THE INFLUENCE OF NATIONAL CULTURAL DIMENSIONS ON MIDDLE-EAST TOURISTS IN MALAYSIA

by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this doctoral dissertation to my precious parents, for inspiring the importance of hard working and higher education. I do believe that without their continued support and encouragement I was not able to complete this process.

I lovingly dedicate this thesis to the reason of my life, Kian, for his patience and understanding which helps me to reach my dream.

I dedicate this dissertation to my supervisor, Prof. Badaruddin Mohamed as a great source of motivation, and supports.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to all those who believe in the richness of knowledge

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IDV   Individualism/Collectivism

LTO   Long –Term Orientation

MAS   Masculinity/Femininity

PDI   Power distance

UAE   United Arab Emirate

UAI   Uncertainty Avoidance

PENGARUH BUDAYA NASIONAL TERHADAP GELAGAT PELANCONG-PELANCONG TIMUR TENGAH DI MALAYSIA

ABSTRAK

Industri pelancongan kian menjadi salah satu industri utama di kebanyakan negara kerana ia telah membawa masuk perolehan pertukaran mata wang asing yang tinggi kepada sesebuah negara. Oleh itu, ramai penyelidik telah tertarik untuk mengkaji gelagat pelancong antarabangsa (praperjalanan, dalam perjalanan, dan pascaperjalanan). Profil demografi pelancong-pelancong, khususnya kewarganegaraan telah dikenal pasti sebagai faktor berpengaruh, yang menyebabkan pelancong-pelancong mempamerkan gelagat yang tidak sama. Justeru, kajian ini bertujuan mengenal pasti gelagat dalam perjalanan (ciri-ciri gelagat dalam perjalanan, ciri-ciri gelagat pelancong) dalam kalangan pelancong Timur Tengah yang melawat Malaysia. Memandangkan budaya merupakan asas kepada sesebuah negara, maka kesan budaya nasional (jarak kuasa, individualisme mahupun kolektif, mengelak ketidakpastian, kelelakian atau kewanitaan, dan orientasi jangka panjang) ke atas gelagat dalam perjalanan pelancong Timur Tengah di Malaysia merupakan satu lagi objektif kajian ini. Oleh sebab itu, model budaya nasional Hofstede, yang telah digunakan untuk mentakrifkan budaya negara-negara yang berlainan, dianggap sebagai model yang paling sesuai digunakan dalam kajian in. Hofstede telah menyediakan indeks untuk beberapa buah negara yang mencatatkan skor setiap dimensi budaya yang berkaitan negara-negara tersebut.

Pelancong Timur Tengah dianggap sebagai salah satu segmen pasaran yang berharga kepada industri pelancongan di Malaysia, tetapi kajian tentang gelagat pelancong Timur Tengah adalah terhad, kalau ada pun. Isu tentang generalisasi berlebihan terhadap semua negara Timur Tengah sebagai satu kumpulan memanglah jelas. Tambahan lagi, kajian

tentang gelagat pelancong dalam perjalanan yang membandingkannya dengan tahap-tahap lain gelagat perjalanan adalah terhad dan tiada model atau teori khusus dalam bidang tersebut. Oleh itu, 16 buah negara Timur Tengah telah dipilih sebagai populasi kajian ini. Kaedah kuantitatif telah digunakan untuk mengumpul data yang diperlukan. Satu sampel 504 orang pelancong dari 16 negara Timur Tengah telah dipilih sebagai saiz sampel utama kajian ini. Pelancong-pelancong tersebut telah dibahagikan kepada 4 kumpulan menggunakan teknik pensampelan berstrata. Soal selidik tadbir kendiri, yang telah disemak keesahan dan kebolehpercayaannya telah diedarkan kepada pelancong-pelancong yang terbabit. Pada keseluruhannya, 504 soal selidik yang boleh diguna pakai telah dipulangkan. Kemudian, data tersebut telah dianalisa menggunakan perisian SPSS. Keputusan analisis data tersebut telah dibentangkan dalam bentuk analisa deskriptif, jadual bersilang, dan analisa faktor; kesemua pembentangan tersebut digunakan untuk menjawab persoalan kajian yang pertama dalam kajian ini. ANOVA satu hala telah digunakan untuk menjawab persoalan kajian yang kedua. Data kuantitatif ini telah disokong oleh data kualitatif yang telah dikumpulkan dengan menemu bual 11 orang pemandu pelancong dan melakukan pemerhatian ke atas pelancong-pelancong berkenaan. Kajian ini telah menemui pengaruh setiap dimensi budaya nsional pada gelagat dalam perjalanan pelancong-pelancong yang dikaji. Tujuh aspek telah ditakrifkan bagi meliputi ciri-ciri gelagat pelancong sebagai sebahagian daripada gelagat dalam perjalanan pelancong. Pengaruh setiap dimensi budaya nasional ke atas ciri-ciri gelagat dalam perjalanan dan ciri-ciri gelagat pelancong telah dapat diperhatikan. Dengan demikian, jarak kuasa mempunyai pengaruh keatas kemudahan dan perkhidmatan perchant, kebergantungan, dan orientasi diri. Manakala individualisme/kolektivisme, kejantanan/kewanitaan, dan orientasi jangka panjang

mempunyai pengaruh keatas kehormatan, interaksi sosial, kemudahan dan perkhidmatan perchant, pembelanjaan, dan aktualisasi diri sebagai seorang pelancong pakar.

