HOTEL SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN JORDANIAN HOTELS: A CASE STUDY OF MARRIOTT HOTELS CHAIN

by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my father and mother, who always believe in me.

To my brothers and sisters Rafat, Rami, Nedal, Raed, Rehab, Roula, Reema and Rana who also always believe in me.

To my supervisor Prof. Badaruddin Mohamed who made it possible.

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"To Allah be the Glory for the Things He has done"

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TABLES OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT iii

TABLES OF CONTENTS iv

LIST OF TABLES x

LIST OF FIGURES xii

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED xiii

ABSTRAK xiv

ABSTRACT xvii

CHAPTER ONE 1

INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Background of the Study 1

1.3 Problem Statement 4

1.4 Objectives of Study 7

1.5 Research Questions 7

1.6 Significance of Study 8

1.7 Contributions of Study 9

1.8 Procedural Definitions 10

- 1.8.1 Service Quality 10
- 1.8.2 Service Quality Dimensions 10
- 1.8.3 Tourists' Satisfaction 11
- 1.8.4 Tourists' Loyalty 11
- 1.8.5Hotel Services 12

1.9 Organization of the Remaining Chapters 12

CHAPTER TWO 13

TOURISM INDUSTRY IN JORDAN 13

2.1 Introduction 13

2.2 Tourism Industry in Jordan 14

  2.2.1 Tourism Services in Jordan 15
  2.2.2 Tourist Attractions in Jordan 16
    2.2.2.1 Amman (A modern city built on the sands of time) 16
    2.2.2.2 Dead Sea 19
    2.2.2.3 Petra 21
2.3 Hotel Services in Jordan 24

2.4 Marriott Hotels in Jordan 26

  2.4.1 Amman Marriott Hotel 26
  2.4.2 Dead Sea Marriott Hotel 28
  2.4.3 Petra Marriott Hotel 29
2.5 Reasons for Selecting Marriott Hotels for This Study 30

2.6 Optional Tourism Services in Jordan 32

  2.6.1 Travel Agencies 32
  2.6.2 Tourist Restaurants 34
  2.6.3 Car Rentals 34
  2.6.4 Souvenir Shops 35
  2.6.5 Tourist Guides 35
  2.6.6 Companies of Tourist Transportation 35
2.7 Previous Studies Related to the Hotel Industry in Jordan 36

CHAPTER THREE 42

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE 42

3.1 Introduction 42

3.2 Service Quality 42

  3.2.1 Definition of Service Quality 43
  3.2.2 Characteristics of Service 46
  3.2.3 Perception and Expectation 46
  3.2.4 Expectation-Performance Approach 48
  3.2.5 Service Encounter 49
  3.2.6 Person-to-Person Interaction 51
  3.2.7 Dimensions of Service Quality 52
  3.2.8 Service Quality Gap 55
3.3 Customer Satisfaction 59

3.3.1 Customer Satisfaction and Its Sources 61
3.3.2 Reflection on the Affective Components and Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction 63
3.4 Customer Loyalty 65

3.4.1 Customer Loyalty Dimensions 67
3.4.2 Evolution of Customer Loyalty 70
3.4.3 Types of Customer Loyalty 72
3.4.4 Factors Affecting Customer Loyalty 73
3.4.5 Relationship between Loyalty and Customer Satisfaction 74
3.5 Perceived Service Quality as a Predecessor of Satisfaction 74

3.6 Satisfaction as a Predecessor of Customer Loyalty 75

3.7 Service Quality and Tourism 76

3.8 Characteristics of the Hotel Industry That Influences Service Quality 77

3.8.1 Competition within the Hotel Industry 80
3.8.2 Hotel Selection 84
3.9 Customer Satisfaction and Service Quality Research in Hospitality 86

3.9.1 Customer Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry 87
3.9.2 Service Quality in the Hotel Industry 88
3.9.3 Loyalty Research in the Hotel Industry 90
3.10 Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development 92

3.10.1 Theoretical Framework 92
3.10.2 The Research Hypothesis 93
3.10.2.1 Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction 94
3.10.2.2 Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty 95
3.10.2.3 Tourism Service Quality and Customer Loyalty 96
3.10.2.4 Mediating Role of Customer Satisfaction on the Relationship between Tourism Service Quality and Customer Loyalty 97
3.11 Summary of the Chapter 99

CHAPTER FOUR 100

METHODS AND PROCEDURES 100

4.1 Introduction 100

4.2 Research Design 100

4.3 Population and Sampling 101

4.3.1 The Population of the Study 101

  4.3.2 Study Sample 102
  4.3.3 Procedures in Selecting the Sample 104
4.4 Unit of Sampling 105

4.5 Questionnaire Design 105

4.6 Variable and Measurement 107

4.7 Pilot Study 108

4.8 Data Collection Procedure 112

  4.8.1 Collecting Primary Data 112
  4.8.2 Dealing with Validity and Reliability 115
    4.8.2.1 Validity 116
    4.8.2.2 Reliability 116
4.9 Data Analysis 117

