

**THE IMPACT OF VALUES ON THE MOTIVATIONS OF DOMESTIC  
TOURISTS IN SAUDI ARABIA**

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THE IMPACT OF VALUES ON THE MOTIVATIONS OF DOMESTIC  
TOURISTS IN SAUDI ARABIA

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*To my parents, my wife, my family and children*

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## ABSTRACT

Saudi Arabia is the world's leading oil producer and exporter. The economy in the country is almost totally dependent on oil. Tourism is one of the sectors which received more attention in the last few years after the establishment of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiques in 2000. The Commission's main purpose is to develop, promote and enhance the tourism sector, particularly the domestic tourism sector, to be one of the important sectors in economy. The main purpose of this research is to identify motivations and values for Saudi citizens to travel domestically. Maslow's Motives Modal (1998) and Rokeach Value Survey (1973) are applied in the study. Motivations are examined by understanding the 'push' and 'pull' factors and these concepts have been used in many studies. The idea behind these concepts is that people travel because they are pushed by their own internal forces and pulled by external forces of the destination attributes. The study was conducted in five regions in Saudi Arabia and 308 questionnaires were obtained, 86 from central region, 46 from western region, 37 from eastern region, 50 from northern region and 89 from southern region. Obtained data were analyzed using SPSS. The findings indicated that there are five push motivations for Saudi domestic tourists including (Relaxation, Escape, Knowledge, Family and Cultural) and seven pull factors including (Religious, Safety, Spirituality, Economicl, Entertainment, Shopping and Local culture). The study showed that the push factor of Relaxation and the pull factor of Religion are the most important factors as perceived by Saudis. The study suggested further research to be carried out across the Muslim and Arab world in order to explore more travel motivations and values dimensions for people in this region.

## ABSTRAK

Arab Saudi adalah pengeluar dan pengeksport minyak yang terkemuka di dunia. Ekonomi di negara ini hampir sepenuhnya bergantung kepada minyak. selepas penubuhan Suruhanjaya Saudi untuk Pelancongan dan Antik pada tahun 2000, pelancongan menjadi salah satu sektor yang menerima perhatian yang lebih dalam beberapa tahun kebelakangan ini. Tujuan utama Suruhanjaya ini adalah untuk membangunkan, menggalakkan dan meningkatkan sektor pelancongan, terutamanya sektor pelancongan domestik, agar menjadi salah satu sektor penting dalam ekonomi. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti motivasi dan nilai-nilai bagi warga Arab untuk melakukan perjalanan domestik. Model Motif Maslow (1998) dan Survei Nilai Rokeach (1973) digunakan dalam kajian ini. Motivasi dikaji dengan memahami faktor 'tolakan' dan 'tarikan' dan konsep-konsep ini telah digunakan dalam banyak kajian. Idea di sebalik konsep ini adalah orang melakukan perjalanan kerana mereka tertolak oleh kuasa dalaman mereka sendiri dan ditarik oleh daya luaran sifat-sifat destinasi. Kajian ini dijalankan di lima wilayah di Arab Saudi dan 308 soal selidik telah diperolehi; 86 dari wilayah tengah, 46 dari rantau barat, 37 dari rantau timur, 50 dari wilayah utara dan 89 dari wilayah selatan. Data yang diperolehi dianalisis menggunakan SPSS. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa terdapat lapan motivasi menolak bagi pelancong domestik Arab termasuk (Relaksasi, Melarikan Diri, Keluarga, Kebudayaan, Aktiviti, Ilmu, Kerohanian dan Ekonomi) dan lima faktor tarikan termasuk (Agama, Keselamatan, Hiburan, Kemewahan dan Budaya Tempatan). Kajian menunjukkan faktor penolak Relaksasi dan faktor penarik Agama adalah faktor yang paling penting seperti yang dilihat oleh Saudi. Kajian ini mencadangkan kajian lanjut dijalankan di seluruh dunia Islam dan Arab dalam usaha menerokai pelbagai motivasi perjalanan dan pelbagai nilai dimensi bagi masyarakat di rantau ini.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>CHAPTER</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
	<b>TITLE PAGE</b>	<b>i</b>
	<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>ii</b>
	<b>DEDICATION</b>	<b>iii</b>
	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	<b>iv</b>
	<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>v</b>
	<b>ABSTRAK</b>	<b>vi</b>
	<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>vii</b>
	<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>ix</b>
	<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
	1.1 Research Background	1
	1.2 Problem Statement	3
	1.3 Purpose of the Study	4
	1.4 Objectives of the Study	5
	1.5 Research Questions	5
	1.6 Importance of the study	5
	1.7 Scope of the Study	6
<b>2</b>	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>7</b>
	2.1 Tourism Motivation	7
	2.2 Values in Travel Destination Decisions	29
	2.3 Values and culture	31

