customer satisfaction research in the hospitality and tourism industry, it is found that most of the studies undertaken by hospitality researchers have focused on identifying the sources of customer satisfaction and discovering effective ways to determine customer wants and needs. While most researchers disagree on the number of key attributes, they all agree that satisfaction must be measured on a multi-attribute scale [8-10].

In a post-modern society, tourism is often conceptualized as a highly complex series of production-related activities (Pretes, 1995). Recently,

the concept of customer value has become an important key to building a sustainable competitive advantage (Woodruff, 1997).

Customer satisfaction related to service quality during the vacation experience is of paramount importance to the travel and tourism industry [9]. Customer satisfaction has generally been conceptualized as the 'outcome' for the customer after exposure to the service product (Crompton and Love, 1999). A major focus in any hospitality and tourism service model should be the personal linkage between the service provider and customer [11].

Service quality and customer satisfaction have been critical concepts in the fields of recreation and tourism as well as in marketing because they may be used as indicators of profitability and the successful achievement of organizational objectives. Most studies have paid attention to the distinctiveness of these concepts, the ways and means to measure them, and their interrelationship vis-à-vis their influence on outcomes [12]. It is the task of the event management to provide quality of service elements for each type of visitors. Visitors expect the service elements to demand their expectations with full satisfactions [10]. Regardless of the type of tourism management tool used, the authentic qualities of the destination and community need to be preserved to keep the local identity of the destination [1].

International tourism industry comprises of various sub-functions of overall tourism industry in forms of transportation, food and lodging also security in some cases. Attractiveness of the spot, historical aspects and entertainment facilities are also major actors for tour attractions. It is required to provide a basket of services in all those fields in order to satisfy customers [9]. For providing maximum level of customer satisfaction, it is necessary to understand what the customers really want. Various tour organizations thus adopt offensive strategy which involves providing consumers variety of services.

The tourism industry would cease to function without an efficient and effective transportation system [13]. To become a 'destination', a historic city or city centre needs to be easily accessible. Those off major rail or road transportation networks have been significantly losing out. For many, ease of access needs to be considered with adequate parking facilities that are convenient to the city centre – yet at the same time do not detract from the character of the historic environment. With retail becoming a leisure activity, studies show families visiting retail parks and the like on weekends can easily ignore an historic centre or major historic attraction that is only a few kilometres away [14]. Transport is the cause and the effect of the growth of tourism. To start with, the improved facilities have stimulated tourism, and the expansion of tourism

has stimulated transport. Accessibility is the main function behind the basics of tourism transport. In order to access the areas that are mainly aimed, tourists will use any transportation mode. However, air transport is the main mode for international tourism [14].

Although accommodations can be found in many shapes and sizes, these facilities have commonly been grouped under the umbrella term lodging. Accommodations create temporary living, quarters for guests through a variety of sources, including bed and breakfasts, condominium properties, timeshares, conference centres, hotels, motels recreational vehicle parks, and campground. Lodging properties, which provide the bulk of overnight accommodations, can be traced to biblical times. Lodging properties are more than just mortar, bricks, and sticks. Once the physical facility has been constructed, a staff must be hired, trained, organized, and motivated to meet guest needs. This task often begins long before reservations are made or guests arrive. Depending on the size of a property, guests may encounter a whole host of service employees [13].

According to Middleton and Clarke (1999), accommodation plays a functional role by providing the facilities that make travel convenient and comfortable. Hall [15] regarded accommodation as one of the more critical components on the demand side as accommodation has a major influence on the type of visitors who come to a destination. Cooper *et. al.*, [16] suggested accommodation provides an essential support services to satisfy the wider motivation that brought the visitor to the destination.

Food obviously plays a major role in tourism and therefore services related to food are very crucial. The required and preferred food items in destinations' vastly depend on the cultural and geographic background of the guests [17]. Foodservice operations are not simply in the business of providing food and beverages; they are in the business of creating guest enjoyment. Achieving this goal requires attention to detail and preparation that begins well in advance of welcoming the first guest. The guest experience is determined by a variety of interrelated factors from menu design and place settings to plate presentation and style of service. Each of these factors plays a significant role in achieving guest satisfaction and must be made within the physical and human constraints of the operation [13]. Food and beverage are vital components of the tourism experience, and are increasingly being seen as prime travel motivators in their own right.

