

**THE ROLES AND IMPORTANCE OF PROMOTION TOOLS AND
DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES OF MICE TOURISM ON JORDAN'S
DESTINATION IMAGE FORMATION**

By

OMAR ABEDALLA AHMED ALANANZEH

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ABSTRAK

Imej destinasi memainkan peranan yang penting kepada pelancong-pelancong dalam membuat keputusan perjalanan dan pemilihan destinasi. Pelbagai pendekatan dan strategi telah digunakan oleh kebanyakan negara untuk membentuk imej destinasi pelancongan masing-masing. Walau bagaimanapun, dalam konteks di Jordan adalah didapati kurang penumpuan telah diberikan dalam usaha ke arah pembentukan imej destinasi pelancongan. Oleh itu, strategi-strategi yang digunakannya untuk membentuk imej destinasi adalah tidak jelas dan kurang berkesan. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji peranan alat promosi dan ciri-ciri destinasi pelancongan untuk tujuan Perhimpunan, Insentif perjalanan, Persidangan, dan Pameran (MICE) terhadap pembentukan imej destinasi pelancongan dan untuk mengenal pasti persepsi para peserta MICE terhadap kepentingan alat promosi, ciri-ciri destinasi dan imej destinasi. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah kuantitatif dan beberapa hipotesis telah dibentuk berdasarkan kajian literatur, teori tolakan-tarikan dan model-model pembentukan imej destinasi. Soal selidik berstruktur telah diedarkan kepada 857 responden yang dipilih melalui teknik persampelan rawak berkelompok. Data kajian dipungut daripada kalangan peserta MICE di Bandaraya Amman dan Dead Sea. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa terdapat perbezaan persepsi yang signifikan di kalangan responden tentang pentingnya ciri-ciri destinasi MICE dan alat promosi terhadap imej destinasi Jordan. Analisis regresi pula menunjukkan bahawa ciri-ciri destinasi MICE dan peranan alat promosi telah mempengaruhi pembentukan imej destinasi secara positif. Ciri-ciri destinasi seperti ameniti menampakkan pengaruh yang tertinggi dalam menyumbang kepada pembentukan imej destinasi Jordan, diikuti dengan perkhidmatan sokongan, kebolehcapaian, tarikan dan aktiviti. Sementara itu, ciri kemampuan pula memperlihatkan pengaruh yang terendah terhadap pembentukan keseluruhan imej pelancongan Jordan. Berdasarkan model yang dicadangkan, kajian ini mampu menyumbang kepada bidang pengetahuan dengan membuktikan bahawa ciri-ciri destinasi pelancongan MICE dan alat promosi merupakan penyumbang yang signifikan terhadap pembentukan imej destinasi Jordan. Manakala itu, implikasi dari segi pengurusan, kajian ini dapat menyediakan garis panduan dan cadangan terhadap pembentukan strategi pemasaran imej destinasi pelancongan kepada sektor awam dan swasta dalam meningkatkan dan memajukan industri MICE sebagai destinasi pelancongan antarabangsa.

Kata kunci: pelancongan MICE, ciri-ciri destinasi, imej destinasi, promosi pelancongan, Jordan

ABSTRACT

The image of the destination has a significant role on tourists' travel decision and selection of the destination to visit. Various approaches and strategies have been utilised by most of the countries to develop their destination image. However, in the context of Jordan less emphasis was given to develop a touristic image. Thus, strategies used in forming a destination image were vague and less effective. The objectives of this study are to investigate the roles of promotion tools and Meetings, Incentive travel, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) destination attributes on touristic image formation and to identify the perceptions of MICE participants on the importance of promotion tools, MICE destination attributes, and destination image. A quantitative approach was employed in this study and several hypotheses were formulated based on the existing literature, push-pull theory, and models of destination image formation. A structured questionnaire was administered to 857 respondents who were selected through cluster random sampling technique. Data were collected from participants of MICE tourism in the cities of Amman and the Dead Sea. The findings of the study revealed that there were significant differences in respondents' perceptions on the importance of MICE destination attributes, promotion tools, and destination image. Regression analyses indicated that MICE destination attributes and the roles of promotion tools positively influence destination image formation. Nevertheless, amenities showed the highest influence of MICE destination attributes on destination image formation, followed by ancillary services, accessibility, attractions, and activities. Meanwhile, affordability portrayed the lowest influence of MICE destination attributes on the overall touristic image formation of Jordan. The study has contributed to the body of knowledge with the proposed model that reveals the significant contribution of MICE destination attributes and the roles of promotion tools to the destination image formation of Jordan. Whereas, for the managerial implications, this study is able to provide guidelines and suggestions on marketing strategies to the public and the private sectors in order to enhance and develop MICE industry in Jordan as an international destination image.

