

## The Mediating Effect of Tourists' Satisfaction on the Relationship Between Destination Image and Tourists' Loyalty: A Study of Selected Archaeological Sites of Jordan

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### Abstract

Tourism has become an essential sector for the economy of many countries. The tourism industry in Jordan has been rapidly developing due to its unique and remarkable assets, such as Petra, the Dead Sea, and Mount Nebo. This study aimed to investigate the mediating effect of tourists' satisfaction on the relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty in selected archaeological sites of Jordan. A conceptual model was developed based on previous empirical studies, and data were collected by distributing questionnaires to a random sample of 380 tourists who visited archaeological sites in Jordan specifically: Petra, mount Nebo, The Dead Sea and The Baptismal site. The findings of this study revealed that destination image had a significant impact on tourists' satisfaction and

loyalty. Moreover, tourists' satisfaction mediated the relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty. The study also found that tourists' satisfaction had a significant impact on their loyalty towards the archaeological sites. These findings suggest that enhancing the destination image and improving tourists' satisfaction can lead to increased loyalty towards archaeological sites in Jordan. The study provides valuable insights for managers of archaeological sites to develop effective strategies for improving the tourism industry in Jordan, the most important of which is to focus on developing the destination image through promoting the unique historical aspects for the archaeological sites, as well as increasing the marketing efforts toward them, and creating a digital map for archaeological sites that would help tourists to explore and access these sites easily, in addition to improving the quality of services, facilities and infrastructure to meet the expectations of tourists and enhance their satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Destination Image, Tourists, Satisfaction, Loyalty, Tourist places, Jordan.

## التأثير الوسيط لرضا السائحين على العلاقة بين صورة الوجهة وولاء السياح: دراسة مواقع أثرية مختاره في الأردن

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### ملخص

أصبحت السياحة قطاعاً رئيسياً لاقتصاد العديد من البلدان، وشهدت صناعة السياحة في الأردن تطوراً سريعاً نظراً لطبيعتها وجهاتها السياحية الفريدة، مثل البتراء والبحر الميت وجبل نيبو. هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة التأثير الوسيط لرضا السائحين في العلاقة بين صورة الوجهة وولاء السائحين في مواقع أثرية مختارة في الأردن. حيث تم تطوير نموذج مفاهيمي اعتماداً على دراسات تجريبية سابقة. وتم جمع البيانات من خلال توزيع استبانات على عينة عشوائية مكونة من 380 سائحاً زاروا المواقع الأثرية في الأردن وبالتحديد: البتراء وجبل نيبو والبحر الميت وموقع المغطس.

أظهرت نتائج هذه الدراسة أن صورة الوجهة كان لها تأثير كبير على رضا السياح وولائهم. بالإضافة لذلك، توسط رضا السائحين في العلاقة بين صورة الوجهة السياحية وولاء السائحين. كما بينت الدراسة أن رضا السائحين كان له أثر كبير على ولاءهم للمواقع الأثرية. تشير نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن تحسين صورة الوجهة وتحسين رضا السائحين يمكن أن يؤدي إلى زيادة الولاء تجاه المواقع الأثرية في الأردن. توفر هذه الدراسة توصيات قيمة لمديري المواقع الأثرية لتطوير إستراتيجيات فعالة لتحسين صناعة السياحة في الأردن. من أهمها ضرورة التركيز على تحسين صورة الوجهة من خلال الترويج للجوانب الفريدة والتاريخية للمواقع الأثرية، وزيادة الجهود التسويقية حيالها، وإنشاء خريطة رقمية للمواقع السياحية تساعد السائح على استكشافها والوصول إليها بسهولة، بالإضافة إلى التركيز على تحسين جودة الخدمات والمرافق والبنية التحتية لتلبية توقعات السائحين وتعزيز رضاهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: صورة الوجهة، السائح، الرضا، الولاء، الأماكن السياحية، الأردن.

