

**FACTORS INFLUENCING FOREIGN VISITORS
PERCEPTIONS AND INTENTION TO REVISIT
PALESTINE: THE CASE OF BETHLEHEM AND
RAMALLAH**

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother and father

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

		Page
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization	1
UNISPAL	United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine	4
VFR	Visit Friends & Relatives	4
PACE	Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange	6
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau Statistics	6
WTO	World Tourism Organization	14
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council	16
IHRA	International Hotel & Restaurants Association	16
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	17
USA	United States of America	20
UK	United Kingdom	22
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	22
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome	25
PKK	Kurdistan Workers Party	35
ZANL	Zapatista Army of National Liberation	35
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	39
PMT	Protection Motivation Theory	44
IIT	Information Integration Theory	44
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	63
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency	69
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization	72
ICJ	International Court of Justice	75
PA	Palestinian Authority	82

PECDAR	Palestinian Economic Council for Development & Reconstruction	82
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism & Antiques	82
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	83
GNP	Gross National Product	83
A.R.E	Arab Republic of Egypt	84
PNIC	Palestinian National Information Centre	84
UNDP	United Nations Development Program	105
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences	126

Faktor-Faktor Yang Mempengaruhi Persepsi Pelancong- Pelancong Asing Dan Keinginan Untuk Melawat Semula Palestin: Kajian Kes Bethlehem Dan Ramallah

ABSTRAK

Industri pelancongan amat penting dalam menyokong pertumbuhan ekonomi Palestin pada masa hadapan. Ia menempatkan beberapa tapak utama pelancongan suci yang merangkumi tiga agama utama iaitu Islam, Yahudi dan Kristian. Hampir kebanyakan tempat-tempat ibadat dan warisan yang menarik tumpuan pelbagai pengunjung antarabangsa terletak di Daerah Bethlehem dan juga Bandar Ramallah. Pelbagai ciri destinasi seperti ketidakstabilan politik dan penerimaan risiko, imej destinasi dan keinginan untuk melawat semula merupakan faktor penting dalam memahami kemajuan dan kejayaan industri pelancongan sesebuah negara. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengetahui persepsi pengunjung antarabangsa berdasarkan kepada ciri-ciri destinasi. Ciri-ciri demografi pelancong seperti kewarganegaraan, jantina, umur dan pengalaman melancong (kekerapan melawat dan tempoh menginap) turut dikaji yang dihubungkan dengan angkuabah bersandar. Teori Motivasi Perlindungan (TMP), Teori Integrasi Maklumat (TIM), dan ciri-ciri produk pelancongan termasuk ketidakstabilan politik telah digunakan sebagai teori asas kajian ini.

Satu kajian soal selidik telah dijalankan untuk mengumpul data daripada 293 pelancong antarabangsa, iaitu lapan tahun selepas peristiwa kebangkitan rakyat Palestin 'Intifada' kedua berlaku. Borang soal selidik tersebut telah diterjemah kepada tiga bahasa utama iaitu Bahasa Inggeris, Bahasa Arab dan Bahasa Rusia oleh penterjemah profesional. Pada bulan Julai 2008, satu kajian pilot telah dijalankan ke atas 28 pelancong antarabangsa di Bethlehem dan Ramallah untuk mengenal pasti keberkesanan instrumen kajian. Selepas kajian pilot dijalankan, pengumpulan data telah dijalankan bermula Julai sehingga akhir bulan Ogos 2008. Lima ratus borang soalan kaji selidik telah disebar di Bethlehem dan Ramallah, tetapi hanya 293 borang sahaja yang diterima untuk kajian ini. Ia telah disebar secara rawak kepada responden di beberapa tempat utama yang menarik di Bandar Bethlehem dan Ramallah. Data kemudian dianalisa dengan statistik deskriptif, sample sendiri ujian-t, analisis faktor, One-Way ANOVA dan analisis pelbagai.

Hasil kajian menunjukkan majoriti pelancong asing merupakan warga Eropah dan Rusia yang melancong untuk tujuan ibadat dan spiritual. Penemuan turut menunjukkan cabaran yang dihadapi oleh industri pelancongan di Palestin secara am dan khususnya di kedua-dua bandar tersebut. Kajian mendapati bahawa ciri-ciri destinasi dan imej mempunyai hubungan dengan keinginan untuk kembali melawat Palestin di masa hadapan. Bagaimanapun, faktor kemudahan dan kemudahsampaian destinasi serta faktor harga dan kos amat mempengaruhi persepsi keinginan pelancong antarabangsa untuk kembali melawat Palestin. Hubungan antara penerimaan risiko di Palestin dan keinginan untuk kembali melawat adalah negatif dengan signifikan daripada faktor penghalang Israel. Kajian membuktikan bahawa warganegara peserta memberi kesan kepada karakter destinasi, penerimaan risiko dan hasrat untuk melawat semula. Jantina responden pula tidak memberi kesan terhadap faktor tersebut. Umur pula memberi kesan terhadap penilaian ciri-ciri destinasi pelancongan dan penerimaan risiko. Pengalaman melancong juga turut

memberi kesan terhadap ciri-ciri destinasi, penerimaan risiko dan keinginan untuk kembali melawat.

Hasil kajian melibatkan beberapa model teori. Selain itu, hasil penemuan dapat memahami ciri-ciri pelancongan secara komprehensif berdasarkan keadaan politik semasa di Palestin. Ini akan memberi kesan yang signifikan untuk pembuat dasar pelancongan di kawasan tersebut. Kajian mencadangkan kempen-kempen promosi untuk menggalakkan pelancong melawat Palestin. Beberapa cadangan juga disediakan untuk membantu sektor awam dan swasta membangunkan industri pelancongan di Palestin.