Selain itu, mengelakkan ketidakpastian mempunyai pengaruh keatas kehormatan, interaksi sosial, kemudahan dan perkhidmatan perchant, serta pembelanjaan pelancong Timur Tengah.

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ABSTRACT

Tourism industry is becoming one of the main industries in many countries due to the high foreign exchange earnings it brings to a country. Thus, many researchers have been attracted to studying international tourists' behaviour (preterit, on-site trip and post trip). Demographic profiles of tourists, especially nationality have been found as the influential factor that causes tourists to exhibit dissimilar behaviour. Thus, this study aims to find the on-site trip behaviour (trip behaviour Characteristics, tourist behavioural Characteristics) of Middle East tourists visiting Malaysia. Since culture is the foundation of a nation, the effect of national culture (power distance, individualism or collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity or femininity, and long-term orientation) on Middle East tourists' on-site trip behaviour in Malaysia is the other objective of this study. Accordingly, Hofstede's national culture model was used to define the culture of different countries as the most applicable model. Hofstede provided the index for several countries in which the score of every dimension of culture related to specific countries can be found.

Middle East tourists are considered as one of the valuable market segment for tourism industry of Malaysia, but there have been limited studies about Middle East tourists behaviour, if there are any. The issue of over-generalizing all Middle East countries as one group is noticeable. Moreover, the studies of on-site tourists' behaviour, which compare it with the other stages of trip behaviour, are limited and there is no particular model or theory

in that area. In this regard, 16 Middle East countries were chosen as the population of the study. Quantitative method was applied to collect the necessary data. A sample of 504 tourists from 16 countries of Middle East was chosen as the main sample size of the study. The tourists were divided into 4 groups by applying the stratified sampling technique. Self-administered questionnaires, which have been checked for the validity and reliability of the items were distributed among the tourists. Altogether, 504 usable questionnaires were returned. Then, the data were analysed using SPSS software. The results of data analysis were presented using descriptive analysis, cross tabulation, and factor analysis; they were used to answer the first research question of the study. One-way ANOVA was used to answer the second research question. The quantitative data were supported by qualitative data collected by interviewing 11 tour guides and conducting observations on the tourists. The study found the influence of each dimension of national culture on tourist on-site behaviour. Seven areas were defined to cover the tourist behavioural Characteristics   as a part of on-site behaviour. The influence of each dimension of national culture on trip Characteristics and tourist behavioural Characteristics have been observed. Accordingly, power distance has influence on facilities and service perchant, reliance, and self-orientation, while individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, and long-term orientation have influence on respectfulness, social interaction, facilities and service perchant, expenditure and self-presentation as an expert traveller. Moreover, uncertainty

avoidance affects the respectfulness, social interaction, facilities and service perchant, and

expenditure of Middle Eastern tourists.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the thesis. It is structured with eight sections. The first section discusses the background of study, while the second section is related to the problem statement. This is followed the discussion on the research objectives, the research questions, and research methodology. A brief explanation of key terms used in this thesis is presented in the next section, after presenting the significance of the study. The chapter ends with structure of the remaining chapters.

1.1 Background of the Study

International tourism has become a global phenomenon and its contribution in value to the tourism industry has increased rapidly. Many countries rank international tourism as an important foreign income earner for the country. Therefore, tourists and their behaviours have become the focus of much research since 1970s. (e.g., Boissevain & Inglott, 1979; Brewer, 1978; Cho, 1991; Galloway, 2007; Ibrahim et. al., 2009; Money & Crotts, 2003; Pizam & Telisman-Kosuta, 1989; Richardson & Cromption, 1988; Rodgers, 1977; Szalai, 1972; Woodside & Lawrence, 1985). Presenting a comprehensive view, the results of tourist behaviour studies are important for marketers. It helps them perform their job better in promoting tourists destination with a better knowledge of their market segment. It is also important for the service providers to tailor their service according to their consumer needs and desires. Moreover, Pearce (2005) suggested public sectors as the other groups that get the benefit of tourist behaviour studies, as they have to manage

the impacts of tourism. Accordingly, managing tourism impacts can make a positive contribution to destinations and affect both tourists and host community.

In the tourism industry, tourists are the consumers. Accordingly, many definitions of consumer behaviour have been presented in the literature. McColl et al. (1994, p. 116) defined consumer behaviour as "the actions a person takes toward purchasing and using a product and service." According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2000), the central point in studying consumer behaviour is how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources as time, money, and effort on consumption-related items. Solomon (1996) clarified consumer behaviour as individuals or groups' behaviour while selecting, purchasing, using or disposing products, services, ideas or experience to satisfy needs and desires. Hanna and Wozniak (2001) provided the same definition for consumer behaviour. Additionally, Belch and Belch (2007, p. 105), defined consumer behaviour as "the process and activities people engage in when searching for, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services to satisfy their needs and desires." Accordingly, behaviour occurs either for the individual, in the context of a group, or an organization. Consumer behaviour study involves the use and disposal of products as well as the study of how they are purchased (Belch & Belch, 2007). Clearly, study of consumer behaviour refers to the process and activities that have been done by consumers before, during and after buying a product or using a service.