2.4	Islamic Values	36
2.5	Motivations and Values	39
2.6	Customer Satisfaction	43
2.6	Domestic Tourism Sector	47
2.7	Domestic Tourism in Saudi Arabia	49
2.8	Tourism Resources in Saudi Arabia	52
<b>3</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>56</b>
3.1	Introduction	56
3.2	Methodology and Design of the Study	56
3.3	Research Instruments	57
3.4	Respondents of the Study	58
3.5	Research Procedure	59
3.6	Statistical Methods Used	60
3.7	Validity and Constancy of the Questionnaire	61
<b>4</b>	<b>DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS DISCUSSION</b>	<b>63</b>
4.1	The Results of the Study Sample	63
4.2	The Results of the Study Variables	77
4.3	Results Related to the Study Enquiries	81
4.4	Discussion and Conclusion	88
<b>5</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY</b>	<b>95</b>
5.1	Introduction	95
5.2	Recommendations	95
5.3	Strengths and Weaknesses of Research	97
5.4	Recommendations for Future Research	99
5.5	Summary	100
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>102</b>
	APPENDIX A-B	112-117

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>TABLE NO</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
2.1	A summary for key researchers' motivation models	10
2.2	Maslow's needs and motivations Listed in travel literature	12
3.1	Cronbach Alpha coefficient for measuring the constancy of the pivots of the study	62
4.1	Distribution of respondents by gender	63
4.2	Distribution of respondents by marital status	64
4.3	Distribution of respondents by the residence region	65
4.4	Do your parents live in the same city	66
4.5	Distribution of respondents by age	67
4.6	Distribution of respondents by educational level	68
4.7	Distribution of respondents by monthly income	69
4.8	What is your favorite destination?	70
4.9	What was the main reason for your last domestic visit?	71
4.10	How many nights dis you spend?	72
4.11	With whom are (were) you on your trip?	73
4.12	How did you know about the place you (are) visit(ing)?	75
4.13	How did you arrange your accommodation?	76
4.14	Where did (are) you stay(ing)?	77
4.15	Travel Motivations (Push factors)	78
4.16	Travel Motivations (Pull factors)	79

<b>4.17</b>	Travel Motivations (The Values)	80
<b>4.18</b>	Analysis of the variation according to the location variable.	81
<b>4.19</b>	Variation analysis test according to the parents residence location variable (whether it is in the same city or not).	82
<b>4.20</b>	Variation analysis test according to the gender variable	83
<b>4.21</b>	The variation analysis test according to the social status variable	84
<b>4.22</b>	The analysis test of the relation between the values and push factors among the tourists in KSA	86
<b>4.23</b>	The analysis test of the relation between the values and the pull factors among the tourists in KSA	87
<b>4.24</b>	Illustrates the differences towards the values	88

