

## MOTIVATING FOREIGN TOURISTS TO VISIT THE RURAL SITE IN JORDAN, VILLAGE OF PETRA

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### ABSTRACT

*In Jordan, Rural Tourism, (soft or green), has recently attracted lots of international tourists, and become a rapid growing activity in some world regions, hence, experienced important governmental programs and revitalizing strategies, such as market segmentation analysis, to elevate the government economic and social impacts. Consequently, the study aims to determine the main motivations (factors) that attract foreign tourists to visit Petra, the Jordanian rural site. An objective achieved by applying a self-structured data collection questionnaire on Petra tourists in 2008 to end up concluding that well-facilitated rural environment is the main motivational factor for Petra visiting.*

**Keywords:** *Motivation, Rural areas, Push and pull factors, Jordan.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Several researchers have determined the role of travel motivation and of understanding tourists' motivations (Bongkosh, et al., 2008; Duk-Byeong & Yoo-Shik; Anto'nia, et al. 2007; Chu, et al., 2006; Nam & Laurence, 2004; Zhang and Lam, 1999; Dann, 1981; Crompton, 1979). Most of the empirical studies are based on the motivation of western countries; no empirical studies have been done on the motivation of travel tourism of Jordan's rural areas, despite the fact that Jordan is one of the important destinations for tourists, especially, the rural areas because of their great number. Rural tourism in Jordan has played an important role to attract many of international tourists. Hence, rural communities in Jordan are facing serious problems such as that of depopulation. Generally, most of rural communities in Jordan are deprived and their works depend on agriculture and livestock. However, in recent years, development has been a significant issue for the Jordanian government. Accordingly, the Jordanian government interested in tourism in rural areas to develop their populations.

In many countries in the world, rural areas have provided the setting for recreation and tourism activities. It also provides and offers a lot of opportunities for Jordanian farmers. Due to the importance of tourism, the Jordanian government has created many natural reserves, such as Dana reserve, Ajloun reserve, etc. These reserves aim to protect the environment without any concern about the interests of rural communities. Thus, the objective of this study is to determine the motives that attract foreign tourists to visit Petra.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW ON TOURISTS' MOTIVATIONS

The concept of motivation was defined by a lot of researchers. According to Scheffman & Kanuk (2004) motivation is individuals' driving force that motivate them to act to satisfy their needs. Myers (2004) maintains that it is a need or desire that energizes behavior and directs it towards a goal. In addition, Beerli & Martin (2004) stated that motivation is the need that desires an individual to act in a certain way to achieve the desired satisfaction. Motivation has been tackled by a lot of researchers (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977, 1981), and most of the researches on consumer's behavior argue that motivations represent individuals' forces that lead them to action

(Schiffman & Kanuk, 1978). Investigating reasons or motivations that lead tourists to travel is very important to understand tourists' contributions and needs (Bongkosh et al., 2008).

Motivations are of two types: the first one is the physiological that stems from biological needs. Such motivations are related with matters of surviving, such as food and water. The second type is the psychological motivations that stem from the needs created by an individual's environment (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981). Individual motivations are related to needs and goals. In travel, Fodness (1994) suggested five types of travel, like knowledge or culture, educational motives, reward maximization or pleasure and sensation, self-esteem and ego-enhancement or social prestige, punishment maximization or escape stimulus-avoidance. Additionally, many papers refer to push and pull factors as travel motivation. Push and pull factors are also used to explain people travel motivation. A study by Zhang & Lam (1999) found 22 push and 26 pull factors that drive Chinese tourists to visit Hong Kong. They found five Push factors as that of knowledge, prestige, enhancement of human relationship, relaxation and novelty, while pull factors consist of hi-tech image, expenditure, accessibility, service attribute and quality, sightseeing variety, and culture link. However, Dann (1981) argued that push factors are internal drives which motivate people to travel; these motives includes the need to escape from routine, need to relaxation and need to self-esteem. Needs for novelty refers to the desire to go to famous destinations or discover new experience, thrill, and adventure (Lee & Crompton, 1992). Push and pull factors are related to tourists behavior that lead them to emotional need. The emotional needs push tourists to leisure and recreation and pull them to destinations (Goossens, 2000). Hence, Maslow's (1970) classified five needs of individuals: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self actualization needs. Pearce (1982) added a travel needs model that was developed based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Push factors refer to the internal factors that drive people to travel while pull factors refer to the external factors that lead people to know and identify where, when, why, and how they travel to exotic places (Jang & Cai, 2002).