In a service industry, in tourism particularly, the study of tourist behaviour can be divided into three categories as pretrip, on-site trip and posttrip behaviour. Study of tourist behaviour involves a search for leisure experiences from interactions with features or characteristics of places they choose to visit (Leiper, 1997).

Referring to the Leiper's point of view, it can be confirmed that understanding tourist consumer behaviour is not merely of academic interest; it would also provide knowledge for effective tourism planning and marketing. Some scholars (e.g., Jelincic, 1999; Meethan, 2001) considered that understanding the behaviour of tourism consumers is less important in the globalization era since tourists tend to have very similar travelling habits. On the other hand, Douglas and Wind (1987) as well as Kean (2003) emphasized that the world is not yet globalized; therefore, tourist consumer behaviour of each country is still different and needs to be understood according to the fact that there are many determining factors influencing travellers' supply and demand. Examples of these factors are the type and price of services and facilities, weather, available alternatives, income of tourists, number of tourists, reference groups, and government policies.

In this regard, the demographic background of the tourist can be considered as the most influential factor on tourist behaviour (Carr, 1999; Frew & Shaw, 1999; Kozak, 2002; Narayan, 2008; Okazaki & Hirose, 2009).

Different studies have been conducted in the area of tourist behaviour, which looked at different perspectives. Some of those studies worked on tourist behaviour in an indirect way (e.g., Boissevain & Inglott, 1979; Brewer, 1978; Business Korea, 1991; Cho, 1991; Pi-Sunyor, 1977; Pizam & Telisman-Kosuta, 1989; Wagner, 1977). In the indirect method the researcher obtains the necessary data about tourists' behaviour by interviewing the service provider such as accommodation service, restaurant, tour guides and etc., or even the destination residents. On the other hand, some other researchers did their study about tourist behaviour in a direct way, in which they dealt with tourist directly (e.g., Bahram, 1989; Holzner, 1985; Ibrahim,

1991; Money & Crotts, 2003; Richardson & Cromption, 1988; Ritter, 1989; Rodgers, 1977; Sheldon & Fox, 1988; Szalai, 1972; Woodside & Lawrence, 1985; Yiannakis Leivadi & Apostolopulos, 1991). Understanding tourist behaviour is essential for both the tourist destinations and the tourists. The importance of this issue is recognized by decision makers especially in the ministry of tourism, service providers, tourist destinations and academia for them to do whatever necessary to meet these expectations (Pearce, 2005). Regarding the factors influencing tourist behaviour, Hudson (2008) referred to seven key factors as motivation, culture, age and gender, social class, lifestyle, life cycle, and reference groups. Dann (1993) presented another view saying that different tourists have dissimilar behaviour according to their nationality. This study concentrates on the influence of nationality on tourist behaviour. It views national culture as causing the dissimilar behaviours of tourists from different nationalities. Hence, the main focus of this study is the influence of national culture on tourist behaviour.

A number of cultural models (e.g., Kluckhohn and Srotbeck, 1961; Schwartz, 1994, 1999; Trompenarrs; 1993) have been developed and applied in cross-cultural studies before. Among these models, Hofstede national culture is the most widely applied model, which many different fields have used in their research. Fields such as management, marketing, education, tourism, and so on, have applied this model in their research. Geert Hofstede developed five cultural dimensions to assist in differentiating cultures among different countries. The five cultural dimensions are power distance, collectivism/individualism, femininity/masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term/short-term orientation. He provided an index for 66 countries which shows the status of their culture in relation to each cultural dimension in 2005. Later, in 2010 the list increased to 96 countries. In confirming the

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importance of this model, Luthar and Luthar (2002, p. 272) asserted that "because Hofstede's research used large samples of individuals across many different countries, the developed framework is extremely useful for understanding cross-cultural differences in behaviours and perceptions."

In reviewing literature, few studies have been conducted in relation to Middle East tourists' behaviour. Recently, some surveys have been done by scholars on Arab tourists travelling patterns and preferences in Malaysian hotels (Ibrahim et al., 2009); market potential of Middle East tourist in Thailand (Vergara, 2009); marketing Malaysia to Middle East tourists (Ariffin & Hasim, 2009a); how Middle East tourists know Malaysia as a tourist destination (Ariffin & Hasim, 2009b); and product and service preferences of Arab tourists staying in five-star hotels in Malaysia (Ibrahim, Sulaiman, & Nor, 2009). With regard to the competitive tourism market, Middle East region has become a very viable market for tourist destinations because of the growing young population with a high per capita income (Ariffin & Hasim, 2009a). Furthermore, Middle East countries include both Arab and non-Arab countries, and not much has been studied about these non-Arab countries.

Apparently, nationality effects tourist behaviour (Pizam & Sussmann, 1995) and tourist behaviour can be affected by culture differences (Litvin et al., 2004). Therefore, it is quite possible that Middle East tourists' behaviour differs when cultural differences are considered. This study aims to examine these differences among Middle East tourists behaviour in Malaysia.