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>FIGURE NO</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
2.1	Buyer Behaviour Model	16
2.2	Motives and Values Within Buyer Behaviour Models	17
2.3	A map of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	54
4.1	Distribution of Respondents by gender	64
4.2	Distribution of Respondents by marital status	65
4.3	Distribution of Respondents by the residence of region	66
4.4	Do your parents live in the same city?	67
4.5	Distribution of Respondents by age	68
4.6	Distribution of Respondents by Qualification	69
4.7	Distribution of Respondents by monthly income	70
4.8	Distribution of Respondents by their favorite destination	71
4.9	What was the main reason for your last domestic visit?	72
4.10	How many nights did you spend or are you planning on your trip?	73
4.11	With whom are (were) you on your trip?	74
4.12	How did you know about the place you (are) visit(ing)?	75
4.13	How did you arrange your accommodation?	76
4.14	Where did (are) you stay(ing)?	77

<b>4.15</b>	Push factors as perceived by Saudis	89
<b>4.16</b>	Pull factors as perceived by Saudis	90

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Research Background**

The Arab world has been acquainted with travel for a very long time, mainly in the form of trade caravans and pilgrimages. Therefore, tourism is an age-old practice in the Arab world that, over recent years, has seen, as has the rest of the globe, the emergence of new forms of tourism that have modified the links between the worlds of culture and development. Tourism has become a major phenomenon, economically, socially and culturally, and has brought both risks and opportunities for culture and development, depending on how it is managed.

There is a growing amount of free time and a high percentage of disposable income is being spent on various forms of tourism in Saudi Arabia. These facts have increased the number of Saudis travelling to tourist destinations, internationally or domestically. Consequently, spending the annual holiday away from home is normal for most Saudi families. Additionally, day or short-break journeys to the coastal regions, countryside or desert are normal several times a year.

The behaviour of the tourist is the main discussion in the tourism literature. Hence, the tourists are made subjected to the study to know which place they would prefer for visit. Variable questions based interview is the mode for many of the investigations. From such kind of analysis it is easy to differentiate between the pull and push factors which identify if the decisions are active for a decision making process of the tourists to decide for a particular place to visit. Yet, the definition is unable to make it understandable.

The backgrounds and motives of the tourists play a very important role in decision making process for the selection of the place to visit; Lue *et al.* referred this by Pearce (2005). While learning certain motive of the tourists many questions were answerable like; why do people like to take a tour of different places, and if so then why their selections are so precise and why they prefer certain activities while they are on holiday (Robinson *et al.*, 2011). The push and pull factors that instigate the tourist to opt for certain place for a visit are the most common explanation model of tourist motivation.

Several studies have highlighted how motivations and values have been of great interest in marketing and consumer behaviour researchers. Both have a considerable effect on the individual's selection and evaluation of any aspect in life (Jolibert & Baumgartner, 1997). Marketers try to satisfy consumer needs, but reasons underlying purchases product and service can vary widely. Therefore, the identification of consumer motives is an important step towards ensuring that the appropriate needs will be met by a product or service. The motivation concept helps to explain why behaviour occurs in one situation but not in the others. The marketing challenges are to recognize the primary motivating effects and to plan strategies that, at the same time, activate and satisfy felt needs (Bogari, 2002).

Many of the studies relate to the western lifestyle for the holidays and the whole text reflects the western travelling purposes while only some portray Islamic and Arab point of view. Hence, this research is also considered important because

over here the Islamic values have been studied for the purpose of planning the tourism according to the Islamic and Arab point of view in Muslim countries. Islam is a rapidly growing religion; therefore, this study has the potential to be of a great use for those who intend to invest in the tourism sector in the Islamic world.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

The Saudi government has been trying to persuade more of its citizens to holiday within the country. In order to do this effectively, this requires tourism marketers to understand fully the needs of domestic tourists. Under increasingly competitive conditions, effective tourism marketing is impossible without understanding tourists' motivations to choose Saudi Arabia as a travel destination. It is very important to recognize the motivations for domestic tourism as knowing the domestic travelers motivations is the key to improving the marketing of domestic destinations (Bogari, 2002). However, in a destination in Middle East like the country of Saudi Arabia, it is worthwhile to place some emphasis on people's values as well.