### 1. Introduction:

Tourism has become a significant driver of economic growth and development for many countries worldwide. Jordan is one such country that has been actively promoting its unique and remarkable archaeological sites to attract tourists from all over the world (Toussaint et al, 2016). Jordan has turned into a rich destination

that attracts tourists from all over the world, as a result of attractions such as Petra, the Dead Sea, and Mount Nebo. Tourism is extraordinary compared to other solution for individuals to eliminate their stress and live sound, safe, and agreeable life. It likewise gives a possibility to learning, assists with understanding the living styles of individuals in various pieces of the world and assists with bettering social relations (Raman, 2019). The tourism industry has achieved incredible fame and has become a typical term in each alcove and corner of the world. The tourism industry is considered as a monetary development engine to pull the improvement of different ventures and the by and large economy (Salleh et al, 2013).

The tourism industry is a likewise key mainstay of Jordan's economy. This industry area is viewed as quite possibly the most encouraging in Jordan. Jordan is a rich nation of archeological and social legacy locales and assets (Al Majali, 2012). Tourists rush to the nation to see the famous ancient city of Petra, which was also named one of the New7Wonders of the World in the year 2007. Petra recorded the highest number of tourists in the decade in Jordan. The second most popular tourist sites after Petra in Jordan are Wadi Rum. It was also included in UNESCO World Heritage Site in the year 2011. Furthermore, Mount Nebo where Moses was buried on the mountain, the city of Jerash which is praised as 'the Pompeii of the East' and Dead Sea located on the border between Israel and Jordan; are the famous archaeological sites in Jordan. According to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA), the travel industry area in Jordan was comparable to about 12.5% of GDP (2019). The third quarter of 2019 additionally enlisted an increase in tourists' appearances by 6.5%. The Central Bank of Jordan's (CBJ) figures uncovered that travel industry in 2019 (third quarter), were equivalent to JD 1,290.7 million (an expansion of 7.7% over same period last year).

Maintaining tourists' satisfaction is very important because it can lead to repeat tourists'. Tourists' satisfaction is directly depending on destination image which means perceptions held by potential tourists about an area. The concept of destination image has recently aroused increased attention from government

because it is the engine to haul the development in the overall economy. It has been one of the key areas of tourism research. However, empirical studies of destination image related to tourists' satisfaction and tourists' loyalty in the context of Jordan have been very limited. Owing these factors, the study was conducted in Jordan as the number of tourists in the country increased significantly. Considering theoretical and contextual gaps on how destination image affects tourists' loyalty, this study made an attempt to test the implications of destination image on tourists' loyalty by collecting primary data through field surveys from the tourists in the year 2021, conducted statistical analysis using regression technique and discussed outcomes of the study.

The independent variable in this study is the destination image. Destination image refers to tourists' perceptions and expectations of a destination based on its reputation, attractiveness, and uniqueness. It is an essential factor in attracting tourists to visit a particular destination. In this study, the destination image of selected archaeological sites in Jordan is investigated as a predictor of tourists' loyalty. The dependent variable in this study is tourists' loyalty towards archaeological sites in Jordan. Tourists' loyalty is defined as their willingness to revisit the same destination and recommend it to others. Loyalty is critical for the sustainability of the tourism industry as it contributes to the continuity of tourist flows and generates positive word-of-mouth marketing. Thus, understanding the factors that influence tourists' loyalty towards archaeological sites in Jordan can help tourism managers and policymakers to develop effective strategies for enhancing visitors' experiences and promoting sustainable tourism development. The intermediate variable in this study is tourists' satisfaction. Tourists' satisfaction is defined as their overall evaluation of their experiences at archaeological sites in Jordan. It is a critical factor that mediates the relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty. Tourists' satisfaction influences their intention to revisit the same destination and recommend it to others.

This research is divided into five sections: introduction, literature review and hypotheses, research methodology, results and discussions, and conclusion.

## **2. Literature Review and Hypotheses:**

### **2.1 Research goals:**

This research aims to achieve the following goals:

1. Explore the relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty in selected archaeological sites of Jordan.
2. Identify the factors that contribute to tourists' loyalty in archaeological sites in Jordan.
3. Examine the mediating effect of tourists' satisfaction on the relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty in selected archaeological sites of Jordan.
4. provide recommendations for improving tourists' loyalty and enhancing the tourism industry in selected archaeological sites of Jordan

### **2.2 Research problem:**

Although the tourism industry in Jordan is developing rapidly due to its unique and fascinating assets, such as Petra and the Dead Sea, there is a need to investigate the effect of destination image on tourist loyalty in selected archaeological sites in Jordan.