Historicaly, the US and European countries used to be very popular among the Middle East tourists. The global impact from the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001 and the subsequent unexpected terrorism have affected the

world tourism industry (Hamarneh & Steiner, 2004). This had a significant impact on international tourists particularly the Arabs from Middle East. The Arabs and Middle Eastern people have been blamed for being responsible for terrorism. Therefore,

> ... the feeling by Arabs of being misunderstood and unwelcome in non-Muslim countries has increased. The traveling policy against the Arab tourists has become more rigid in many countries especially in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and European countries (Ibrahim et al., 2009, p. 4).

Over-reactions and ignorance in those countries have forced many Arab tourists to look for new frontiers and change their traditional holiday destinations to other countries (Hamarneh & Steiner, 2004). As a result, Malaysia and other Asian countries were found to be one of the favourite alternative vacation destinations for the Arabs. Malaysia as an Islamic country having same Islamic culture and tradition, makes the Muslim Middle Eastern feel safer in terms of security, food, shopping, and religious obligation (Ibrahim et al., 2009, p. 4). To develop a market segment based on aforementioned issues, the focus of this study is to investigate the on-site behaviour of Middle East tourists in Malaysia and the influence of their national culture on it. In the light of aforementioned issues, Table 1.1 indicates the increasing arrivals of Middle East tourist to Malaysia since 2001.

Table 1.1

Tourist Arrivals to Malaysia from Middle East Countries, 2000, 2005-2012

Countries	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010*	2011
Iran	N/A	12,309	18,753	27,215	63,165	101,664	116,252	139,617
S/Arabia	27,808	53,682	67,679	78,298	74,632	77,082	86,771	87,693
U.A.E.	2,391	29,606	35,118	38,170	34,994	22,108	25,645	24,212
Kuwait	1,095	11,506	13,369	17,650	18,853	20,170	1,885*	22,833
Oman	1,223	9,228	11,905	19,525	17,472	15,280	989*	22,062
Egypt	N/A	4,888	5,682	7,066	11,926	11,006	1,122*	15,359
Yemen	N/A	4,882	4,160	7,314	11,286	10,161	1,238*	14,384
Sudan	N/A	5.241	6806	12668	10693	10993	1,087*	13,703
Iraq	N/A	2455	4015	12700	10032	8680	1,051*	13,568
Jordan	2,888	2,086	2,657	5,196	7,087	7,713	768*	9,012
Turkey	N/A	6,673	7,654	9,580	8,152	8,265	9,149	8,597
Syria	N/A	5,613	5,772	7,481	4,838	5,909	597*	7,241
Bahrain	N/A	4,189	5,526	6,874	7,822	6,114	239*	7,128
Qatar	N/A	7,254	8,386	11,782	7,808	4,257	241*	5,727
Lebanon	899	8,522	6,885	8,523	5,532	5,187	347*	4,887
TOTAL	36,304	160,438	193,546	244,674	273,567	294,916	-	396,003

Notes. Taken from Immigration Department of Malaysia provided by Tourism Malaysia, 2012. * These data are for the first month of the year 2010 since during February 2010, the Immigration system that recorded the tourist arrivals had crashed. For solution, they produced the estimated number for top 35 countries to Malaysia for the whole year of 2010. Four countries out of them were Middle Eastern countries. Other than the top 35 countries for the year 2010 other data were not available due to the Immigration system crash (Tourism Malaysia, 2012).

1.2   Statement of Problem

Hsu et al. (2008, p. 16) made the point that "a thorough understanding of consumer behaviour is fundamental to any marketing effort," although it is very difficult particularly in tourism studies. Many factors can make it complicated; for instance, there are some questions which cannot be asked from tourists because they would not tell the truth as it involves their personal matters and for some other reasons. On the other hand, there are some questions which service providers cannot answer as those issues are exactly the tourists' feelings. Then again, observation of tourists' behaviour is not an easy issue to handle since tourists may change their

behaviour when they are being watched. Moreover, Hsu et al. (2008) argued that in marketing research observation is a useful way to "identify patterns of tourist behaviour," but Crabtree et al. (2003) believed that participants tended to be paranoid about being watched. It would appear that the use of combination methods would provide a clear understanding of tourists' behaviour.

As mentioned in the section on the background of the study, understanding tourist behaviour is fundamental for tourist destinations and related policy makers, public sectors, and business interests (Pearce, 2005). Moreover, reviewing the literature shows that the Middle Eastern countries have become an emerging tourists market, due to the growing young population with high per capita income (Ariffin & Hasim, 2009a). Furthermore, tourists from Middle East countries are well-known for their length of stay and their spending as Mohd Salleh et al. (2012) mentioned,

> ... in view of the importance of Malaysia's tourism industry and the importance of the Middle Eastern tourists in terms of the rapid growth rate of arrivals, the high level of spending and the longer length of stay, research on this market is potentially significant. (p. 54)

Moreover, Mctague (2014) mentioned that "Arabs now spend twice as much as Australians, Germans and French - and 50 per cent more than Americans". According to table 1.1 the number of tourist arrivals to Malaysia from Middle East countries is quite noticeable, and as it is explained, this market segment by having long length of stay and high level of expenditure, in addition to their increasing number of young generation who travel more, can have positive impact on the economy of Malaysia. Accordingly, udrestanding this market segment is fundamental for Tourism Malaysia to keep this market sustainable for long time. Unfortunately the number of research about them is so inadequate and limited to