Factors Influencing Foreign Visitors Perceptions and Intention to Revisit Palestine: The Case OF Bethlehem and Ramallah

ABSTRACT

The tourism industry is an important support for future economic growth in Palestine. It has major sacred sites for three main religions Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Bethlehem district has most religious and heritage places that attract numerous international visitors and also Ramallah city. Destination characteristics including political instability and perceived risk, destination image and revisit intention are essential factors in understanding tourism performance and the success of a country's tourism industry. The objective of this study was to investigate international visitors' perception in terms of destination characteristics including political instability, perceived risk and likelihood of revisiting Palestine in general and to Bethlehem and Ramallah cities specifically. The influence of demographic characteristics of tourists including nationality, gender, age and travel experiences (number of visit and length of stay) was also examined along with the relationship between dependent variables. Protection Motivation Theory (PMT), Information Integration Theory (IIT), and Tourism Product Characteristics Including Political Instability employed as the theoretical base for this study. A theoretical framework of this study was constructed based on tourist characteristics, tourists' destination characteristics, perceived risks and likelihood of revisiting.

The study conducted a survey to collect data from 293 international visitors, eight years after the second Palestinian uprising "Intifada" began. The questionnaire was translated into three major languages (i.e., English, Arabic, and Russian) by professional translators. In July 2008, a pilot study was conducted on 28 international tourists in Bethlehem and Ramallah to establish the validity, reliability, and comprehensiveness of the research instrument. After the pilot study, data were collected from July until the end of August 2008. Five hundred questionnaires were distributed in Bethlehem and Ramallah, but only 293 questionnaires were finally used in this study. The questionnaires were randomly distributed to participants in the most attractive sites in Bethlehem and Ramallah cities. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent sample t-test, factor analysis, One-Way ANOVA and multiple regression analysis.

The Results revealed that majority of the foreign tourists were Europeans and Russians who traveled for religious and spiritual purposes. The results also reveal a challenge that faces tourism industry in Palestine in general and both cities particularly. This study indicated that tourism destination characteristics and image were related to revisiting Palestine in the future. However, destination facilities and accessibility factor and prices and cost factors greatly influenced the intention of perception of international visitors to revisit Palestine. The relationship between perceived risk in Palestine and likelihood of revisit was negatively significant in terms of perceived Israeli constraints factor. The study demonstrated that nationality of participants had impact on tourist destination characteristics, perceived risk and intention to revisit. Gender of respondents had no impact on destination characteristics, perceived risk and intention of revisit. Age had effects on destination tourists characteristics attribute and perceived risk. Travel experience had impact on destination characteristics attributes, perceived risk and intention to revisit.

The results of this study involved theoretical models. In addition, this study resulted in a comprehensive understanding of tourism characteristics under the current political circumstances of Palestine. This will result in significant implications for tourism policy makers in the area. The study suggested promotional campaigns to encourage tourists to visit Palestine. Also recommendations were provided to assist public and private sectors in tourism industry of Palestin.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the challenges facing tourism and travels worldwide throughout this decade, with a brief review of relevant literature. Afterwards, it concentrates on tourism in Palestine and the constraints which face international tourists visiting Palestine; which are Bethlehem and Ramallah governorates. This chapter is composed of important areas in the body of the dissertation comprising; the research background, the research problem, objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the methodology for the study and the organization of the dissertation.

1.2 Background

Tourism is one of the fastest developing elements of the economic sector and a valuable industry within regions-nationally and locally. There abound several evidences of the growth in the number of international arrivals in the tourism sector worldwide. Tourism has become an important industry due to its contribution to the increase in its income, foreign exchange earnings and also in the generation of jobs (Seddighi, et al., 2001; Seddighi & Theocharous, 2002).

Tourism is the largest industry in the world and is rapidly growing through its roles of enhancing the political and economic development in different countries, as well as its help in mitigating poverty, which leads to positive impacts on people. In 2000, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) announced that there was an

increase on the numbers of tourists from 25 million in 1950 to 670 million by the end of 1999. In addition, by the year of 2020, it is predicted that the number of foreign tourist arrivals would stand at approximately 1.56 billion. Based on this number, intra-regional tourists will count for 1.2 billion, while long haul travelers will be 378 million (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: UNWTO Tourism 2020 Vision: Forecast of Inbound Tourism, World by Regions International Tourist Arrivals by Tourist Receiving Region (million)

	Base Year	Forecast		Average Annual	Market Share	
	1995	2010	2020	Growth Rate (%)	1995	2020
				1995-2020		
World	565.4	1,006.4	1,561.1	4.1	100	100
Africa	20.2	47.0	77.3	5.5	3.6	5.0
Americas	108.9	190.4	282.3	3.9	19.3	18.1
East Asia and the Pacific	81.4	195.2	397.2	6.5	14.4	25.4
Europe	338.4	527.3	717.0	3.0	59.8	45.9
Middle East	12.4	35.9	68.6	7.1	2.2	4.4
South Asia	4.2	10.6	18.8	6.2	0.7	1.2
Intraregional (a)	464.1	790.9	1,183.3	3.8	82.1	75.8
Long-Haul (b)	101.3	215.5	377.9	5.4	17.9	24.2

Source: United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2000)

Note: (a) Intraregional includes arrivals where country of origin is not specified

(b) Long-Haul is defined as overseas travels or a trip of greater than 3,000 miles or 6 hours of fly time (Brown, 2001; King, 1994).