The study problem focuses on identifying the mediating effect of tourist satisfaction on the relationship between the image of the tourist destination for the tourist places in Jordan and enhancing the loyalty of tourists after their visit to these archaeological sites.

### **2.3 The impact of destination image on tourists' satisfaction and tourists' loyalty**

Destination image (DI) refers to the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations, and emotional thoughts an individual or group might have of a specific place. It is the most important component of tourist decision making. It is a subjective term and different researchers used different components to determine destination image. Rajesh (2013) used attractions, accessibility, lodging, dining, and environment, shopping events & activities as the proxy variables for destination image. Furthermore, Andreea (2018) selected comfort and discomfort of the destination, infrastructure and transport, accommodation and food services, and tourist attractions for destination image. The research by

Alcocer and Ruiz (2019) used natural resources, infrastructure, leisure and recreation tourism, culture, history, art, political and economic factors, to measure the destination image.

Al-Ababneh (2013) examined tourists' perceptions towards quality tourism services provided at Petra historical site in Jordan. Information was gathered with the assistance of surveys from 180 tourists. Multiple regression was used to examine the relationship between service quality and tourist satisfaction. The sample included 52% females, 48% males, 45% college education holders, 51% individuals who worked in private area. The author used destination facilities, destination accessibility, destination attractions to measure service quality. Furthermore, the research highlighted that service quality has a positive relationship with tourist satisfaction. It was additionally discovered that tourists in Petra were respectably happy with the degree of the travel industry administrations.

Johann and Anastassova (2014) conducted a survey during 2010 to 2013 on 1212 tourists who spare their summer vacations in Bulgaria. The demographic picture showed that 51% were females and 49% males. The results highlighted a positive and strong correlation among different variables namely standard of rooms, quality of meals provided by hotels, level of customer service, entertainment facilities, and the price charged by hotels. The research found the quality gaps like deficient cleaning, insufficient client support regarding challenges with imparting, hostile mentality towards Polish sightseers, absence of Polish channels on the TV restricted admittance to free Wi-Fi. Furthermore, Aliman et al (2014) conducted the research on 482 tourists visiting Langkawi in 2013. The findings demonstrated that all the three predictors (tourist expectations, perceived quality, and destination image) had positive critical relationships with perceived value and satisfaction. Destination image was the foremost vital antecedent of perceived value and tourist satisfaction. The research suggested incorporating more lifts at the Langkawi air terminal ought, foundation of more open latrines at the sea shores and at the little close by islands; fabricating more reasonable chalets for the low and center pay gatherings of guests; offer moderate bundles for the youthful guests and control the costs of food and private vehicle rentals.

Andreea (2018) examined the impact of destination image on tourists'

satisfaction and loyalty in the context of domestic tourism in Romania on a sample of 205 tourists. The sample included 75% females, 25% males, 39% young people aged 18-21, and 50% have an average education with monthly income around 2,000 RON. The results revealed that variables including destination's comfort, tourist attractions, accommodation and food services have a significant influence on the satisfaction and loyalty of tourists. The author found that the destination's comfort has the greatest among all variables. Moreover, the research conducted by Keni, Oktora, and Wilson (2018) on 150 respondents highlighted a positive and significant impact of destination image and perceived quality on tourists' satisfaction and also on tourists' loyalty.

Alcocer & Ruiz (2019) tried to find out whether the destination image has played any role in tourist satisfaction. The data was collected from 511 tourists visited the archaeological park during the months of April and May 2017. PLS-SEM was applied for analysis. The authors divided destination image into cognitive image, affective image, and overall image. Natural resources, general infrastructure, tourism infrastructure, leisure and recreation tourism, culture, history, and art, political and economic factors, natural environment, political environment were the variables used to measure the destination image. The individual reliability as well as composite reliability was examined before testing of hypotheses. The results using PLS-SEM revealed significant relationship between destination image and tourists' satisfaction. Similarly, another study conducted by Elsayeh (2020) in Egypt including tourists from (Finland, UK, USA, and Egypt) also concluded that destination image has a positive impact on tourists' satisfaction and on tourists' loyalty. The study suggested of developing a strong image of Egypt as a travel destination like Jordan for the development of economy.