Safety and security are vital to providing quality in tourism finally affect in tourists destination selection. More than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors. This was highly evident in the aftermath of the

tragic events of 11th September 2001[18]. We cannot be complacent, since there is an emerging consensus that crime - which raises safety issues - is a growing concern among tourism stakeholders who fear the potential damage that it may inflict on the perception of safety and, by extension, the industry [19]. Of even greater concern than crime is the issue of visitor harassment, which also impacts on the tourist's sense of safety. It may be claimed that, although varying in severity, it is a widespread phenomenon.

Entertainment is closely related to leisure is the availability of entertainment facilities in historic centers. Opera, theatre or concerts, especially those taking place in historic and atmospheric settings add to the visitor appeal of a place and can become an important factor in determining an overnight stay. To be sustainable they need to appeal to local interests and remain accessible. Other forms of entertainment, such as nightclubs, may be less welcome in the historic environment, even though they have come to be an important economic contributor in places [17].

Many resorts and estimations were simply developed in locations with natural beauty, favourable climates, and easy transportation access. In fact, one popular classification system that has been used to describe resorts relies on the historical seasonal operations patterns that defined the markets of many resorts [20].

People have always been attracted to new, unusual, or awe-inspiring attractions and events in every corner of the world. In the days before recorded history, travellers may have journeyed for miles just to experience the beauty of the setting sun across a mountain valley or to participate in a religious festival in honour of bountiful harvests. Today, we may expect more, but we are still inspired to travel by the appeal of special attractions and events. No matter whether it is the chance to attend a rock concert, to witness Shakespeare being performed in the rebuilt Globe Theatre, to climb to the top of the Eiffel Tower, or to view the solitude and majesty of Ayers Rock, tourists are constantly seeking new sights, sounds and experiences as well as the opportunity to participate in a variety of leisure activities [13].

Attractions are similar in some ways to live entertainment alternatives. Visiting attractions or enjoying entertainment opportunities requires travellers to make choices about how they will use their leisure time. Some attractions are planned around historic sites and natural settings while others are designed and constructed around planned activities, themes and events. Depending on the purpose or setting, they may be controlled and operated by not-for-profit organizations that are dedicated to preservation and interpretation or commercial organizations dedicated to meeting guest's needs while making a profit. Live

entertainment opportunities may also be found in these same settings and many be operated on a not-for-profit or a for-profit basis. However there are some key-differences between attractions and live entertainment venues [13].

Attractions are natural location, objects or constructed facilities that have a special appeal to both tourists and local visitors. In addition to these attractions, tourists and other visitors are also drawn to see and be part of a variety of live entertainment opportunities. While most attractions are permanent, entertainment alternatives are often temporary. In contrast, events such as fairs and festivals are temporary attractions that include a variety of activities, sights and live entertainment venues [13].

Shopping may be part of the travel experience or it may be the primary focus of travel. Shopping is an activity that crosses all market segments. As long as cities have existed, the pattern of going into town has included a leisure experience, and visiting towns is an essential part of the tourist market (Jansen, 1991). While some visitors simply pick up necessities or a souvenir as a reminder of their travels, others may travel to specific locations for the primary purpose of shopping. Nearly nine out of ten, or 89% of overseas travellers report that they shopped during their visit to the United States, according to a study conducted by the U. S. Department of Commerce and Taubman Centers Ind [21].