A number of literatures have focused on tourism from various perspectives. However, some of the studies concentrated on the constraints of the tourism that are related to safety and security and issues which impact on the traveler's perception in respect to the decision to visit destinations under risk conditions. Obviously, according to Faulkner (2001), the tourism industry has been a subject of several crises and disasters in recent years. From human to natural impacts, these disasters and crisis include political unrest, terrorism, economic and financial crisis, bio-

security and natural disasters and its threats. In addition, Newell and Seabrook (2006) claimed that tourism has connection with economic and war situations; like Iraq War, global terrorism, economic downturn, SARS disease and September 9/11 events, which made important impacts on the international tourism in recent years. In other words, the tourism sector is a sensitive industry and easily vulnerable to exogenous factors, which can disrupt the industry and also affect the decline of tourists to plan to visit a destination, as well as leading them to change their decisions for the choice of that destination (Ritchie, 2004; Seddighi & Theocharous 2002; Prideaux et al., 2003).

Palestine is a home to the world's three major religions: Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Therefore, it is considered as the first center of religious tourism, due to the dedications of these three major world religions flocking to Palestine to engage in sacred pilgrimages. Some of the sites which are frequently being visited include; Jerusalem, Nazareth, Jericho, Bethlehem and Hebron. Similarly, Palestine has throughout numerous centuries been a destination for pilgrims and visitors of Muslims and Christians from all over the world (Hammad & Hammad, 2008; Isaac, 2010a; Isaac & Platenkamp, 2010). Unfortunately, in recent years, tourism in Palestine faces many challenges to its sustainable development. The most important factor which is an obstacle to tourism in Palestine has political consequences (Hammad & Hammad, 2008; Sizer, 1999; Al-Rimmawi, 2003; Isaac; 2010a, 2010b).

No doubt, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had begun after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Subsequently, the British mandate issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917, which supported the establishment of a state for the Jews in Palestine (Giacaman et

al., 2009; United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), 2009). Consequently, numerous tragedy events occurred to Palestinian and their lands. Absolutely, the Israeli regimes undermine the tourism industry in Palestine by controlling the borders, tour operators and tourists' infrastructure development.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Human travels to destination are for visiting friends or relatives (VFR), business, vacation, leisure and for other motivations (Mcintosh et al., 1995). However, some studies showed that tourism industry is sensitive to indirect and direct occurrences. These are events which could threaten the safety of tourists (Sonmez, 1998; Seddighi et al., 2001). According to Law (2006), numerous changes due to tragedies occurred globally throughout the 21st century have had many negative effects on the tourism industry. These impacted shocks on tourism were examined by researchers. For instance; Pine and McKercher (2004) discussed the impact of bird flu and SARS on tourism in Asia in 2003. Furthermore, Steffen *et al.* (2003) studied the impacts of tsunami catastrophe in southern Asia and also travel across epidemics zones, which are a threat to the universal tourism industry and host destinations during the history of human life. At the same time, Lepp and Gipson (2003) stated that tourism was affected during the time of the events of September 11 attacks in Washington and New York in 2001. Similarly, civil Wars, terrorism, regional conflicts, occupation and so on, lead to increase insecurity and along with politics of the risk and spread of globalization of fear, affected the economic sector and the environment as well as declined the numbers of travelers to visit other countries (Hall et al., 2003; Bianchi, 2006). Destination image and attributes, risk perception and revisiting of a

destination greatly influence the tourists' travel decisions (Sonmez & Greafe, 1998a, 1998b; Sonmez & Sirakaya, 2002; George, 2003, 2009; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2008; Canally et al., 2007; Floyd et al., 2004; Qi et al., 2009). There is a lack of literature on destination image perception and experience in the third World (Awaritefe, 2004). Therefore, few studies have examined the relationships between destination image and attributes, risk perception and likelihood of revisiting a specific destination. The examination of these factors assists and motivates the destination marketers to understand the perception of international visitors in future revisit and attempt to increase the market share.

UNWTO (2009) reported that the Middle East countries recorded 55.1 million visitors, which represented 6.0% of the world's total tourist arrivals in 2008. This percentage was considered low compared to other countries. Thus, Sharpley (2002, p. 221) stated that the Middle East region is "*one of the least developed tourism regions in the world*", despite that, the Middle East countries possess a wealthy collection of cultural and natural resources (Henderson, 2006). Some writers claim that the reason for this is the lack of planning, marketing and inadequacies of infrastructure, in addition to the unsuitable Islamic way of life (found in these countries) to western international visitors. A restrictive access procedure which was imposed by some countries in the Middle East might be another discouraging factor to tourists. Meanwhile, some states in the region have witnessed some reasonable developments in the tourism sector. It is important to note that UNWTO (2007) predicted a growth in international tourists' arrivals to Middle East to an estimated 68.5 million by 2020, considering an average annual growth rate of about 7.1%.

Palestine as one of the Middle East countries is a holy land and the cradle of many civilizations. It is very important for all the three major religions in the world. It hosts many important religious cities such as Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Hebron and Jericho. Despite being such a small country, Palestine is rich in its religious sites, cultural, natural and heritage locations which support its economy (Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange (PACE), 1999; Hammad & Hammad, 2008; Isaac, 2010a). Palestine has not only been the site for many conflicts between Arabs and Israelis, but has also attracted religious tourists from all over the world (Al-Bandak, 2005; Alternative Tourism Group, 2005; Hammad & Hammad, 2008; Isaac, 2010a, 2010b).