  4.9.1 Variable Testing 118
  4.9.2 Descriptive Analysis 119
  4.9.3 Correlation 120
  4.9.4 Multiple Regression Analysis 120
  4.9.5 Testing the Mediates Role of Satisfaction 121
4.10 Summary of the Chapter 122

CHAPTER FIVE 123

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS 123

5.1 Introduction 123

5.2 Response Rate 123

5.3 Profile of Respondent 124

5.4 Profile of Respondent Country 125

5.5 Background of Respondent 126

5.6 Characteristics of Respondents by Satisfaction and Loyalty 128

5.7 Goodness of Measures 131

5.8 Factor Analysis 131

  5.8.1 Factor Analysis for Tourism Service Quality 132
  5.8.2 Factor Analysis of Customer Satisfaction 134

4.8.3 Factor Analysis of Customer Loyalty ... 135
5.9 Reliability Analysis ... 136

5.10 Descriptive Analysis for Variables ... 137

5.11 Correlations ... 138

5.12 Regression Analysis ... 139

5.13 Multiple Regression Analysis ... 142

5.14 Summary of the Chapter ... 147

CHAPTER SIX ... 148

DISCUSSIONS ... 148

6.1 Introduction ... 148

6.2 Discussion Based on Key Findings ... 148

    6.2.1 Tourism Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction ... 148
    6.2.2 Tourism Service Quality and Customer Loyalty ... 149
    6.2.3 Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty ... 151
    6.2.4 Customer Satisfaction Mediates the Effect of Tourism Service Quality on Customer Loyalty ... 153
6.3 Main Findings ... 154

CHAPTER SEVEN ... 157

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION ... 157

7.1 Introduction ... 157

7.2 Recapitulation ... 157

7.3 Implications of the Study ... 158

    7.3.1Theoretical Implication ... 158
    7.3.2 Managerial Implications ... 159
7.4 Limitations ... 162

7.5 Recommendations for Future Research ... 164

7.6 Conclusion ... 167

References ... 169

Appendix A- Questionnaire 191

Appendix B- Data Analysis 200

Appendix C- Factor Analysis 212

Appendix D- Reliability 223

Appendix E- Descriptive Analysis for Study Variables 229

Appendix F- Pearson Correlation between All the Variables 230

Appendix G- Regression Analysis 231

Appendix H- Cross Tap (Chi-Square) 258

Appendix H- Jordan Map 263

List of Publications Associated with the Thesis 266

LIST OF TABLES

2.1 Number of Hotels, Number of Rooms and Number of Beds 24
2.2 Number of Classified Hotels, Beds and Rooms and Number of Employee 25
2.3 Main Tourism Indicators 33
2.4 Geographical Distribution of Travel Agencies 33
2.5 Tourist Restaurant 34
4.1 Number of International Tourists 104
4.2 The Questionnaire Design 106
4.3 Summary of Variables, Measurement Sources 106
4.4 Cronbach's Alpha for Tourism Service Quality 111
4.5 Cronbach's Alpha for Customer Satisfaction 111
4.6 Cronbach's Alpha for Customer Loyalty 112
5.1 Rate of Items in Terms of Numbers of Questionnaire Distribution 124
5.2 Personal Profile of Respondent 124
5.3 Profile of Respondent Country 125
5.4 Background of Respondent 126
5.5 Cross-Tab (Chi-Square) test for demographic, satisfaction and loyalty 128
5.6 KMO and Bartlett's Test for Tourism Service Quality 132
5.7 Factor Analysis for Tourism Service Quality 133
5.8 KMO and Bartlett's Test for Customer Satisfaction 134
5.9 Factor Loading for Customer Satisfaction 135
5.10 KMO and Bartlett's Test for Customer Loyalty 135
5.11 Factor Loading for Customer Loyalty 136
5.12 Results of Reliability Test 137
5.13 Results of Descriptive Statistics 138
5.14 Inter-correlation Among variable 139

5.15 Regression Results on Tourism Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction 140

5.16 Regression Results on Tourism Service Quality and Customer Loyalty 141

5.17 Regression Results on Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty 142

5.18 Multiple Regression Results of Tourism Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty 144

5.19 Summary of the Results 146

6.1 Summary of Empirical Support for Research Findings of this Study 156

LIST OF FIGURES

2.1 Jordan Map 14
2.2 Amman City 19
2.3 Dead Sea 20
2.4 Petra 23
2.5 Marriott Hotel Amman 27
2.6 Marriott Hotel Dead Sea 29
2.7 Marriott Hotel Petra 29
2.8 Three Tourists Destinations in Jordan 32
3.1 Dimensions of Service Quality 53
3.2 Service Quality Model 56
3.3 The Proposed Theoretical Framework 93
4.1 Research Design and Procedures 102
5.1 Effects of Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction 140
5.2 Effects of Service Quality and Customer Loyalty 141
5.3 Effects of Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty 142
5.4 The Mediation of Customer Satisfaction on the Relationship between Tourism Service Quality and Customer Loyalty 143