In review of the above-mentioned research outcomes the study anticipates the following hypotheses:

- H1: Tourists perception on the service quality is positively related to their visit or revisit intention.
- H2: Tourists perception on the natural beauty of the tour destination is positively related to their visit or revisit intention.
- H3: Tourists awareness on the tour destination is positively related to their visit or revisit intention.
- H4: Tourists perception on convenience of lodging facility of the tour destination is positively related to their visit or revisit intention.
- H5: Tourists perception on adventure of the tour destination is positively related to their visit or revisit intention.
- H6: Tourists perception on security of the tour destination is positively related to their visit or revisit intention.
- H7: Tourists perception on effective and efficient transportation in reaching the tour destination is positively related to their visit or revisit intention.
- H8: Tourists perception on the safe and quality food of the tour destination is positively related to their visit or revisit intention.

H9: Tourists perception on shopping facility in the tour destination is positively related to their visit or revisit intention.

THE STUDY'S METHODOLOGY

Research Design, Sample, and Procedure

A descriptive research design was used to test the hypotheses, proposed for examining the effects of various factors to the tourists' tour intention and /or revisit intention, with data collected from different tourists in Jordan through a self-administered structured survey instrument. The survey questions were adopted from the literature and exploratory techniques. The sample for this study is selected from the prospective tourists of 4 divisions in Jordan such Amman, Jarash, The Dead Sea and Al Aqaba.

- The study's population: The questionnaire is directed towards the foreign tourist coming to Jordan.
- The study's sample: 240 questionnaires will be distributed in different tourist sites in Jordan.
- A total of 240 surveys were conducted in May 2016-September 2016 while 165 questionnaires were received as complete thus used for further analysis.

Only recovered 189 questionnaires were collected, i.e. an average of 78.75%, 24 were excluded for not identifying the suitability for analysis, and the remaining ones to identify 165 only, i.e. equivalent to 87.3% of the number of questionnaires recovered.

Data Analysis

To address nine independent variables of the study 28 items were generated, that were purified and validated through the factor analysis and internal consistency of the items were examined using cronbach alpha. For the purposes of this study, items measuring the independent variables were simultaneously subjected to a principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation. The result yielded a 9 factor solution with Eigen values greater than 1.0 (as shown in Table 2). The factor analysis further reveals that all the items were retained within the 9 factors those are anticipated for the study that cumulatively explained 87.3% of the total variance.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the responding companies. The reliability statistics among study variables are presented in Table 4. As shown in the table:4, the internal reliabilities of scales for most of the factors found satisfactory is clearly acceptable (Nunally, 1978) although perceived quality, known destination, security, safe and quality food and shopping facility were below 0.70. All of the factors reliability score were above .60, except the shopping facility which was the lowest score that was very near to .60, thus, is acceptable for further analysis.

Table 1: Respondents profile

Description	f	Percent
Respondents age		
Below 25 years	18	10.91
26 – 45 years	54	32.72
46 – 60 years	72	43.64
Above 60 years	21	12.73
Occupation		
Student	16	9.7
Government job	44	26.7
Private Job	69	41.8
Business	23	13.9
Other	13	7.9
Total	165	100
Marital status		
Married	103	62.4
Single	62	37.6
Total	165	100
Education		
HSC or Below	64	38.8
Graduate	76	46.1
Post Graduate	25	15.1
Total	164	100
Area		
Amman	81	49.1
Al – aqaba	22	13.3
The Dead See	45	27.3
Jarash	17	10.3
Total	165	100

Table 2: Principle Component Analysis

component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.638	16.565	16.565	4.638	16.565	16.565	2.691	9.611	9.611
2	3.237	11.562	28.127	3.237	11.562	28.127	2.504	8.943	18.555
3	2.163	7.724	35.851	2.163	7.724	35.851	2.293	8.190	26.744
4	2.107	7.524	43.375	2.107	7.524	43.375	2.242	8.006	34.750
5	1.872	6.687	50.062	1.872	6.687	50.062	2.108	7.530	42.280
6	1.288	4.600	54.662	1.288	4.600	54.662	2.094	7.479	49.759
7	1.229	4.389	59.051	1.229	4.389	59.051	1.656	5.914	55.673
8	1.103	3.940	62.992	1.103	3.940	62.992	1.645	5.874	61.547
9	1.064	3.801	66.793	1.064	3.801	66.793	1.469	5.246	66.793