The continuing conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis has numerous effects on tourism. Isaac (2010a) poses challenges to the development and growth of the tourism industry, particularly in Palestine. Due to Israeli occupation, the number of international tourist arrivals in Palestine remains unsteady. In 2010, the Palestinian Central Bureau Statistics (hereafter PCBS) demonstrates over the years, the unstable political scene has influenced fluctuations in the number of visitors (Figure 1.1).

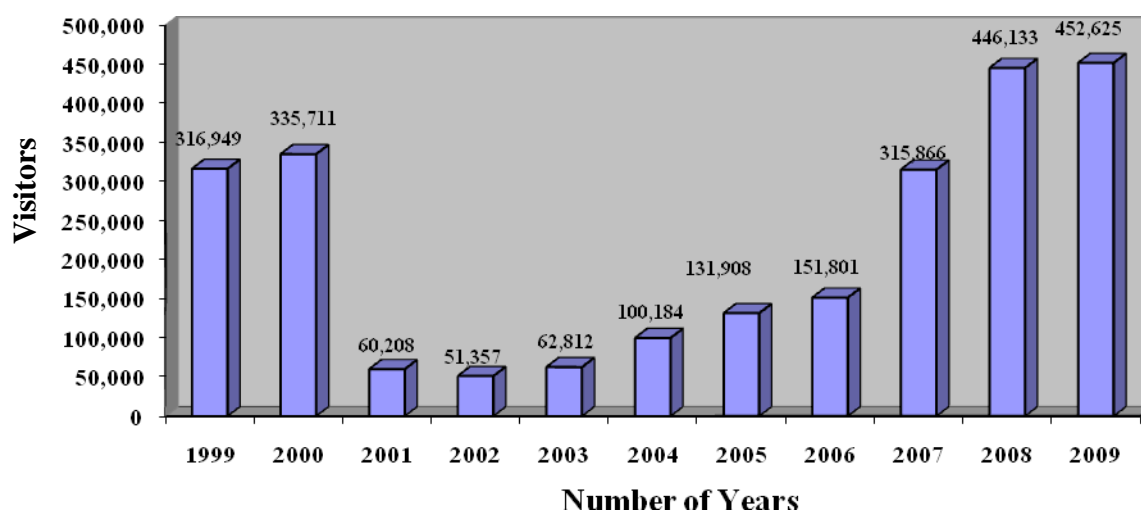


Figure 1.1: Number of visitors to Palestine corresponding to constitutive years 1999 to 2009. Source: PCBS, Hotel Activity Survey (2010)

Another point to be considered is that a few empirical studies were employed to study the international tourists' arrival in Palestine. For example, the study examined by Al-Rimmawi (2003), which revealed constraints of Al-Badan Park in Nablus governorate in the middle of the West Bank in Palestine. He noted that political barriers make international tourists not found in this park at the time of conducting his study. The study found a number of visitors to Al-Badan Park to be from citizens of Palestine into the West Bank cities, the Palestinians in Israel, Palestinians in Jordan and American-Palestinians. Therefore, lack of studies have been done on foreign tourists in Palestine is noticeable. To successfully study international tourism market in Palestine, the tourism marketers and planners need to obviously understand which destination attributes of Palestine really influence international tourists' perceptions and whether to select Palestine as their future destination. Tourism marketers and planners in Palestine also need to clearly identify how different group characteristics (nationality, age, and gender, number of visit, purpose of visit and length of stay) affect the tourists' perception of those attributes.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were as follows:

1. To explore the effects of political issues on the international visitor image of Palestine.
2. To find out the types of international visitors visiting Palestine.
3. To examine relationships between demographic variables (nationality, gender and age) with the influencing factors.
4. To identify the link between the number of visits and length of stay with influencing factors.
5. To determine relationships between demographic variables (nationality, gender and age) with revisit intention.
6. To examine the relationships between the number of visit and length of stay with revisit intention.
7. To explore the influencing factors that affect revisit intention.

Based on the research objectives the following hypotheses are presented:

H1: There is a link between religious purpose and visiting Palestine.

H2: There is a significant relationship between demographic variables (nationality, gender and age) and influencing factors.

H3: There is a significant relationship between the number of visits, length of stay and influencing factors.

H4: There is a significant relationship between demographic variables (nationality, gender and age) and revisit intention.

H5: There is a significant relationship between the number of visits and length of stay with revisit intention.

H6: There is a significant relationship between influencing factors and revisit intention.

1.4.1 Research Questions

In order to achieve the research objectives of this study, five main questions were presented. The first and second questions were designed to investigate how the demographic variables (nationality, gender and age) and travel characteristics (number of visit and length of stay) of international visitors are influenced by destination attributes and political situation in Palestine. The third and fourth questions were proposed to examine the differences in the demographic variables and travel characteristics in terms of the affects on the revisiting intention. On the other hand, the final question was formed to explore the effect of destination attributes and political situation factors on revisiting intention. These five questions were presented as follows:

1. How demographic variables of international visitors are influenced by Palestine destination attribute and political situation?
2. How characteristics of travel of international visitors are influenced by Palestine destination attribute and political situation?
3. How demographic variables of international visitors affect revisit intention?
4. How characteristics of travel of international visitors affect revisit intention?
5. How destination attributes and political situation affect revisit intention?