Arab Middle Eastern tourists. Despite of the fact that this market segment is important for Tourism Malaysia, but not that much study has been done about it, not only by tourism Malaysia but also by other researchers. Referring to some of the limited studies, the examples can be the study by Ibrahim et al. (2009) about "travelling pattern and preference of Arab tourists in Malaysian hotels". The focus of their study was mainly on accommodation behaviour of the Middle Eastern tourists. They not only didn't concern the whole Middle Eastern tourists (only Arabs), but also the area of their study was merely limited to accommodation behaviour. Other study has been done by Ariffin and Hasim's (2009b) entitled "Middle East tourists view Malaysia as a tourist destination. In their research the image of Malaysia through Middle Eastern view was covered and certainly they didn't focus of on-site trip behaviour of Middle Eastern tourists by details. In addition, the study by Ibrahim, Sulaiman, and Nor (2009) as "the product and service preferences of Arab tourists staying in 5-star hotels", yet again focus of Arab tourists behaviour in hotel which has long way to cover the whole on-site trip behaviour of Middle East tourists.

Different tourists need different treatments and overgeneralizing tourists may cause losing the market. As mentioned earlier, tourism is an important industry for Malaysia, and Middle East tourists as a valuable market plays an important role in this growing industry in Malaysia. Therefore, the study of tourists from Middle East is essential for Tourism Malaysia.

Previous studies have considered the Middle East market as a different category. Some referred to them as Arab countries, whereas the Middle East includes both Arab and non-Arab countries. Apparently, most studies about Middle East countries also have concentrated on Arab tourists. This has created a gap in the literature about non-Arab Middle Eastern tourists, thus they need to be explored.

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Regardless of the apparent usage of the term "Middle East" to cover a certain degree of homogeneity, people have least expected the dissimilarities in its physical, cultural, and social landscape (Manners & Parmenter, 2008). Furthermore, "the Middle East is likewise culturally diverse" (Manners & Parmenter, 2008, p. 10). It is confirmed that "generalizing about Arabs is a little like generalizing about Europeans - they have many traits in common, but regional differences are striking" (Nydell, 2006, p. 147). On the other hand, there is no agreement among scholars as to the categorizing of countries in the Middle East. The number of countries varies in different definitions based on different purposes such as geography, politics, history, and so forth (some definitions will be discussed in Chapter 3).

Many studies have attempted to develop a distinct model for tourist behaviour from different perspectives such as needs and desire, motivation, decision making, information search, satisfaction, and so forth. In that regard, the study of tourist's behaviour can be divided into three stages: the pretrip, the on-site, and the posttrip behaviours. As mentioned earlier, most aspects covered by other scholars have either focused on pretrip or posttrip behaviour, while the study about on-site trip behaviour has not been satisfactorily covered. However, there is a lack of detailed framework to describe the on-site tourist behaviour, which makes this research a necessity.

Furthermore, through literature reviewed, many researches have focused on the factors that influence tourist behaviour in different ways. Among others, it is found that different nationalities have dissimilar behaviours due to the differences in their culture. Different national cultures contain different values, causing differences in tourist behaviour according their nationalities. Accordingly, Hofstede's notion of national culture has been the most applied and accepted model in different areas of

study, and that was the reason for this study to apply this model in this research. His model includes five dimensions of national culture value including power distance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and long-term orientation. Each dimension has its distinct influence on different parts of the tourist behaviour (more explanation can be found in Chapter 2).

Finally, there is a critical research gap that remains to be filled for a comprehensive investigation about Middle East tourists' behaviour, based on the differentiation of national cultures. Thus, in conducting this research, the first question was whether Middle Eastern tourists from different countries have different behaviours. Therefore, a presurvey was conducted through interviewing tourist guides who have accompanied Middle Eastern tourists during their trip in Malaysia, and some service providers in hotels, shopping centres, and so forth. The result showed that there were probable differences, although some similarities were also found. Since one of the reasons behind dissimilar tourists' behaviour was found as tourist's national culture, this study was set out to find the relationship between Middle Eastern national culture and their on-site trip behaviour in Malaysia. Accordingly, the following section presents the objectives which were considered while conducting this study.

1.3   Research Objectives

The overall purpose of this thesis was to study the tourist on-site behaviour while travelling and the influence of their national culture on their on-site trip behaviour. To answer the research questions of this thesis, research objectives were outlined as follows. The research objectives are

1.   To study Middle East tourists on-site behaviour including their trip characteristic, and tourist behavioural characteristics in their trip in Malaysia.

2.   To identify the influence of Middle East tourists national culture including power distance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and long-term orientation on their on-site behaviour in their trip in Malaysia using the Hofstede national culture dimensions index.

1.4   Research Questions

The current research was conducted to determine tourist on-site behaviour and the relationship between national culture and tourist on-site behaviour. Thus this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

RQ1:   What is the on-site trip behaviour (trip characteristics, tourist behavioural characteristics) of Middle East tourists visiting Malaysia?

RQ2:   What is the effect of national culture (power distance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and long-term orientation) on Middle East tourists' on-site trip behaviour in Malaysia?