#### ***2.4 Hypotheses Developed***

Based on the literature presented above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Destination image has a significant impact on tourists' satisfaction.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Destination image has a significant impact on tourists' loyalty.

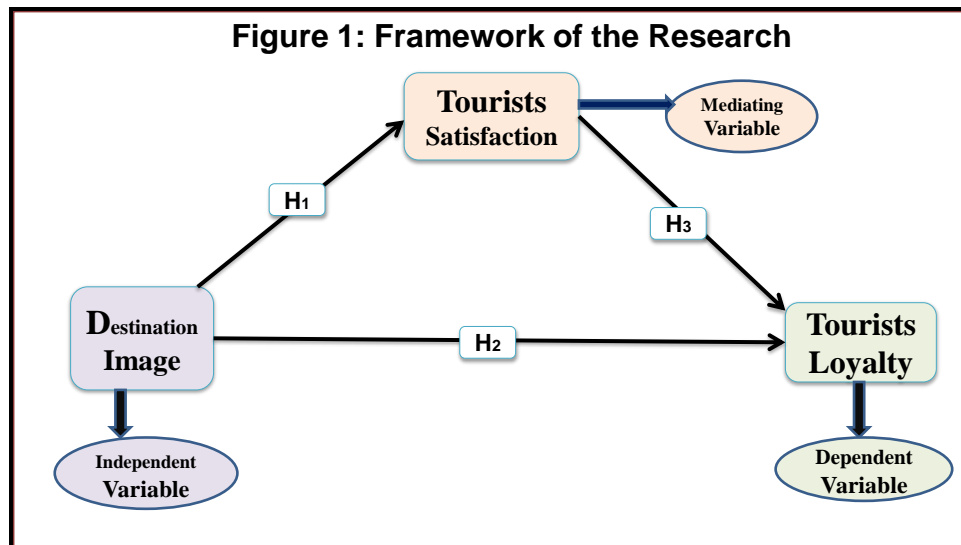
**H<sub>3</sub>:** Tourists' satisfaction has a significant impact on tourists' loyalty.

**H4:** The quality of services and facilities in archaeological sites positively influence tourists' satisfaction.

**3. Research Methodology:**

**3.1 Conceptual Framework of the study**

The conceptual framework as shown in figure 1 was constructed as per the objectives of the study. Destination image was the independent variable which was measured by five components on the basis of previous empirical research and on the basis of research gap. These include historical and cultural heritages, ambience, accommodation, gastronomy, and prices. The special care was laid that no single factor left behind which was left by previous researchers. Tourists' satisfaction was the mediating variable and tourists' loyalty was the dependent variable.



**3.2 Sampling Technique**

Random sampling was executed in the research since all tourists have equivalent chance at being including for the sample. The benefit is that the enormous number of respondents can be acquired rapidly and advantageously at lower cost. The necessary number of samples to direct the research was identified through the formula particularly where large and unknown population.



Sample Size=  $Z^2 * (p) * (1-p) / c^2$

Where, Z=1.96; P=0.5 (Proportion for unknown Population);

C=margin of error (0.04=±4%)

According to the above formula, 384 should be the required sample size.

### 3.2 Questionnaire

The current study used a structured questionnaire (see table 2) that was prepared under the expert guidance. It was designed on five-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This method was also used previously by Kim and Kwon (2018), Hung et al. (2021). Twenty-two items (Table 2) were used to measure the aforementioned seven variables. Most of the items were adapted from previous studies and some of them were developed by me. The study was conducted in a single time frame during July 2021 to November, 2021. 500 structured questionnaires were distributed to the tourists visiting selected archaeological sites to get the sample size of 384. However, 420 questionnaires were received back wherein 380 were found reliable for testing hypothesis. Thus, sample size for the study remains 380.