1.4.2 The Proposed Theoretical Framework

The study aimed to examine the international visitors' revisiting intention to Palestine and to investigate how destination attributes, political situation dimensions and demographic variables (nationality gender, age), and travel experience (number of visit, length of stay, purpose of visit) influence the significance of the revisiting intention. The present study refined constructs hypothesized to influence tourists' revisit intention. These constructs comprise: (1) destination attributes (2) political situation (3) tourists characteristics and travel experience (4) and behaviour towards revisit intention. In the proposed framework, these variables were hypothesized to directly influence the revisiting intention independently, either negatively or positively. The model is shown in Figure 1.2.

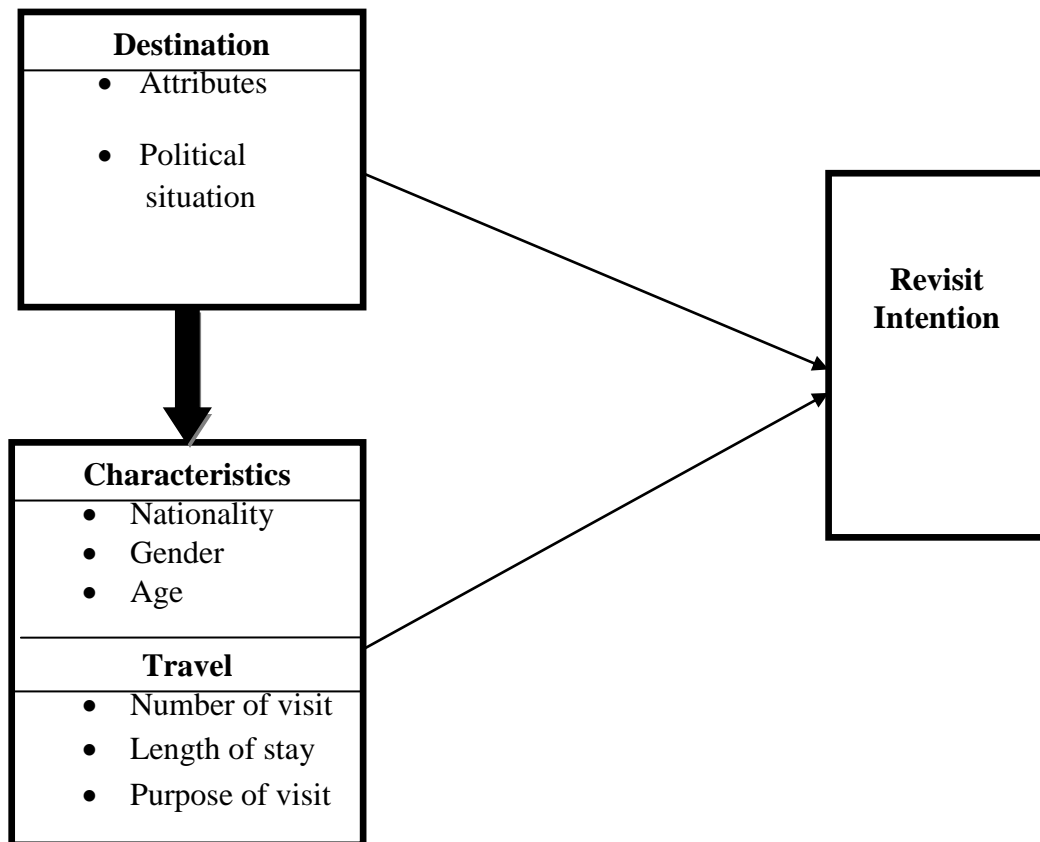


Figure 1.2: The Proposed Theoretical Framework

1.5 Significance of the Study

The current study is focusing on international visitor arrivals in Bethlehem and Ramallah towns. It also pays more attentions to the attitudes, perceptions and feelings of tourists in Palestine. As well, the risk perceptions of incoming tourists in Palestine were examined along with studying other factors which influence their perceptions during a visit. It is important to comprehensively recognize the effects of tourists' perceptions and their experiences to the success of the destination. Furthermore, a study which is based on the destination characteristics attributes level, is also valuable to tourism planners as it would assist them to formulate relevant strategies to attract more tourists. It would also provide tourism planners in Palestine with a different perspective of how tourists look at their destination. This study may aid the Palestinian tourism policy makers and marketers to determine an effective marketing strategy for generating markets.

1.6 Research Methodology

This study is based on data collection methods that employ the primary and secondary data. The primary data which was used to solve the problem being encountered in the research in terms of travel, tourism and gathering data is based on the questionnaires obtained from international visitors during their visit to Bethlehem and Ramallah in Palestine. The secondary data includes the literature review on the importance of tourism and the types of impacts that might affect the tourism development and tourist perception regarding to destination attributes, image and revisiting intention by foreign visitors. In addition, the statistical collected information and the literature which are based on the tourism in Palestine are taken into consideration in this study.

1.7 Organization of Thesis

The thesis is organized into six main chapters, where every chapter deals with a specific aspect of the research. Each chapter is organized as explained below:

1. Chapter one introduces the research, which also covers the problem statement of the study and its objectives.
2. In chapter two, review of relevant literatures appropriate of this study is provided.
3. Chapter three provides an overview of Palestine where it's old and modern history, conflict; location, climate, population; economy, culture and also its tourism history phases are all elaborated.
4. Chapter four explains the methods employed to gather data, which includes secondary and primary sources of data. Furthermore, the design of a questionnaire and the main instruments of data collection are explained. The population and sample size are also indicated.
5. Chapter five deals with the presentation of the survey results and the discussion of this study.
6. In chapter six, the conclusions and implications of this study are presented, based on the study results, to provide answers to the research questions. Recommendations for further research are also stated.