1.5   Research Methodology

Before conducting the actual study, the first phase of the study was to conduct a primary survey to find the possible differences among Middle East tourists behaviour from different countries in Malaysia. Therefore, tourists, tour guides, and

people who deal with them during their trip to Malaysia were asked to obtain some answers. Moreover, the observation also supports some differences among Middle East tourists independently.

The result of this phase has helped the researcher to organize the research questions and the research objectives. Consistent with the research questions, this study initially focused on secondary data collected from related books, articles, journals, magazines, newspapers, internet, forecasts, reports, and so forth. This was done to get more information about the issue and the characteristics of the market segment, the Middle East.

The study used a conceptual framework suggested by Manrai and Manrai (2009) which divided the study of tourist behaviour into three dimensions: pretrip, on-site trip, and posttrip behaviour. Since this study attempts to find the influence of culture as one of the key factors influencing Middle East tourists' behaviour in Malaysia, Hofstede's model of national culture was used in this research. Meanwhile, Manrai and Manrai, (2009) provided a general framework which shows the influence of culture on tourist behaviour. They reviewed previous studies in tourist behaviour area and summarized them according to the dimensions of tourist behaviour study as well as Hofstede cultural dimensions which influence tourists' behaviour.

The survey questionnaire in this study had two different characteristics, namely tourist trip characteristics and tourist behavioural characteristics, in addition to demographic background. The questionnaires were distributed among tourists from the population of the study. Because the questionnaire was to be administered in a non-English-speaking samples (Arabic and Persian), a dual strategy of back

translation was conducted as recommended by cross-cultural methodological researchers (Brislin et al., 1973; Malhotra et al., 1996; Temple, 1997). To ensure that the wordings of the questionnaire were clear and understandable and equivalent of the instrument was achieved, a pretest was conducted prior to conducting the final survey. A pretest was necessary to spot any problems in the instrument, and to determine the face validity of the measures. Some discussion sessions with both Arab and Iranian colleagues were organized to determine the level of accuracy of the questionnaire prior to the pilot study.

The sample size of this study was calculated using the formula suggested by Taro Yamane (1967). The statistics provided by Tourism Malaysia (2009) showed that the population of Middle East tourists who visited Malaysia during the year 2009 was 294,916. Therefore, the sample size calculated as 400. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling table was employed to support the calculation and to ensure that the correct sampling size was used. Stratified sampling was applied, and the population was stratified into four groups of Middle East tourists, namely, from non-Arab countries, from Persian Gulf States, from North Eastern Africa, and from Eastern Mediterranean (Levant or Belad-o-Sham). Equal number of 100 respondents was selected from each group and proportionate allocation sampling was applied for each stratum. Then, from the number of tourist arrivals from each group, the sample size was calculated for individual countries. However, the number of tourist arrivals from North Eastern Africa was not sufficient for further analysis. Therefore, the sample size was increased to 500 to fulfil the requirement of later analysis (See more information and the list in Chapter 4).

In-depth interviews with tour guides (with the experience not less than a year) were conducted to support the quantitative data and to find the underlying reasons behind some particular behaviours. Observation method was also used as a part of data collection technique to support the results of the in-depth interviews as well collected quantitative data.

The first research question of this study was: What is the on-site trip behaviour (trip characteristics, tourist behavioural characteristics) of Middle East tourists visiting Malaysia? This question would be answered through the quantitative surveys conducted on the tourists. Questions about trip characteristics and tourist behavioural characteristics were obtained from tourists through the questionnaire survey. In addition, the interviews from tour guides supported the result of data collected from Middle Eastern tourists, and provide the detailed justification for their answers.

The second research question was: What is the effect of national culture (power distance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and long-term orientation) on Middle East tourists' on-site trip behaviour in Malaysia? Hofstede had provided a list of countries with their five national culture dimensions index. The countries were listed according to their cultural differences from 1-100. For example, Iran among other countries in the list has a high power distance culture (58), high uncertainty avoidance (59). However, it has more collectivism culture rather than individualism (41), and more femininity culture rather than masculinity (43). (The complete table is provided in Chapter 4). The table provides information about almost all Middle Eastern countries except Palestine and Sudan. Moreover, the first index in 2005 provided the values for the

first four dimensions, while the updated index in 2010 provides the whole dimensions index. To answer the second research question, first, countries with similar national culture (in each dimension separately) were grouped together. For example, in the dimension of power distance, five groups of very low (VL), low (L), medium (M), high (H), and very high (VH) power distance countries, separated in five different groups (See the details in Chapter 3).

Trip characteristics as one part of tourist on-site behaviour was fully presented in second part of questionnaire and to summarise the 44 items of tourist behavioural characteristics, factor analysis was done which divided those items to 7 groups.

By having two variables in the questionnaire such as country groups and groups of related items to each dimension, it makes the analysis of data easier for finding the influence of each dimension on tourists' behaviour with similar culture.

Related literature about the influence of each dimension of Hofstede national culture was collected and summarised into key attributes. Then, the result of collected data from Middle Eastern tourists, which was analysed in the previous part, was reviewed and linked with the provided key attributes.

The variables of the study as discussed before were national culture and tourist behaviour which the detailed can be seen in Figure 1.1.