Keywords: MICE tourism, destination attribute, destination image, tourism promotion, Jordan

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE.....	ii
ABSTRAK (BAHASA MALAYSIA).....	iii
ABSTRACT (ENGLISH).....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xvi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xvii

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study	1
1.1 Problem Statement	7
1.2 Research Objectives.....	12
1.3 Research Questions	12
1.4 Hypotheses	13
1.5 Significance of the Study	14
1.6 Scope of the Study	17
1.7 Definition of Concepts.....	18
1.7.1 MICE Tourism	18
1.7.2 MICE Destination Attributes.....	19
1.7.3 Destination Image.....	19
1.7.4 Event Tourism	20
1.7.5 MICE Tourism Promotion.....	21
1.8 Structure of the Thesis	21

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction.....	23
2.1 An Overview of MICE Tourism.....	24
2.1.1 Meetings.....	25
2.1.2 Incentives.....	25
2.1.3 Conferences.....	25
2.1.4 Exhibitions.....	26
2.2 MICE Tourism: The Growing Segment in Tourism Industry	27
2.3 Characteristics of MICE Tourism.....	30
2.4 Contributions of MICE Tourism.....	32
2.4.1 Economic Contributions.....	32
2.4.2 Social and Cultural Contributions	36
2.5 MICE Tourism in Jordan.....	37
2.5.1 MICE Infrastructure in Jordan	39
2.5.1.1 Convention and Exhibition Enterprises.....	40
2.5.1.2 Convention Hotels.....	42
2.5.2 Jordan National Tourism Strategy (NTS) 2004-2010.....	43
2.6 Destination Image	44
2.6.1 Perceived Destination Image Concept	45
2.6.2 Theory of Destination Image Formation	48
2.6.3 Cognitive and Affective Components of Destination Image	51
2.6.4 The Importance of Destination Image.....	55
2.6.5 The Measurement of Destination Image	57
2.6.6 Relationship between Socio-demographic Characteristics and Destination Image Formation	61
2.7 MICE Destination Attributes	63
2.7.1 Amenities.....	64
2.7.2 Accessibility.....	65
2.7.3 Ancillary Services.....	65

2.7.4 Affordability.....	66
2.7.5 Attractions.....	66
2.7.6 Activities.....	67
2.8 MICE Destination Selection	70
2.9 The “Pull Factors” of Destination Attributes: Push-Pull Theory.....	73
2.10 Relationship between MICE Destination Attributes and Destination Image Formation	76
2.11 MICE Destination Marketing	78
2.11.1 MICE Promotion Tools	80
2.12 Relationship between MICE Promotion Tools and Destination Image Formation ..	86
2.13 Conceptual Framework.....	89
2.14 Conclusion	93

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction.....	96
3.1 Research Design.....	96
3.2 Population and Sample	99
3.3 Instrument Design.....	101
3.3.1 Questionnaire Items.....	104
3.3.2 Reliability and Validity of the Instrument.....	109
3.4 Pilot Study.....	111
3.4.1 Results of the Pilot Study	112
3.5 Data Collection	123
3.6 Data Analysis	126
3.7 Conclusion	128