1.8 Summary

This chapter addressed the background of this study, reviewed the literature and discussed the current studies which are related and being involved to the topic. Moreover, it presented the problem statement of the study. The significance of the research was also explained along with the objectives of the study. The research

questions were designed in such to represent the research objectives. This chapter presented a brief research methodology accompanied with its primary and secondary data. Finally, this chapter elaborated a discussion of the thesis organization. In the next chapter, the literature review will be discussed on details.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the important fields in tourism and travel. In the literature, the elements which play major roles in this study are discussed. It highlights the tourism definitions and its magnitude to the world, regions, countries, destinations and local society. It focuses on definitions of crisis, political instability and risk perception from tourism perspective. Furthermore, it reviews various studies in the literature and factors which determine tourism and affect the travel industry. These factors are shown in the literature in the areas of crisis, conflicts, wars, violence, disasters, political instability.

This chapter concentrates on theories and models that are related to the core of this study. Image of tourist destination is reviewed and related to the impacts of determining the factors on the image of the destination. Likewise, the intention of revisiting a tourist destination was also reviewed and discussed.

2.2 Definitions of Tourism

There are several different available definitions of tourism nowadays. In 1999, according to the World Tourism Organization (WTO) cited by Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003), tourism “*comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited*”. At the same time, WTO considers “a

tourist” as *a temporary visitor staying for at least twenty four hours in any other country other than their normal place of residence, whereas excursionists, the second category of visitors, do not spend the night in the destination country*”. In terms of the purposes of travel by people are categories to these reasons such as; holiday, visiting friends and relatives, religion, conference, missions, health, business, studies, recreations and pleasure (Chadwick, 1987, cited by Mason, 2003). International tourism was classified by UNWTO (2008) into two components: inbound and outbound tourisms. The first tourism component means performing a visit to a country by non-residents, while the other tourism component means to perform a visit by residents of a country to another country. Therefore, international tourism is defined as *“persons who travel for a period not exceeding twelve months to a country other than the one in which they generally reside and whose main purpose is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited”*. Likewise, from the perspective of PCBS (2009a), inbound tourism was defined as *“comprising the activities of non-resident visitors to the households in another country, with the exception of hotel guests”*.

2.3 Magnitude of Tourism Industry

Tourism is considered as an important source of financial income to all countries of the entire world. It provides employment, income, tax revenue, foreign exchange (Seddighi & Theocharous, 2002; Chen & Tsai, 2007). Furthermore, it is considered one of the worlds’ top significant economic activities and the greatest growing fundamentals worldwide (Seddighi et al., 2001). By evidence, the World Tourism Organization estimates the economic finance running US\$2 trillion yearly; direct

international tourist payments stands at US\$800 billion a year. Therefore, more than US\$2 billion a day is estimated to be doubled by the year 2020 (WTTC, 2006).

In 1999, the World Travel & Tourism Council and International Hotel and Restaurant Associations (WTTC & IHRA) showed that tourism and travel will create 255 million job opportunities. The direct and indirect economic share has reached 11.7%, worldwide in the year 2010. Travel and Tourism generate jobs directly in tourism and travel businesses and reach across markets - in retail, telecommunications, construction and manufacturing. It could be one of the most valuable drivers for the growth of regional economies. In addition to the contribution to a sustainable development, this is economically, ecologically and socially sustainable due to the supplement of economic motivation to preserve natural environments and habitats. It also has less effect on natural resources in the environment than any other industries; besides, it promotes the appreciation of natural environment by protecting it (WTTC & IHRA, 1999).

According to WTTC and IHRA (1999), that tourism relies on a wide range of infrastructure services which are required by recreation facilities, accommodations, shops and restaurants - airports, air navigation, transportation, railheads and ports. Through the combination of good infrastructure with tourism, there are sustained social, economic and environmental benefits. Tourism and travel also produce wealth and has a great potential to economic, environmental and social sustainable development in both developing and developed nations.

Goeldner *et al.* (2000) stated that tourism and travel represent the top three industries in many nations. All of these features come from visitors when they visit a

destination. Therefore, the visitors play a role in the income of the economy and increase the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). At the same time, all of these benefits do not come without political stability (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2006).

Ritchie (2004) stated that the survival and growth of the economy of numerous countries depend on the tourism industry. As noted by Issa and Altinay (2006), tourism brings lots of money to the destination planned for. The authors described the importance of tourism in Lebanon. They considered tourism as an essential component of the economy. Fairbairn-Dunlop (1994) indicated that tourism reduces ethnic prejudice, promotes world peace and maintains the resource of women and foreign tourism performs to strengthen local customs.

2.4 Definitions of Political Instability, Crisis, Terrorism and Disaster

As defined by UNWTO (2006), crisis is *“any unexpected event that affects traveler confidence in a destination and interferes with the ability to operate normally”*. The other definition for a crisis emphasizes that, *“Any action or failure to act that interferes with an organization’s ongoing functions, the acceptable attainment of its objectives, its viability or survival, or that has a detrimental personal effect as perceived by the majority of its employees, clients or constituents”* Selbst (1978, cited by Faulkner, 2001, p. 136).

Crisis as cited by Coombs (2007) could be defined as *“a significant threat to operations that can have negative consequences if not handled properly”*.