Table 3: Factor Matrix

Component		Standard	Natural beauty	Knowledge	Lodging	Adventure	Security	Transportation	Food	Shopping
1	Q30	.453	.031	.040	-.205	.531	.085	.024	.146	.093
2	Q31	.270	-.084	.029	-.140	.770	.097	.022	.027	.122
3	Q43	.105	.401	.119	-.012	.680	-.032	-.022	.053	-.060
4	Q39	.009	.798	.072	-.030	.029	.006	.052	.107	-.017
5	Q40	.000	.770	.029	.145	.029	.193	-.034	.064	-.001
6	Q41	.191	.535	.035	.107	.481	-.215	-.026	-.035	-.006
7	Q43	.140	.766	.068	-.046	.069	.053	-.014	-.014	.118
8	Q6	.234	-.058	.146	.685	.185	.295	.074	.120	.078
9	Q8	-.037	.042	-.176	.643	-.103	-.014	-.068	-.010	.073
10	Q9	-.143	-.018	-.015	.666	-.112	.077	.170	.205	.139
11	Q10	.058	.187	.219	.663	.337	.025	.035	.94	-.255
12	Q32	.694	.037	-.087	-.349	.354	.025	-.012	.017	-.038
13	Q5	.665	-.018	-.063	.104	.209	.114	.047	.215	.064
14	Q7	.782	.086	.077	.186	-.027	-.058	-.062	-.029	-.038
15	Q27	.670	.243	-.022	-.125	.299	-.003	.157	.112	.112
16	Q34	-.113	-.009	.678	.042	.021	.153	.054	.122	.032
17	Q35	.278	.057	.684	-.056	-.093	.006	.150	-.320	.108
18	Q36	-.118	.207	.701	-.094	.051	.194	.114	.092	.066
19	Q37	.038	.021	.748	.068	.120	-.105	.024	.069	.035
20	Q46	.116	-.014	.117	-.062	-.061	.062	.880	.081	-.090
21	Q47	-.048	.010	.149	.205	.043	.020	.827	.130	.168
22	Q16	.027	.077	.017	.115	-.021	.811	.023	-.049	.189
23	Q17	.160	.196	.054	-.019	.040	.782	-.032	.183	-.122
24	Q18	-.133	-.099	.185	.160	.059	.668	.127	-.251	.158
25	Q1	.079	.086	.163	.107	.231	-.135	.148	.783	.039
26	Q3	.289	.06	-.013	.221	-.079	.061	.119	.708	.063
27	Q24	-.033	.104	.043	.168	.084	.068	.126	-.078	.866
28	Q25	.199	-.010	.248	-.057	.017	.183	-.100	.303	.653

Table 4: Regression Statistics

Variables	Standardized Beta	Alpha
Quality service	.252**	.692
Natural Beauty	.247**	.738
know		
(knowledge) destination	.007	.697
Convenient Lodging	.036	.652
Adventure	-.103	.757
security	.261**	.698
Transportation	.087	.705
Safe and Quality Food	.060	.646
Shopping Facility	-.175*	.551
R2	.246	
F Value	4.934**	
Durbin - Watson	1.872	

** p <.001, * p<.05

As shown in Table 4, regression model shows a good fit with F value 4.934 (p<.01) and R2 value 0.246 indicating 24.6% of the variation in the travel intention can be explained by the independent variable. Service quality, Natural Beauty, Security and Shopping Facility are statistically significant in explaining the intention to select a tour destination in Jordan. The model result indicates that people’s perception on

security, quality service and natural beauty of the destination are the stronger predictors followed by shopping facility of the destination.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the research was to examine the influence of various factors affecting the tour intention of the foreign tourists in Jordan. This study

analyses various factors that affect the tourist's tour intention adapted from different previous literature as well as using field survey. Finally the study examines the effects of the factors in explaining the tourists' tour intention.

Nine factors related to different aspects of tourism such as service quality, natural beauty, known destination, convenient lodging, adventure, security, effective and efficient transportation, safe and quality food and shopping facility were used as indigenous variables where tour intention was used as exogenous variable of the model.