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   INDEPENDENT VARIABLE      │        │    DEPENDENT VARIABLE       │
│          (IV)               │        │          (DV)               │
│                             │        │                             │
│   National culture values   │  ──▷   │   Tourist on-site behaviour │
│      Hofstede Model         │        │                             │
│                             │        │   • Trip characteristics    │
│   • Power distance          │        │   • Tourist behavioural     │
│   • Individualism/Collectivism│      │     characteristics         │
│   • Masculinity/Femininity  │        │                             │
│   • Uncertainty avoidance   │        │                             │
│   • Long -term orientation  │        │                             │
└─────────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────────┘
```
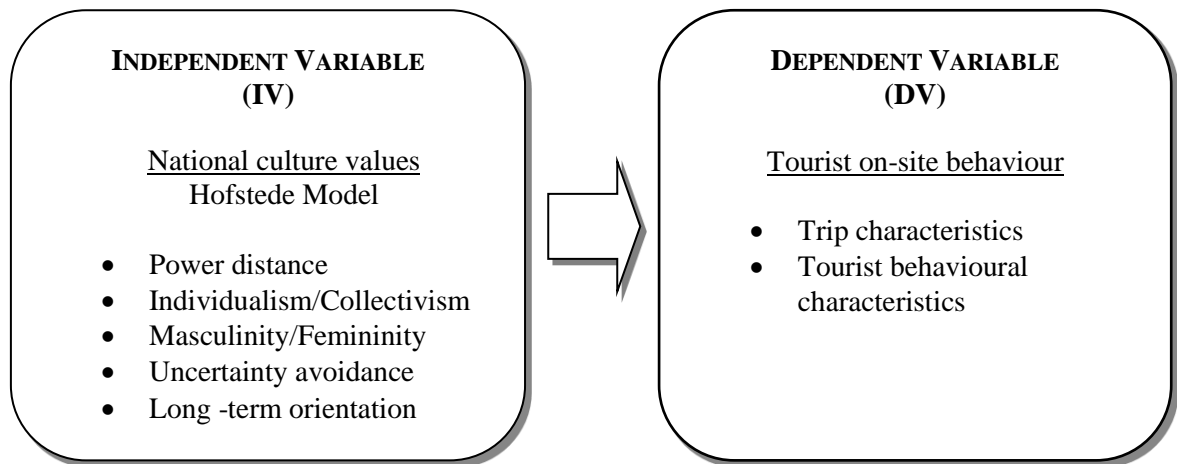
Figure 1.1. Independent and dependent variables

In stage one, the quantitative method was used to collect necessary data for IV (Nationality) and DV (On-site Trip Behaviour) using self-administrated questionnaires on Middle East tourist visiting Malaysia. The qualitative method, using in-depth interviews, was mainly used to interview tour guides who escort Middle Eastern tourists during their trip in Malaysia. The interviews were conducted only to support the result of survey and to help find the deeper meaning of respondents' answers.

A pilot study was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. To achieve the research objectives, the data were analysed using SPSS Statistic Package of Social Science, as this software is related to social studies. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, cross tabulation, factor analysis, and the one-way ANOVA were used. Qualitative data collected were only used to support the quantitative data. Frequencies and percentages showed the number of tourist who were engaged in different specific behaviours, while the factor analysis helped to examine the underlying relationships among behavioural characteristics and determine if the information could be summarized into smaller

sets of factors. Cross tabulation was used to show the distribution of each item of questionnaire in different nationality. The one-way ANOVA elaborated the influence of Middle East national culture on their on-site trip behaviour. The one-way ANOVA is an appropriate method of analysis to be used in a study with a quantitative outcome and two (or more) categorical explanatory variables. The usual assumptions of normality, equal variance, and independent errors also apply here.

1.6   Significance of the Study

Hsu et al. (2008, p. 77) believed that "the study of tourism consumer behaviour concerns the processes that guide tourist's decisions on how to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on tourism products, services, and experiences that meet their needs and wants." For this reason, Horner and Swarbrook (2007, p. 10) claimed that "understanding of consumer behaviour will allow a more effective marketing planning process." In reviewing related literature, the researcher found that Middle East tourists consumer behaviour, focusing on Arab and non-Arab countries have not been fully studied. Recently, Vergara (2009) has studied about Middle East tourists, focusing on market potential of Middle East tourist in Thailand. The study did not give a comprehensive view about consumer behaviour; moreover, it was done in a different destination. Accordingly, this present study may contribute to knowledge of Middle East tourists' behaviour literature. As mentioned earlier, Hofstede model include five dimensions, namely power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation. In addition, tourist behaviour studies have been divided to three dimensions including pretrip, during trip (on-site) and posttrip behaviour (Manrai & Manrai, 2009). This study focuses on Middle East tourist on-site trip behaviour.

Having taken the importance of national culture on tourists' behaviour, previous studies could only work on the influence of individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation on tourists on-site trip behaviour, while this study covers all the five dimensions. Notably, not only there is no available study in this area about Middle East countries, but also the tourist on-site behaviour has not been studied in detail.

The main contribution of this study is to improve a conceptual model of tourists' on-site trip behavioural characteristics and its relation with Hofstede five cultural dimensions. The model will ease the researchers' job in studying tourist on-site trip behaviour.

The previous available framework in relation to tourists' behavioural characteristics was provided by Pizam and Sussmann (1995). They divided tourists' behavioural characteristics into 5 parts as social interaction, commercial transactions, activities preference, bargaining and knowledge of destination. This research up to improve the framework by some additions and changes consist of 7 parts as; Respectfulness, Social Interaction, Facilities and Service Penchant, Expenditure, Self-presentation as an expert traveller, Reliance, and Self-Orientation.

Another important aim of this research was to find the relationship of dimension of national culture; power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, and long-term orientation on each part of tourists' behavioural characteristics, which completed the framework of Manrai and Manrai (2009) who did not concern the detail of tourists' behavioural characteristics.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

There are a number of key terms used throughout this document. Definitions of the terms are provided to ensure that all readers have a common understanding about the concepts used in this study.

(a) Culture

An umbrella word that encompasses a whole set of implicit widely shared beliefs, traditions, values, and expectations which characterize a particular group of people (Pizam, 1999, p. 393).