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS

4.0 Introduction.....	129
4.1 Demographic Profile of Participants.....	129
4.2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Measurement Scales	132
4.2.1 MICE Destination Attributes.....	132
4.2.2 Promotion Tools: Importance and Roles.....	135
4.2.3 Destination Image Formation: Cognitive and Affective	137
4.3 Research Hypotheses Testing	141
4.3.1 Test of First Hypothesis	142
4.3.1.1 MICE Destination Attributes Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Nationality.....	142
4.3.1.2 MICE Destination Attributes Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Gender.....	143
4.3.1.3 MICE Destination Attributes Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Age Groups.....	144
4.3.1.4 MICE Destination Attributes Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Monthly Income Groups.....	146
4.3.1.5 MICE Destination Attributes Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Educational Levels.....	148
4.3.2 Test of Second Hypothesis	150
4.3.2.1 Promotion Tools Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Nationality.....	151
4.3.2.2 Promotion Tools Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Gender.....	152
4.3.2.3 Promotion Tools Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Age Groups.....	153
4.3.2.4 Promotion Tools Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Monthly Income Groups.....	156
4.3.2.5 Promotion Tools Attributes Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Educational Levels.....	158
4.3.3 Test of Third Hypothesis	160

4.3.3.1 Destination Image Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Nationality.....	161
4.3.3.2 Destination Image Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Gender.....	162
4.3.3.3 Destination Image Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Age Groups.....	163
4.3.3.4 Destination Image Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Educational Levels.....	165
4.3.3.5 Destination Image Perceived by MICE Tourism Participants in Terms of Monthly Income Groups.....	167
4.4 Regression Analysis (Hypothesis <i>H4</i> , <i>H5</i>)	169
4.4.1 Test of Fourth Hypothesis	174
4.4.1.1 Regression Analyses: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Destination Image Formation from the Perspective of Local Participants.....	177
4.4.1.2 Regression analyses: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Destination Image Formation from the Perspective of International Participants.....	179
4.4.2 Test of Fifth Hypothesis	182
4.4.2.1 Regression Analyses: The Influence of MICE Destination Attributes on Destination Image Formation from the Perspective of Local Participants.....	186
4.4.2.2 Regression Analyses: The Influence of MICE Destination Attributes on Destination Image Formation from the Perspective of International Participants.....	189
4.5 Conclusion	192

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction.....	195
5.1 MICE Destination Attributes Perceived by MICE Event Participants.....	195
5.2 The Importance of Promotion Tools Perceived by MICE Event Participants.....	201

5.3 Socio-demographic Characteristics of MICE participants and their Perceptions on Destination Image Formation.....	206
5.4 Relationship between the Roles of Promotion Tools and Destination Image Formation	212
5.5 Relationship between MICE Destination Attributes and Destination Image Formation	214
5.6 Strategies in Developing and Promoting MICE Tourism in Jordan.....	217
5.6.1 Suggestions to Market Jordan MICE tourism.....	218
5.6.2 Positioning Strategy Based on Key Destination Attributes.....	219
5.6.3 Promotional Strategies	220
5.6.4 Pricing Strategy	222
5.7 Implications of the Study	223
5.7.1 Theoretical Contributions.....	223
5.7.2 Managerial Contributions.....	225
5.8 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies	229
5.9 Conclusion	232
REFERENCES	234

APPENDICES

Appendix A.....	257
Appendix B.....	258
Appendix C.....	259
Appendix D.....	263
Appendix E.....	264
Appendix F.....	268
Appendix G.....	269