As hypothesized, service quality, natural beauty, known destination, convenient lodging, security, effective and efficient transportation, safe and quality food, adventure and shopping facility have positive correlation with the tour intention of tourists in Jordan. The regression analysis have indicated significant correlations between service quality, natural beauty, security and shopping facility of the destination with the tour intention where Service Quality, Natural Beauty, and Security are positively correlated which means that the positive perceptions of these three characteristics or attributes led to higher purchase intention. On the other hand, shopping facility is negatively correlated with tour intention, which means that the perceptions of more advanced shopping facility in the tourist spot led to lower visit or revisit intention. Although the shopping facility of the tour destination is observed significant in tourists' destination selection, disagree with previous researches as most of the researches explain the significant positive relation in between shopping facilities in destination and the destination selection [21].

Security emerged as the strongest factor in terms of degree and magnitude affecting the tour intention of tourists in Jordan. The security issue is significant as people go for tour for pleasure and amusement. The amusement or entertainment is not possible if the place is not secured. It is thus an important aspect to be considered by the government of Jordan to ensure the security in various tourist spots in order to gain the tourist attention and acceptance.

Quality of service emerged as an important factor affecting the tour intention of the foreign tourists in Jordan. The service quality issue is significant because it deals with the tourists' perception on the pleasure.

Natural beauty of the destination also emerged as another important factor affecting the tour intention of tourists. The natural beauty issue is significant as it deals with tourists' perception on the importance of the destination and its attractiveness to be considered as a place of destination. Natural beauty is in fact considered as core service of the tourism products.

Shopping facility exist in the tourist spot inversely affects the tour intention of foreign tourists. The result is not complementary with the tourists' intention in foreign countries. In international environment the tourists' fundamental desires are to make amusement with different tourism facilities that include convenient shopping facility. Purchasing different souvenir and gift items with indigenous products is one of the common tasks of general international tourists. The study findings implies that the foreign tourists are not interested to spend much money in purchasing products or commodities rather they are interested to spend almost entire money only for tourism purpose. In the case of group tour, tourists are bound to spend some money for shopping some fashion and fancy goods in response to their peers, friends or group fellows' pressure. It provides negative impact on their satisfaction. Unusual shopping and spending much money during the tour are not required if the destination has not adequate facility of shopping. The tourists of the country, due to their limited earnings, thus prefer to visit those destinations that don't provide adequate shopping facility or to push them to spend substantial amount of money in shopping.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Jordan is trying to foster its economic development through utilizing country's resources and expertise in service sector by the side of its main foreign currency earner manufacturing industry, the RMG industry and others. The government has declared tourism is one of the thrust sectors of the country. The indigenous culture, climate, geographic location, currency exchange rate, price of essential commodities and services; and price and convenience of lodging and quality of food are extremely favourable for developing an organised and professional tourism industry in Jordan that can contribute a substantial amount of money each year in the national exchequer. It will also generate huge employment opportunities that will ultimately help develop country's overall economic environment. Although the tourism industry has the potentials of contributing a substantially large amount of money in national economy, the government's initiative, people's perception on the tourism, and country's culture hinder the development of the sector. The political instability in the region is considered as major barriers of emerging tourism industry in Jordan. Infrastructures like technological, legal, financial, human resources are also to be considered as important influencer in Jordan. Jordan is a country where different types of tourism elements and destinations are available such as historical places, holy places, indigenous cultures, natural beauty, Sea beach, hilly areas etc. The government should provide a positive look at developing the human resource infrastructure required for developing tourism sector in the country. Highly professional and technical human resource competent in

tourism can contribute positively to satisfy diversified needs of different tourists. A specialized institution thus may be established for tourism education in Jordan. Besides the above mentioned supports and services the entrepreneurs in the field of tourism industry should be supported and encouraged by establishing government's grants and subsidies and adopting country's tourism policy that may be used as the guideline for the rapid expansion of this sector. The study is believed to be supported by its academic proponents and professionals.

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