### 3.3 Characteristics of Sample

Table 1 highlights the demographic profile of the selected respondents. The highest number of respondents (171) was belonging to the age group of 40-55 years. The respondents belong to the age group of 25-40 years were 38%. Only 10% of respondents were more than 55 years. Besides, the study finds 53% males, 47% females, 62% married respondents, and unmarried or single or divorced tourists were 38% only. Moreover, the highest number of respondents was graduates followed by postgraduates and thereafter undergraduates. The questionnaire also asked the nationality of tourists. The highest number of tourists was from European countries and the lowest tourists were from Arab countries. Tourists from American countries stand second. 15% were from Asian countries and 8% were Jordanians.

**Table 1: Characteristics of Sample**

Attributes		Frequency	Percent
<b>Age (in years)</b>	Less than 25 Years	27	7
	25-40 Years	144	38
	40-55 Years	171	45
	Above 55 Years	38	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender (N=340)</b>	Male	201	53
	Female	179	47
	<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	236	62
	Unmarried/Single	144	38
	<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Education</b>	Undergraduates	84	22
	Graduates	144	38
	Postgraduates	95	25
	Others	57	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Nationality</b>	American	95	25
	Europeans	183	48
	Asians	57	15
	Arabs	15	4
	Jordanians	30	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 provides information about the characteristics of the sample used in the study. It includes demographic variables such as gender, age, education, Marital Status, and nationality. The table also shows the number and percentage of respondents for each category of these variables. This information is essential to understand the profile of the participants and to ensure that the sample is representative of the population being studied.

#### 4. Analysis:

**4.1 Alpha Reliability**

Table 2 shows the result produced by SPSS after the application of Cronbach alpha. Alpha values on all constructs were greater than 0.6 which are matched with the guidelines issued by Taber (2018). This brought me on the conclusion that data was suitable for testing hypotheses.

**Table 2: Alpha Reliability**

Variables	Indicator	Alpha
<b>Historical and cultural heritages</b>	You are glad after visiting historical heritages.	0.911
	Cultural heritages overwhelmed you.	0.871
	Festivals and events at the destination impressed you to the core.	0.654
<b>Ambience</b>	The climatic conditions of the destination are most convenient to you.	0.773
	You like the safety and cleanliness of the destination.	0.667
	Local citizens are friendly and polite.	0.634
	There are possibilities of entertainment at the destination.	0.779
<b>Accommodation</b>	There is proper network of stores.	0.792
	There is proper availability of internet services.	0.642
	There is availability of hotels and good quality of rooms.	0.633
<b>Gastronomy</b>	Review of cooking techniques.	0.724
	Food is quite delicious.	0.758
	Local food eating habits and serving style is appreciable.	0.690
<b>Prices</b>	The prices of food and accommodation are reasonable.	0.935
	The prices of transport service are reasonable.	0.768
	You get value for the money.	0.914
<b>Tourists Satisfaction</b>	The overall experience of visiting Jordan is satisfying.	0.754
	I think my decision to visit Petra and other places was a wise one.	0.738
	These places meet most of my expectations.	0.729
	I will continue to visit this country.	0.687

Variables	Indicator	Alpha
Tourists Loyalty	I will recommend this country to others.	0.664
	I will say positive things about this place to others.	0.752

**Table 3: Correlation Matrix**

	HCH	Ambience	AC	GS	Prices	TS	TL
HCH	1						
Ambience	0.887**	1					
AC	0.796**	0.854**	1				
GS	0.744*	0.767**	0.804**	1			
Prices	0.692**	0.839*	0.711*	0.677**	1		
TS	0.901*	0.857**	0.928*	0.796*	0.844 **	1	
TL	0.822**	0.770*	0.796**	0.823**	0.937*	0.809*	1

**Note:** HCH: Historical and Cultural Heritages; AC: Accommodation; GS: Gastronomy, TS: Tourists' Satisfaction; TL: Tourists' Loyalty

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

#### 4.3 Correlation Matrix

Table 3 highlights the correlation among dependent and independent variables used in the study. Some of the variables were correlated significantly at 5% and some were significant at 1% confidence level. It was found that none of the variable was insignificant either at 5% or at 1% confidence level. The results were supported the previous findings Jayampathi & Munasinghe (2019) and Alcocer & Ruiz (2020).