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Number of Meetings per Continent/ Region.....	27
Table 2.2	Pros and Cons of Convention Center Development.....	36
Table 2.3	Common MICE Site Features.....	86
Table 3.1	Items’ Resources for MICE Destination Attributes.....	105
Table 3.2	Items’ Resources for the Roles of Promotion Tools.....	107
Table 3.3	Cognitive Image Factors and Items.....	108
Table 3.4	Pilot Study Subscale for Analysis of MICE Destination Attributes.....	113
Table 3.5	Pilot Study Subscale for Analysis of Cognitive Image Attributes.....	116
Table 3.6	Pilot Study Subscale for Coefficient Alpha of MICE Destination Attributes.....	119
Table 3.7	Pilot Study Subscale for Coefficient Alpha of the Roles of MICE promotion Tools.....	120
Table 3.8	Pilot Study Subscale for Coefficient Alpha of Cognitive Image Attributes.....	121
Table 3.9	Pilot Study Subscale for Coefficient Alpha of Affective Image Attributes.....	123
Table 3.10	Specification of Measurement Scale and Data Analysis Procedures.....	127
Table 4.1	Descriptive Statistics for the Demographic Variables.....	131
Table 4.2	Descriptive Analysis of MICE Destination Attributes Factors.....	132
Table 4.3	Descriptive Analysis of MICE Destination Attributes.....	133
Table 4.4	Descriptive Analysis of the Importance of Promotion Tools.....	136
Table 4.5	Descriptive Analysis of the Roles of Promotion Tools.....	137
Table 4.6	Descriptive Analysis of Destination Image Dimensions.....	138

Table 4.7	Descriptive Analysis of Destination Image.....	140
Table 4.8	<i>T</i> -test of MICE Destination Attributes by Nationality.....	143
Table 4.9	<i>T</i> - test of MICE Destination Attributes by Gender.....	144
Table 4.10	Analysis of Variance of MICE Destination Attributes by Age Groups.....	145
Table 4.11	Post-Hoc Tukey HSD on MICE Destination Attributes Perceived by Respondents in Terms of Age Groups.....	146
Table 4.12	Analysis of Variance Results by Monthly Income Groups.....	147
Table 4.13	Post-Hoc Tukey HSD on MICE Destination Attributes Perceived by Respondents in Terms of Monthly Income Groups.....	148
Table 4.14	Analysis of Variance Results by Educational Levels.....	149
Table 4.15	Post-Hoc Tukey HSD on MICE Destination Attributes Perceived by Respondents in Terms of Educational Levels.....	150
Table 4.16	<i>T</i> - test of Promotion Tools by Nationality.....	152
Table 4.17	<i>T</i> - test of Promotion Tools by Gender.....	153
Table 4.18	Analyses of Variance Results by Age Groups.....	154
Table 4.19	Post-Hoc Tukey HSD on Promotion Tools Perceived by Respondents in Terms of Age Groups.....	155
Table 4.20	Analysis of Variance Results by Monthly Income Groups.....	156
Table 4.21	Post-Hoc Tukey HSD on Promotion Tools Perceived by Respondents in Terms of Monthly Income Groups.....	157
Table 4.22	Analysis of Variance Results by Educational Levels.....	159
Table 4.23	Post-Hoc Tukey HSD on Promotion Tools Perceived by Respondents in Terms of Educational Levels.....	160
Table 4.24	<i>T</i> -test of Destination Image by Nationality.....	161
Table 4.25	<i>T</i> -test of Destination Image by Gender.....	162
Table 4.26	Analysis of Variance Results by Age Groups.....	163

Table 4.27	Post-Hoc Tukey HSD on Cognitive Image Factors Perceived by Respondents in Terms of Age Groups.....	164
Table 4.28	Analysis of Variance Results by Educational Level.....	166
Table 4.29	Analysis of Variance Results by Monthly Income Groups.....	167
Table 4.30	Post-Hoc Tukey HSD on Destination Image Factors Perceived by Respondents in Terms of Monthly Income Groups.....	168
Table 4.31	Correlation Matrixes: Independent Variables versus Dependent Variable.....	171
Table 4.32	Multiple Regression Analysis of Coefficients: Collinearity Statistics....	174
Table 4.33	Regression Analysis: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Cognitive Image	175
Table 4.34	Regression Analysis: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Affective Image.....	176
Table 4.35	Regression Analysis: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Destination Image Formation (Cognitive and Affective).....	177
Table 4.36	Regression Analysis: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Cognitive Image ($n = 310$).....	178
Table 4.37	Regression Analysis: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Affective Image ($n = 310$).....	178
Table 4.38	Regression Analysis: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Destination Image Formation (Cognitive and Affective Components) ($n = 310$).....	179
Table 4.39	Regression Analysis: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Cognitive Image ($n = 547$)	180
Table 4.40	Regression Analysis: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Affective Image ($n = 547$)	181
Table 4.41	Regression Analysis: The Roles of Promotion Tools on Destination Image Formation (Cognitive and Affective Components) ($n = 547$).....	182
Table 4.42	Regression Analysis: MICE Destination Attributes on Cognitive Image ($n = 857$)	183
Table 4.43	Regression Analysis: MICE Destination Attributes on Affective Image ($n = 857$)	184
Table 4.44	Regression Analysis: MICE Destination Attributes on Destination Image Formation (Cognitive and Affective Components) ($n = 857$).....	185
Table 4.45	Regression Analysis: MICE Destination Attributes on Cognitive Image ($n = 310$)	187
Table 4.46	Regression Analysis: MICE Destination Attributes on Affective Image ($n = 310$)	188