Blaine & Gloan (1993) stated that touristic activities, especially, in rural areas has remarkably witnessed more attentions since the 1970s in most of the developed countries, Spain for instance. Such an attention has played a significant role in developing the rural areas that were deprived socially and economically (Dernoi, 1991). World Tourism Organization added that rural tourism has become a very important world activity since it uniquely attracts lots of foreign tourists. Barke (2004) mentioned that in Spain, for instance, rural tourism has witnessed a rapid growth, especially, in regard with facilities and accommodations. Moreover, rural tourism aims to live temporarily in a different local community to know more about their life-style. Molera & Albaladejo (2007), also, maintained that the new type, Rural Tourism, has witnessed a rapid grow in many world regions, particularly, Jordan.

In this vein, Liu (2006) found three illustrations which are drawn from Kadah state, in Malaysia, that encourage regional planning of remote resorts, establishments and/or home-stay programme. Park & Yoon (2009), on the other hand, identified six motivational factors that influence tourists to visit rural area in Korean; they were relaxation, socialization, learning, family togetherness, novelty, and excitement.

### 3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

#### 3.1 Area of the Study

Petra covers 2,209 km<sup>2</sup>, with a number of population around 80.1. The region of Petra is located in Southern Jordan, bordering Aqaba and Wadi Rumm areas. It is around 260 km far from south of Amman, the capital of Jordan. In Jordan, rural tourism was evolved in the beginnings of last two decade of the last century in southern Jordan. However, it is considered a new phenomenon in the country. The reasons for selecting this province are two-fold. Firstly, Petra is the main and important tourist's site in Jordan. Secondly, it has won to be one of the new seven wonders in the world 2007. According to data from Ministry of Tourism Antiquity (2008) the number of tourist arrivals was (160,658) in 2003, but this number jumped to (813,267) tourist in 2008.

Figure 1 insert here

#### 3.2 Survey Instrument

The study focuses on those foreign tourists visiting rural sites in Jordan, such as Petra. The instrument of this research includes a self-structured questionnaire. Secondary data were collected from related papers and articles published on the same topic. The questionnaire is designed to be self-administered, is divided into a Likert scale from five to one, 5 very important, 4 important, 3 fairly important, 2 least important, 1 not at all important. It is divided into two main parts: demographic variables and tourists' behaviors who visit Jordan. The second part focused on the factors that drive foreign tourists to visit rural touristic sites in Jordan. The questionnaire includes (28) questions. In first part of the questionnaire, most of questions are related to demographic variables and the behavior of respondents when they visit Jordan; these questions extends from (1-8). In the second part of the

questionnaire, most of questions are related to identify the main factors that attract foreign tourists to visit the rural touristic sites in Jordan, specifically, Petra; these questions extends from (9-21).

#### 4. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Factor analysis, descriptive analysis, and frequency are used in order to find the importance of the main reasons that drive foreign tourists to visit Petra in Jordan. Foreign tourists who visit Jordan in summer season 2008 were selected as representative sample of this study. Face to face personal method was used as a means whereby data was collected. The data collection method was suitable because it helped researchers collect the questionnaires with a relatively short period of time. There were 300 distributed questionnaires, (287) were returned and only (273) of the used questionnaires were analyzed with a response rate of (91.67%). For Data analysis and results, the researchers used factor analysis, frequency and descriptive analysis to identify the important motivation factor that attracts foreign tourists to visit Petra.

#### 5. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

##### 5.1 Demographic Variables and Tourists Characteristics

Table (1) summarizes all the details related to respondents' demographic variables and their characteristics. Among (273) questionnaires, (50.9%) from respondents were male and (49.1%) were female; and (27.8%) of the respondents' were in the age group of 31-40. More than half of the respondents were married, figuring about (52.4%); about (37.9%) of the respondents' had a monthly income less than 100.000 USD. Around (51.3%) of respondents came from Europe, 70 percent of them used air-medium to reach Jordan, and only (75.9%) of respondents wanted to repeat their visit to Jordan. The majority of the respondents, (86.2) per cent will recommend Jordan as a foreign destination for their friends and relatives.

Table 1 insert here

##### 5.2 The Importance Motivational Items

Table (2) reports the importance of mean ranking of the motivational items. "Petra, the site of new seven wonders" was the most important among the travel motivations ( $m = 4.47$ ), followed by the "heritage sites" ( $m = 4.13$ ), natural reserves ( $m = 3.91$ ), and "outstanding scenery" ( $m = 3.89$ ).

Table 2 insert here

##### 5.3 Factor Analysis

In order to identify the motivational dimensions, factors, principle components, factor analysis was used to group the main motivational factors that drive and attract foreign tourists to visit Petra as a rural area in Jordan. The measure of Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) was used in all the motivational factors. Twenty one motivational items were factors analyzed using Varimax Rotated procedure to delineate the underlying main motivations that were associated with travel motivation to rural areas in Jordan. Factors items also had an Eigen value that was greater than one.