**Table 4: Multiple Regression Results [H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>2</sub>]**

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables					
	Model 1			Model 2		
	Tourists' Satisfaction (TS)			Tourists' Loyalty (TL)		
	$\beta$	t-statistics	p	$\beta$	t-statistics	p
Historical and cultural heritages (HCH)	0.503	3.457	0.000	0.577	9.745	0.001
Ambience	0.479	5.449	0.001	0.405	1.347	0.000
Accommodation	0.287	6.207	0.000	0.342	7.442	0.002
Gastronomy	0.339	1.499	0.002	0.441	6.085	0.000
Prices	0.279	4.557	0.004	0.366	1.273	0.000
ANOVA (F Value) = 65.745			ANOVA (F Value) = 101.227			
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =0.521			Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =0.601			
Durbin Watson =1.457			Durbin Watson =1.944			

**4.4 Multiple Regression Results [H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>2</sub>]**

Table 4 highlights the multiple regression results produced by SPSS related with H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>2</sub> in simplified manner. The adjusted R square (0.521) indicates that 52% of the variations in the tourists' satisfaction can be predicted from the destination image. The model constructs were also validated (F=65.745; p<0.005). Besides, beta coefficients on HCH ( $\beta$ =0.503), Ambience ( $\beta$ =0.479) accommodation ( $\beta$ =.287) gastronomy ( $\beta$ =0.339) and prices ( $\beta$ =0.279). All beta coefficients were significant to tourist satisfaction. Hence, H<sub>1</sub> is accepted.

Under model 2, the adjusted R square (0.601) indicates that 60% variations in tourists' loyalty can be predicted from the destination image. The model constructs were also validated (F=101.227; p<0.005). Furthermore, the results highlighted that all independent variables of destination image were significantly associated with the tourists' loyalty. HCH ( $\beta$ =0.577), Ambience ( $\beta$ =0.405), accommodation ( $\beta$ =0.342), and gastronomy ( $\beta$ =0.441) and prices ( $\beta$ =0.366). All these were significant to tourist loyalty. Thus, H<sub>2</sub> is accepted. The findings related

with H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>2</sub> were supported with the previous studies Guzman-Parra et al. (2016); Gim (2018); Herle (2018); Clue (2019); Raman (2019); Hung et al. (2021).

**Table 5: Simple Regression [TS and TL]**

Model	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	Standard Error	t value	ANOVA F Value	P Value	Result
3	0.722	0.637	0.60987	30.741	112.989	0.000	Accepted

Significant at 5%

**4.5 Simple Regression Results [H<sub>3</sub> and H<sub>4</sub>]**

Table 5 highlights the results of H<sub>3</sub>. The adjusted R square (0.722) indicates that 72% variations in tourists' loyalty can be predicted from tourist satisfaction. The model constructs were also validated (F=112.989; p<0.005). Furthermore, tourist satisfaction was significantly associated with tourists' loyalty ( $\beta=0.637$ , p<0.01). Thus, H<sub>3</sub> is accepted. It also proved that tourist satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty. These findings were consistent with the previous studies Alrousan and Abuamoud (2013); Wang et al (2017); Chenini and Touaiti (2018); Kim and Kwon (2018); Kanwel et al (2019); and Huwae et al (2020). And it was found that there is a positive statistical relationship between the effect of the intermediate variable of tourist satisfaction on the relationship between the destination image of the Jordanian tourist places and the quality of services and facilities provided to them and the tourists' satisfaction with these services as an element of the marketing mix that enhances tourist loyalty in the future.

**5. Discussion of the results:**

The results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that the destination image has a significant impact on both tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. The adjusted R-square values for both models suggest that a significant proportion of the variations in tourists' satisfaction (52%) and loyalty (60%) can be explained

by the destination image. The beta coefficients show that the constructs of HCH, ambience, accommodation, gastronomy, and prices are significant predictors of both tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. These findings support H1 and H2, which suggest that the destination image has a positive effect on both tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. Additionally, the results are consistent with previous studies, which have also found a significant relationship between destination image, tourists' satisfaction, and loyalty. Therefore, the results provide further evidence to support the importance of destination image in shaping tourists' attitudes and behaviors.