Table 4.47	Regression Analysis: MICE Destination Attributes on Destination Image Formation (Cognitive and Affective Components) (n = 310).....	189
Table 4.48	Regression Analysis: MICE Destination Attributes on Cognitive Image (n = 547)	190
Table 4.49	Regression Analysis: MICE Destination Attributes on Affective Image (n = 547)	191
Table 4.50	Regression Analysis: MICE Destination Attributes on Destination Image Formation (Cognitive and Affective Components) (n = 547).....	192

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Distribution of MICE Tourism in Jordan in 2004.....38 (Badhadho, 2006)
Figure 2.2	A General Framework of Destination Image Formation.....53 (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a)
Figure 2.3	Model of the Formation of Destination Image.....54 (Beerli & Martin, 2004a)
Figure 2.4	A General Conceptual Model of the Site Selection Process.....71 (Crouch & Ritchie, 1998)
Figure 2.5	Conceptual Framework of the Study.....93
Figure 4.1	Normality Probability Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals.....172
Figure 4.2	Scatterplot of Destination Image Formation (Dependent Variable).....173

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIMS	Amman International Motor Show
CVBs	Convention Visitor Bureaux
DA	Department of Antiquities
DMOs	Destination Marketing Organizations
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GAM	Greater Amman Municipality
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
JEDCO	Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation
JIL	Jordan Investment Law
JITOA	Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association
JTB	Jordan Tourism Board
MOIT	Ministry of Industry and Trade
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NTS	National Tourism Strategy
WEF	World Economic Forum
WOM	Word of Mouth
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWW	World Wide Web
UNWTO	United Nation World Tourism Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Jordan is a land steeped in history. It has been a place to some of mankind's earliest settlements and villages. The relics of many of the world's great civilizations, such as Greek, Nabatenians, Roman, and Islamic civilizations, can still be seen today in Jordan. As described by Reid and Schwab (2006), Jordan is one of the largest concentrations of iconic archaeological sites. Being at the crossroads of the Middle East, the lands of Jordan and Palestine have served as a strategic nexus connecting Asia, Africa and Europe. Thus, since the dawn of civilization, Jordan's geography has given it an important role to play as a conduit for trade and communications. Connecting east and west, north and south, Jordan continues to play this role today.

In addition to its historical sites, Jordan offers health tourism which is becoming very popular in Jordan (Alhroot & Al-Alak, 2010) Leisure tourism in the Dead Sea area offers world-class spas to visitors. Education tourism is also very popular in Jordan. Adventurers staying in Jordan can also rock-climb in Jordan's Wadi Rum and go for hikes in Jordan's northern mountainous region (Alhroot, 2007). Scuba divers can visit Aqaba's magnificent coral reefs. Cultural tourism is also evident in Jordan, because many western films have been made in Jordan. Shopping tourism is popular in Amman, Zarqa, Irbid, and Aqaba (Alhroot, 2007). Pilgrimages are growing in Jordan. Mount Nebo and the Mosaic Map in Madaba are popular to Christian tourists (Harahsheh, 2002; MOTA, 2010). The

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