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

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UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA
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To my parents, my wife, my family and children
First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to God for all the blessings and help which gave me patience and endurance to accomplish this work.

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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

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DECLARATION</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABSTRAK</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1 Research Background</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Problem Statement</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4 Objectives of the Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 Research Questions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.6 Importance of the study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.7 Scope of the Study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 Tourism Motivation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 Values in Travel Destination Decisions</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3 Values and culture</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Islamic Values
2.5 Motivations and Values
2.6 Customer Satisfaction
2.6 Domestic Tourism Sector
2.7 Domestic Tourism in Saudi Arabia
2.8 Tourism Resources in Saudi Arabia

3 METHODOLOGY
3.1 Introduction
3.2 Methodology and Design of the Study
3.3 Research Instruments
3.4 Respondents of the Study
3.5 Research Procedure
3.6 Statistical Methods Used
3.7 Validity and Constancy of the Questionnaire

4 DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS DISCUSSION
4.1 The Results of the Study Sample
4.2 The Results of the Study Variables
4.3 Results Related to the Study Enquiries
4.4 Discussion and Conclusion

5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY
5.1 Introduction
5.2 Recommendations
5.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of Research
5.4 Recommendations for Future Research
5.5 Summary

REFERENCES
APPENDIX A-B
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE NO</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>A summary for key researchers’ motivation models</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Maslow’s needs and motivations Listed in travel literature</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Cronbach Alpha coefficient for measuring the constancy of the pivots of the study</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Distribution of respondents by gender</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Distribution of respondents by marital status</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Distribution of respondents by the residence region</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Do your parents live in the same city</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Distribution of respondents by age</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Distribution of respondents by educational level</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Distribution of respondents by monthly income</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>What is your favorite destination?</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>What was the main reason for your last domestic visit?</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>How many nights dis you spend?</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>With whom are (were) you on your trip?</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>How did you know about the place you (are) visit(ing)?</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>How did you arrange your accommodation?</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>Where did (are) you stay(ing)?</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>Travel Motivations (Push factors)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>Travel Motivations (Pull factors)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.17 Travel Motivations (The Values) 80
4.18 Analysis of the variation according to the location variable. 81
4.19 Variation analysis test according to the parents residence location variable (whether it is in the same city or not). 82
4.20 Variation analysis test according to the gender variable 83
4.21 The variation analysis test according to the social status variable 84
4.22 The analysis test of the relation between the values and push factors among the tourists in KSA 86
4.23 The analysis test of the relation between the values and the pull factors among the tourists in KSA 87
4.24 Illustrates the differences towards the values 88
LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE NO</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Buyer Behaviour Model</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Motives and Values Within Buyer Behaviour Models</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>A map of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by gender</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by marital status</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by the residence of region</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Do your parents live in the same city?</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by age</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Qualification</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by monthly income</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by their favorite destination</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>What was the main reason for your last domestic visit?</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>How many nights did you spend or are you planning on your trip?</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>With whom are (were) you on your trip?</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>How did you know about the place you (are) visit(ing)?</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>How did you arrange your accommodation?</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>Where did (are) you stay(ing)?</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>Push factors as perceived by Saudis</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>Pull factors as perceived by Saudis</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 (Joliber & 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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