Faulkner (2001) defined a disaster to be “*where an enterprise is confronted with sudden unpredictable catastrophic change over which it has little control, while crisis was defined as where the root cause of an event is, to some extent, self-inflicted through such problems as inept management structures and practices or a failure to adapt to change*”. At the same time, Beirman (2003) adapted a definition of crises from Faulkner and Russell’s in his study which defined a destination crisis as “*a crisis is a situation requiring radical management action in response to events beyond the internal control of organization, necessitating urgent adaptation of marketing and operational practices to restore the confidence of employees, associated enterprise and consumers in the viability of the destination*”.

Instability is a situation where a government “*has been toppled, or is controlled by factions following a coup, or where basic functional pre-requisites for social-order control and maintenance are unstable and periodically disrupted*” defended by Cook (1990, 14 cited by Sonmez, 1998a, p. 420). Political instability is “*A situation in which conditions and mechanisms of governance and rule are challenged as to their political legitimacy by elements operating from outside of the normal operations of the political system*” (Hall & O’ Sullivan, 1996, p. 362). Another definition by Hall and O’ Sullivan (1996, p. 117) is that “*Perception of political instability and safety are a prerequisite for tourist visitation. Violent protest, social unrest, civil war, terrorist actions, the perceived violations of human rights, or even the mere threat of these activities can all severely cause tourists to alter their travel behavior*”. Also, Hall and Page (2000) identified dimensions of political instability as international wars, civil wars, coups, terrorism, political protest, riots, social unrest and strikes.

The US Department of State (cited in Sonmez, 1998a, p. 417) defined Terrorism as *“premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against civilians and unarmed military personnel by sub-national groups, usually intended to influence an audience and international terrorism as involving citizens or the territory of more than one country”*. Brown (2000) defined political risk according to the purpose of his study as *“foreign investors risk or probability of occurrence of some political event (s) that will negatively change the prospect for the profitability of a given investment”*. According to Neumayer (2004), violence means *“the exercise of physical force with the intention to harm the welfare or physical integrity of the victim”*. In addition, he defined a political violence as *‘the exercise of such force that is politically motivated and can be exercised by either governmental or anti-governmental groups’*.

2.5 Impacts of Political Instability on Tourism

Numerous studies have discussed and examined the impacts of war, political instability, terrorism, crime, disease and natural & human disasters on the tourism industry. Furthermore, some researchers have also studied perceived travel risks concerning crises and anxiety (Neumayer, 2004; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998a, 1998b; Beirman, 2003; Pizam & Fleischer, 2002; Brown, 2000; Clements & Geolgiou, 1998; Cooper et al., 2005; Huang et al., 2002; Issa & Altinay, 2006; Kim & Wong, 2006; Prideaux & Faulkner, 2003; Ritchie, 2004; Weaver, 2000).

For example, according to Ritchie (2004), the tourism industry has faced several disasters and crises recently, such as economic recession, threats, natural disasters, terrorist attacks and political instability. He also stated that the impact of war

eruption and political instability such as the conflict in Iraq in 2003 and the gulf war of 1991 can suddenly decrease tourist travel patterns to other parts of the world. On the other hand, tourism is also easily affected by pressures in the wider operating environment and influenced by external factors, because it is a sensitive industry. War and conflicts lead to decline in standards and cause damages to cultural infrastructure (Issa & Altinay, 2006).

In recent years, many disorders have influenced foreign tourists' flow. One of these is the isolation of certain destinations, which lead to disruption and other effects on journey plans and the impact on public and private sectors. Further, these disruptions could last for long periods or vanish in short durations. Examples of such crisis which had their large impacts are the Asian financial crisis, which influenced countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia, the 11 September attack in the United States of America (USA), Gulf war and others (Prideaux et al., 2003; Sausmarez, 2004).

Factors such as pandemics in certain areas greatly reduce visitors traveling to such destinations. Other security factors such as bankruptcy in airlines companies seriously affect the number of tourists (Hall et al., 2003). The authors also considered other important issues which need great attention to enhance tourism such as; environmental, health and social factors. Reisinger and Mavondo (2005) stated that international and domestic travelers pay a lot of attention to their security and safety. The lack of such security hinders visitors to travel overseas. As for political dogma and its influence on tourism, Kim *et al.* (2007) established certain points for tourism

development of which numerous countries have employed for guidance. These actions may be summarized as follows:

- Discrediting propaganda has been noticed in some countries, where these governments mistakenly spread negative information about their areas. These negative feedbacks discourage visitors from traveling to such places. Such dogma is common in most communist and socialist countries in Asia and Eastern as well as Central Europe.
- Conflicts between countries usually produce warnings from one state to discourage traveling to the other state. As an example, the tensions in the political relations between USA and Syria greatly discouraged Americans from visiting Syria.
- Some countries impose economic sanctions against other countries. For example, South Africa was under trading embargo. A second example is the Turkish Republic forcing international sanctions against Northern Cyprus. USA also imposed economic sanctions against Cuba.
- Tourism industry faces severe restrictions by dictatorial states, which hinder people from presenting information to the outside world, such as North Korea.
- The emerging tourism relationships between countries encourage the gaining of favors and promises to increase tourism. This is obviously seen in the relation between Libya and USA.
- Ignoring tourism products and history is embarrassing and unpalatable. This is evident in the socialist past of Nazi in Germany in the 20th century and the massacres of Native Americans (USA) and so on.