Table (3) reports the results of factor analysis for all items attributes, resulting in five factors. The important factor grouping was "Rural Environment". It had (3.85) Eigenvalue and (10.60) per cent of variance. This factor included five items, which were "Local Bedouin life", "Outdoor activities", "Festivals and events", "Entertainments", and "Affordable tourist destination". In this factor, the important item was "Local Bedouin life". It obtained a mean of (3.77). The lowest important motivational factor was "Adventure". It had (1.47) Eigenvalue and (6.02) per cent of variance. It included two items: "Mount climbing", and "Desert camping". Moreover, "desert camping" was the most important item because it yielded a mean of (3.31). The results showed that all the motivational factors to rural areas are "Rural environment", "Facilities", "Weather", "Cultural link", and "Adventure".

Table 3 insert here

The results indicated that more than 75 percent of the respondents agreed on considering Jordan as a place to be visited more than once. In addition, more than 86 percent of the respondents will promote and recommend Jordan as a foreign destination to their friends and relatives.

#### 6. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

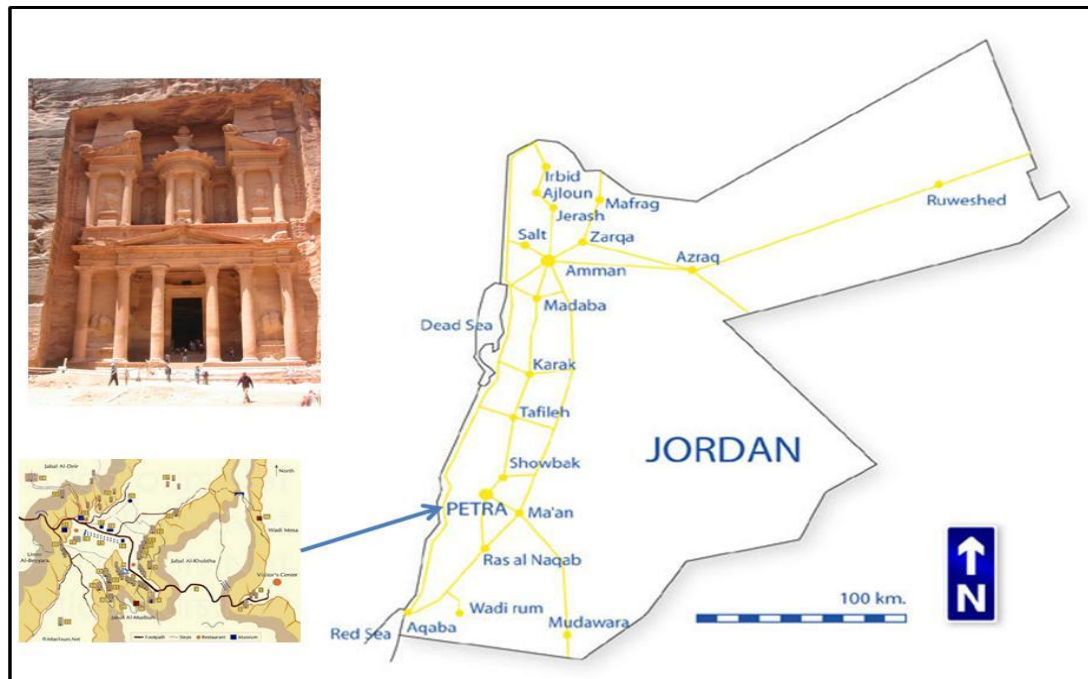
The main purpose of this study was to identify the main motivational factors that attract foreign tourists to visit Petra as a rural area in Jordan. A factor analysis was used and to provide underlying dimensions of travel motivational factors to visit rural areas in Jordan. The motivation of travel to rural areas showed that there were five motivational factors that attracted foreign tourists to visit rural areas in Jordan. These factors are "rural environment", "facilities", "weather", "cultural link", and "adventure". Hence, Jordan is considered as a

multinational region and an open gate for international tourists' arrival to across the outside world. Its very uniqueness stems from the change and mixture between the western and eastern culture, such as heritage, and historical attraction sites in Jordan. On the other hand, in order to support motivational factors that drive foreign tourist to visit Jordan and to attract more foreign tourists, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquity should consider focusing tourism and marketing strategies, in accordance with the results of this study, to develop rural tourism in Jordan and in Petra especially. Knowing the main reasons and the importance of motivational factors that drive foreign tourist to visit rural areas can help destinations to satisfy the needs and desires of tourists. Attitude of tourists toward destinations might reveal something about the characteristics of the destinations visited. However, the results indicated that "rural environment" was the important factor while "adventure" was the lowest important motivational factor for tourists to visit rural areas in Jordan. Therefore, one can notice that the foreign tourists are looking forward to see and practice something different from their own countries. Since Jordan is considered as an international destination and its borders are open for international tourists. This has made Jordan a great and unique place to tourists all over the world. Moreover, in term of rural areas in Jordan, rural environment, facilities, weather, cultural link, and adventure were regarded glamorous incentives to foreign tourists to visit rural area in Jordan, especially, Petra. As a result, Jordanian government paid strict attention to inbound tourism, especially, from Europe and America to participate in developing tourism sector as well as to receive a lot of international tourists in the future. Based on the results of this study, the tourism sector and its product in Jordan are on the way of growing and getting more prosperous. Ministry of Tourism and Antiquity can develop a variety of tourist destinations in Jordan to give a chance to attract more foreign tourists in the future. Recommendations for future research were given to decision makers and takers to test the repeated visited destinations by foreign tourists in Jordan to satisfy their needs and desires. Moreover, and as for future research, it is suggested to study in detail the motivations of foreign tourists to visit other Jordanian regions, such as Dana reserve and Bedouin life to expand the knowledge about the other main motivations that drive foreign tourists to visit Jordan.