the study aimed to investigate the mediating role of tourist satisfaction on the relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty. The adjusted R square value of 0.722 indicates that 72% of the variation in tourists' loyalty can be predicted from tourist satisfaction. The F-value of 112.989 and p-value of  $<0.005$  indicate that the model constructs were validated. The beta coefficient of 0.637 and p-value of  $<0.01$  show that tourist satisfaction was significantly associated with tourists' loyalty. These results indicate that H3 is accepted, and it proves that tourist satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty.

the findings of the study are consistent with previous studies conducted by Alrousan and Abuamoud, Wang et al., Chenini and Touaiti, Kim and Kwon, Kanwel et al., and Huwae et al. The paragraph further explains that there is a positive statistical relationship between the effect of the intermediate variable of tourist satisfaction and the quality of services and facilities provided to tourists in Jordanian tourist places. This positive relationship enhances tourist loyalty in the future, indicating the importance of considering tourist satisfaction as a crucial element of the marketing mix in enhancing tourist loyalty.

## 6. Conclusion:

Jordan is a rich nation of archeological and social legacy sites. The tourism industry is a key mainstay of Jordan's economy. Tourism is considered as an economic growth engine to haul the development of other industries and the

overall economy. Due to the importance of tourism, the present research was conducted to examine the impact of destination image on tourists' loyalty by using tourists' satisfaction as the mediating variable. A conceptual model was created based on past empirical studies to explore the relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty. The model considers historical and cultural heritages, ambience (environment), gastronomy, and prices to quantify destination image. Tourists' satisfaction was used as the mediating variable whereas tourists' loyalty was the dependent variable. A structured questionnaire consisted of 22 statements was used to collect primary data. Besides, the collected data was tabulated and transferred from Microsoft Excel to Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to apply regression to test the hypotheses. The study developed three hypotheses. All the hypotheses were accepted which portrays the significant impact of destination image on tourist satisfaction as well as on tourists' loyalty. It was also proved that tourist satisfaction played a mediating role in tourist loyalty.

With regards to previous studies, there has been insufficient empirical research testing how destination image can impact tourists' satisfaction and tourists' loyalty. This study will contribute to a better understanding of the implications of destination image in the tourism industry and fill research gaps accordingly. Satisfied and happy tourists have strong propensities to become loyal and be more willing to revisit and recommend it to their family, relatives, and friends. It is very necessary for hotels, transport providers, to satisfy more tourists' needs, and make them not only satisfied but also happy to encourage loyalty. Consequently, by maintaining these loyal customers, government can bring much optimism to the sustainable tourism economy, mainly in terms of income, GDP, generation of employment, and economic growth.

## **7. Limitations and directions for future research**

- A. This study depends on information gathered through field survey from 380 visitors. Structured questionnaires were used to gather the reactions of tourists' during the year 2021. Lack of cooperation in filling out the questionnaires by tourists' and biasness with respect to researcher may make variety in outcomes. Therefore, future research ought to be conducted with enormous



sample size.

- B. The research has considered famous archaeological sites in Jordan only. New research should include some other archaeological sites or similar study might be conducted in other Middle East countries.
- C. Regression technique was used for analyzing the impact of study variables. PLS-SEM might be used for the upcoming research by including some more variables like tourists motivation.
- D. Random sampling was used for selecting 380 tourists, although it might not able to represent the whole population. It means scholars in the future might use some another sampling technique.

#### **8. Research recommendations:**

Based on the results of this study, this study recommends several recommendations to improve the loyalty of tourists and enhance the tourism industry. **Firstly**, there is a need to focus on improving the image of the destination by promoting the unique and historical aspects of the archaeological sites, increasing marketing efforts, and creating a digital map of the tourist sites that helps the tourist to explore and access tourist sites easily.

**Secondly**, managers should focus on improving the quality of services, facilities, and infrastructure to meet the expectations of tourists and enhance their satisfaction. Third, creating positive experiences for tourists, such as offering guided tours, interactive activities, and providing information and educational materials, can also enhance tourist satisfaction and loyalty. Fourth, managers should consider offering loyalty programs and incentives to encourage tourists to revisit and recommend sites to others. Finally, demographic factors must also be considered, and strategies tailored to different segments of tourists based on age, gender and income must be developed. By implementing these recommendations, managers of archaeological sites in Jordan can increase tourist loyalty and contribute to the growth of the country's tourism industry.

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