Tourism in Saudi Arabia can be divided into three categories: the Hajj (pilgrimage), business visitors and recreational tourists from other Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states and from inside the kingdom (Bogari, 2002). According to the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA, 2008), Saudi Arabian domestic tourism is expected to generate SR101.3 Billion (\$27 Billion) by 2020 indicating high growth in the sector in coming years. The SAMA official also revealed that 3% of the country's GDP (Gross Domestic Product) comes from the tourism sector. Moreover, with expansion of tourism sector, there was 65% increase in air arrivals and 16% increase in air departure during 2006-07. The highest proportion of tourists visited the Saudi Arabia capital, Riyadh. Besides, the hotel industry in the capital grew by

280% in last three decades from 1988 to 2008 (RNCOS industry research solutions, 2008).

Factors influencing tourist behavior have been a focal point in tourism research for decades. Efforts to unveil the determinants that shape travel behavior stem not only from pure academic interest, but from practical business considerations (Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999). Sirgy and Su (2000) pointed out that past research efforts have focused on the issues of what, when, where, and how to purchase, but not much on why to purchase. Therefore, further analysis of why tourists make their choices is much needed (Beerli, *et al.*, 2007). Tourism literatures have explored some critical concepts such as push and pull factors (Bellenger, *et al.*, 1976).

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

This study aims at exploring the motivation of Saudi tourists to choose some urban and rural areas as their holiday destination. The Push and Pull theories have been chosen as the theoretical basis of the study. The purpose of this research is to identify the market segmentation and target marketing and to set up a strategic vision and a sustainable tourism development plan for some urban and rural locations in some parts of the regions of Saudi Arabia, in light of National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and National Tourism Strategy considering natural and environmental resources in these regions, for a balanced urban development environmentally, economically, and socially.

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the current research are as follows:

1. To find out the influences of demographic factors on the values.
2. To identify the influences of demographic factors on travel motivation.
3. To determine the influence of values on travel motivations.
4. To explore the difference and similarity patterns of travel motivations between those who prefer to travel domestically and who prefer to travel abroad.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the influences of demographic factors on the values?
2. What are the influences of demographic factors on travel motivation?
3. What is the influence of values on travel motivations?
4. What is the difference and similarity patterns of travel motivations between those who prefer to travel domestically and who prefer to travel abroad?

## **1.6 Importance of the study**

Motivation is the need that drives an individual to act in a certain way to achieve the desired satisfaction” (Beerli et al, 2004). One of the most complex issues facing researchers attempting to study tourists’ behaviors is to understand the

traveling motives of travelers (Crompton, 1979). Tourist motivation is believed to be the foundation of influencing the way tourist behaves (Crompton, 1979) as well as where they travel to, when they travel, what activities they participate in the destination (Hudson, 1999) and their satisfaction (Prebensen, 2006; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). From the destinations' point of view, it is very important to know why tourists choose (or not choose) a destination and how the tourists feel about the place they visited. According to Sharma (1995) it is significant to understand tourist motivation and decision-making processes not only for its impacts on destination areas (Crompton, 1979), but also for economic reasons related to promotion of tourism and tourism planning which rely on understanding tourist decision-making. It also enables the identification of market segmentation and target marketing.

## **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The study will examine the motivations by understanding the 'push' and 'pull' factors and these concepts have been used in many studies. The idea behind these concepts is that people travel because they are pushed by their own internal forces and pulled by external forces of the destination attributes.

This research will examine the travelers in some parts of the regions of Saudi Arabia by applying the descriptive approach and analyzing the surveys and data collection results. The study area is located within the administrative boundary of central region (Riyadh & Qassim), eastern region (Dammam & Jubail), western region (Mecca, Medina & Jeddah), the northern region (Hail & Qurayyat) and the southern region (Abha, Baha, Khamis Mushait & Najran). The findings in this research reveal the different types of tourists in the all these areas.

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