Ichinosawa (2006) reported that natural disasters are unpredictable and almost inevitable in certain places. Examples for such a catastrophe includes; earthquakes, tsunamis and hurricanes. Other non-environmental factors include potential events which have severe consequences on tourism, for instance, economic disorder, violence, environment pollution and accommodation overbooking as well. Political environment and instability have a big influence on the tourism industry, due to its sensitivity. The politically unstable countries face troubles with security and safety issues, international investors, unstable demand, destination image, currency flow and quality of infrastructure as well as funding and supply (Hall, 1994; Clements & Georgiou, 1998; Scott, 1998; Baral, et al., 2004; Issa & Altinay, 2006).

Sonmez and Graefe (1998a) demonstrated that the perception of tourists to choose a destination for traveling plays an important role in the decision making process, especially in cases related to safety and risk. For instance, if a large place has unsafe areas, the perception of tourists would be insecured in the whole country, which may cause them to hesitate in visiting the entire country.

Prideaux *et al.* (2003) divided factors leading to the impact on tourism flows and disrupt the tourism industry into three categories: (1) The occurrence of crises is likely but unpredictable, leading to inability in tourist management, for example the chernobyl disaster, the Exxon Valdez oil tanker wreck and the foot and mouth epidemic in United Kingdom (UK) farms in 2001. Other crises which may also occur in the future comprise; economic breakdown, effects of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), nuclear war in Asia, achievement of religious and political aims by terrorism. (2) Disasters indicated unexpected tragic changes that

need emergency plans. Some precautions could be taken to avoid large damage caused by different disasters; such as global warming on climate change, spread of unknown diseases, pandemic and finally, a number of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and droughts. 3) Trends which may impact and disrupt the tourism industry in the future because no action is taken to mitigate the degree of influence.

In another development, Coombs (2007) reported that crisis can produce three interrelated threats: (1) reputation loss, (2) financial loss; through disruptions of businesses, loss of purchase purposes and loss of market share reputation, and (3) public safety and security. Hall *et al.* (2003) stated that the invasion of Iraq by Americans would affect the political and economic confidence, and therefore, influence the decision making process of individual tourists and thus impact on the perception of the individual destinations, which will in turn affect the tourism industry operations. Nevertheless, the war on Iraq led to the increase in the global price of oil.

Floyd *et al.* (2004) opined that 11 September 2001 attacks caused a great shift in the inbound. Outbound and domestic tourism faced several cancelations in international and domestic tourism. Moreover, thousands of travelers left their flights behind and many airlines companies dismissed their employees due to financial losses and the reduction in the number of passengers and reservations. Thus, these events impacted on the safety and security confidence of consumers to travel. The authors also revealed that the impact of that event on the tourism industry in Florida affected the occupancy rate by up to 44.6%.

Kim *et al.* (2007) stated that the travel principle differs from country to country, due to economic and political conditions. In certain countries, traveling is not supported by some countries as human right. Likewise, some countries that carry rigid policies are not interested in tourism development and impose restrictions on citizens traveling into their country or overseas, at the same time, they discourage international visitors and form restriction on international visitors. Both ability and intangibility of the complexity perishes are considered as special characteristics of tourism industry, due to the sensitivity to any crisis which may cause highly affected destinations and demands to a destination (Faulkner, 2000).

In terms of Lebanon, Issa and Altinay (2006) indicated that the main obstacles in the tourism development in Lebanon have limited budget, negative image, poor infrastructure, low investment opportunities and unrest demand through the impacts of terrorism and war from neighboring countries. Their study showed that Lebanon suffers from restricted water supplement, poor quality of roads, regular power cuts and requires infrastructure amelioration. Hall *et al.* (2003) said that after the events of September 11th 2001, major changes were made in American policies overseas, which led to the invasion of Iraq. This invasion had its impact on politics and economies. This also affected the individual tourist decision's making as well as their destination.

Brown (2000) mentioned that the increase in the cost of capital and loans depend on political risks. Consequently, when risks increase, this would prevent international and domestic tourism. However, pricing and timing in the tourism production process are negatively influenced by political risks. Hence, unrest in an environment

affects the successes of international tourism and reduces the motivation of investment. Furthermore, political risk will inhibit tourism investment projects for other projects. In addition, the rules of operations airlines will decrease in their reliabilities, due to increased changes and uncertainties being encountered. Therefore, he utilized certain macro political risk event variables which were adapted from Simon in 1982 and was considered as a comprehensive topology by Brown (2000); Refer to Table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1: Macro Political Risk Event Variables

Revolution	Cross-national guerrilla warfare
Coups d'etat	Cross-national guerrilla warfare
Civil war	Repatriation restrictions
Factional conflict	Leadership struggle
Ethnic/ religious turmoil	High inflation
Widespread riots/terrorism	Bureaucratic politics
Nationwide strikes/protests/boycotts	Border conflicts
World public opinion	High external debt service ratio
Nationalization/expropriation	Creeping nationalization

Source: Adapted by Brown from Simon (1982) and adopted from Brown (2000)

In the twentieth century, two world wars took place (First and Second World Wars). Many other civil wars also occurred, as well as the cold war and conflicts between regions and countries. These events led to the lack of confidence in sustainable development, at the same time, the lack of tourism along with security achievements due to its sensitivity. In other words, the risk of safety and security is not only due to wars, but also due to other threats such as pandemics. The spread of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) from East Asia into many countries mandated the warning of other citizens from traveling to certain countries in East Asia, such as Hong Kong and Guangzhou. Political disorder and Terrorism are considered to form the major challenges towards the tourism industry (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998a). Issa