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**Figure 1. Location of Study Area**

**Table 1. Demographic variables and trip characteristics profile in Jordan (n = 273)**

Variables	F	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	139	50.9 %
Female	134	49.1%
<b>Age</b>		
11 – 20	15	5.5%
21 – 30	57	20.9%
31 – 40	76	27.8%
41 – 50	39	14.3%
51 – 60	39	14.3%
More than 60 years	47	17.2
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	105	38.5%
Married	143	52.2%
Widowed	25	9.2%



<b>Annual Income</b>		
Less than 20,000\$	233	37.9%
20,001 \$ - 40,000 \$	115	18.7%
40,001 \$ - 60,000 \$	97	15.8%
60,001 \$ - 80,000 \$	79	12.8%
80,001 \$ - 100,000 \$	62	10.1
More than 100,000 \$	29	4.7%
<b>Nationality</b>		
North America	65	23.8%
Latin America	20	7.3%
Europe	140	51.3%
Australia	27	9.9%
Africa	10	3.7%
Asia	11	4.0%
<b>What travel medium used to reach Jordan</b>		
Air	191	70%
Sea	48	17.6%
Land	34	12.5%
<b>Would you like come to Jordan as again</b>		
Yes	467	75.9%
No	148	24.1%
<b>Would you recommend Jordan as destination to your friends</b>		
Yes	530	86.2%
No	85	13.8%

**Table 2.** The importance ranking of tourists motivations (n=273)

Item	Mean	Item	Item	Mean	Rank
Petra, the site of new seven wonders	4.47	1	Reliable Weather/Climate	3.60	11
Heritage Sites	4.13	2	Historical Castles	3.58	12
Natural Reserves	3.91	3	Value for Money	3.57	13
Outstanding Scenery	3.89	4	Availability of pre-trip an in-country tourist information	3.41	14
Local Bedouin Life	3.77	5	Outdoor Activities	3.36	15
Safe destination	3.75	6	Desert Camping	3.31	16
Exotic Atmosphere	3.74	7	Festivals and Events	3.23	17
Culture, Arts and Traditions	3.68	8	Entertainment	3.09	18
Affordable Tourist Destination	3.64	9	Nightlife	2.96	19
Convenience of Visa	3.64	10	Mount Climbing	2.83	20
			Amusement/theme parks	2.45	21

**Table 3.** Motivational factors that motivate tourists' to visit Petra in Jordan (n= 273)

Pull Factors	Factor loading	Communality	Mean	Eigen Value	Variance	Alpha
<b>Rural Environment</b>				3.85	10.60	0.72
Local Bedouin Life	0.69	0.48	3.77			
Outdoor Activities	0.83	0.70	3.36			
Festivals and Events	0.61	0.56	3.23			
Entertainment	0.61	0.57	3.09			
Affordable Tourist Destination	0.37	0.28	3.64			
<b>Facilities</b>				3.70	9.91	0.73
Safe Destination	0.77	0.59	3.75			
Convenience of Visa	0.70	0.53	3.64			
Value for Money	0.72	0.54	3.57			
Availability of pre-trip information in-country Tourist	0.59	0.46	3.41			
Nightlife	0.87	0.78	2.96			
<b>Weather</b>				3.24	8.73	0.58
Reliable Weather/Climate	0.69	0.48	3.60			
Exotic Atmosphere	0.52	0.42	3.74			
Natural reserves	0.69	0.49	3.91			
Amusement/Theme Parks	0.77	0.60	2.45			
<b>Culture Link</b>				3.16	7.23	0.60
Petra, the Site of New Seven Wonders	0.78	0.61	4.47			
Heritage Sites	0.78	0.53	3.13			
Historical Castles	0.48	0.40	3.58			
Culture, Arts and Traditions	0.69	0.49	3.68			
Outstanding Scenery	0.70	0.49	3.89			
<b>Adventure</b>				1.47	6.02	0.64
Mount Climbing	0.86	0.73	2.83			
Desert camping	0.86	0.73	3.31			