(b) Hofstede National Culture Model:

The Hofstede model distinguished culture according to five dimensions, namely power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2010, p. 88).

(c) Individualism/collectivism

It refers to the extent to which people emphasize their own needs.

(d) Long-term orientation

People with long-term orientation culture care about their future. However, to people with short-term orientation, spending their income now is more important than saving for their future.

(e)   Masculinity/femininity

This concept refers to the extent to which a culture values *masculine* behaviour, such as assertiveness, acquisition of money, and material possessions, and lack of care for others, as opposed to *feminine* behaviour and the quality of life, and the extent to which gender roles are differentiated.

(f)   Power distance

Power distance refers to the extent to which a society accepts the unequal distribution of power in relationships and institutions.

(g)   Tourist behaviour

The study of why and how tourists buy specific products and services, act in certain ways, and make certain decisions (Pizam, 1999).

(h)   Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance refers to the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and tries to avoid them.

1.8   Structure of Thesis

This section provides a brief review of the structure of the thesis. Initially, Chapter 1 introduces the issues related to the topic under investigation, background of the study, statement of problem. Then, it presents the research objectives and research questions of this study. This is then followed by brief discussion about the methodology used, significance of the study, and finally, a definition of key terms used in the study is outlined.

Subsequently, Chapter 2 will provide an overview of consumer behaviour and tourist behaviour studies. Discussion on domains of tourist behaviour study follows. Then, the chapter discusses nationality and culture as two key factors influencing tourists' behaviour. The chapter also presents a review of studies that have been done in those areas. Hofstede National Culture model will be presented in detail in the next part of this chapter, after elaborating on some other cultural models. The chapter also critically reviews relevant literature related to the influence of each Hofstede National Culture dimensions, that is, power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation on tourists' behaviour.

Chapter 3 starts with the general information about Middle East countries separately, and continues with the review of studies that have been done about their behaviour in general, and specifically their tourists' behaviour.

Drawing on the literature review in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, Chapter 4 starts with the design of this research. This is followed by a presentation of the conceptual framework proposed in this thesis, discussing the variables, research questions and

objectives which have been presented in the other part of this chapter. The chapter also provides an overview of the research design and its justification for the use of quantitative method. It discusses the scale items selected to measure the underlying constructs. It describes the instrument used to collect the data, the pretest and final survey, and justifies the techniques used to analyse the collected data. Finally, it explains the reliability and validity of the constructs. The chapter ends with an ethical consideration related to conducting this research.

Chapter 5 reports the results of data analysis, using the techniques justified in Chapter 3.

Chapter 6 interprets the results drawn from analysis, aiming to answer the two research questions identified in Chapter 1. The results are compared and supported by literature. In the section on National Culture and Middle Eastern Tourist On-site Behaviour, the result is discussed according to the dimensions of national culture. The chapter continues with introducing a conceptual model as the final outcome, derived from the research findings. The chapter ends with the implementation of the study, which is divided into two distinct parts: as an academic implementation and as a practical implementation.

Finally, Chapter 7 starts with the recommendation and conclusion of the study in addition to avenues for further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of consumer behaviour and tourist behaviour studies. To start reviewing tourist behaviour studies, the chapter provides the domains of tourist behaviour study. Nationality and culture are two key factors affecting tourists' behaviour that would be discussed in the next section. "Hofstede National Culture" model as the most useful models in cross-cultural studies are presented in details in the next section of this chapter. This chapter also critically reviews the relevant literature related to the influence of each of the dimensions of the Hofstede National Culture dimensions, namely power distance, individualism/ collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation on behaviour in general and tourists' behaviour in specific. The summary of literature is presented in tabular form for each dimension of the national culture. The chapter ends with the theoretical framework of the study.

2.1 Consumer Behaviour and the Concept of Tourist Behaviour

According to the literature, there are different definitions for consumer behaviour, which are concerned with some main elements of the behaviour which consumer has while selecting, purchasing, using or disposing products, services, ideas or experiences. According to Moven and Minor (2001, p. 3) consumer behaviour is "the study of buying units and the exchange processes involved in acquiring, consuming, and disposing of goods, service, experiences and ideas." Hanna and Wozniak (2001, p. 2) referred to consumer behaviour which "focuses on