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

MOICT	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (Jordan)
NPM	New Public Management
TQM	Total Quality Management
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WOM	Words Of Mouth
WTO	World Tourism Organization

KUALITI PERKHIDMATAN HOTEL DAN KESETIAAN PELANGGAN DI HOTEL-HOTEL DI JORDAN: SUATU KAJIAN KES DI RANGKAIAN HOTEL-HOTEL MARRIOTT

ABSTRAK

Dalam industri hotel yang sentiasa mencabar di Jordan, kualiti perkhidmatan merupakan suatu polisi penuh cabaran yang amat penting untuk mengekalkan sokongan pelanggan serta membina suatu asas pelanggan yang kukuh. Usaha-usaha yang telah dipraktitkan oleh para pengusaha hotel untuk menawan dan mengekalkan kesetiaan pelanggan ialah dengan membekalkan kualiti perkhidmatan yang telah ditambah-nilai yang sedang berubah menjadi semakin mencabar. Tesis ini mencuba untuk meneliti perhubungan di kalangan kualiti perkhidmatan pelancongan melalui kualiti perkhidmatan, kepuasan pelanggan dan kesetiaan di tiga buah hotel pilihan di Jordan yang merupakan cawangan-cawangan kepada suatu rangkaian hotel lima bintang. Sejumlah 390 borang kaji-selidik telah diedarkan kepada para pelancong yang menetap di tiga buah cawangan kumpulan hotel Marriott di Jordan. Keputusan kajian telah memaparkan bahawa dimesi-dimensi kualiti perkhidmatan seperti empati, kebolehpercayaan, keupayaan membalas dan penampilan fasiliti fizikal telah mempengaruhi kepuasan pelanggan secara signifikan, dan seterusnya mempengaruhi kesetiaan pelanggan. Khususnya, di kalangan dimensi-dimensi kualiti perkhidmatan pelancongan, penanda yang paling signifikan untuk kesetiaan pelanggan adalah penampilan fasiliti fizikal. Tesis ini memberi implikasi bahawa para pentadbir hotel lima bintang harus tampil ke depan dan cuba sedaya upaya meningkatkan kualiti perkhidmatan pelancongan mereka demi menawan dan mengekalkan kesetiaan pelanggan mereka.

Tesis ini turut bertujuan menyelidiki jangkaan kualiti perkhidmatan di kalangan para pelanggan hotel serta menaksir kepuasan pelanggan-pelanggan berpandukan kualiti perkhidmatan pelancongan (TSQ) di hotel-hotel lima bintang di Jordan. Teknik penaksiran kualiti perkhidmatan ini telah diubahsuai dari model SERVQUAL. Berdasarkan tujuan mencapai objektif-objektif tesis ini, borang-borang kajiselidik telah digunakan untuk menilai kepuasan pelancong. Instrumen kajiselidik ini telah dibangunkan dari kajian-kajian lampau dan ianya mengandungi 23 item cadangan TSQ. Daripada 322 borang kajiselidik yang dikumpulkan, didapati bahawa hanya empat dimensi kualiti perkhidmatan yang didapati mempunyai hubungan positif dengan kepuasan pelanggan. Selepas itu, beberapa temuduga telah dilakukan untuk memberi sokongan dan pengesahan ke atas kebolehpercayaan kajiselidik ini. Di antara keempat-empat dimensi tersebut, jaminan merupakan dimensi yang paling tinggi dalam menilai kepuasan pelanggan. Oleh yang demikian, kualiti perkhidmatan mempuyai kaitan langsung dengan kepuasan pelanggan. Dari segi teori, hasil-hasil kajian telah memaparkan bahawa para pelanggan hanya akan berasa puas hati apabila jangkaan perkhidmatan mereka itu berkualiti tinggi dan menyeronokkan. Ini merupakan salah satu penentu yang mempengaruhi pilihan-pilihan para pelanggan dalam memilih hotel lima bintang yang mereka minati. Dengan cara yang hampir sama, hasil kajian ini juga telah mendapati bahawa kepuasan pelanggan adalah berkadar langsung dengan kesetiaan pelanggan. Biasanya seseorang pelanggan akan tetap setia kepada sesebuah hotel jika beliau masih dapat menikmati kepuasan yang sama atau lebih baik lagi dalam perkhidmatan yang ditawarkan oleh hotel tersebut. Keputusan-keputusan tesis ini mampu membekalkan para perancang pelancongan dan pakar-pakar pemasaran di Jordan dengan suatu pemahaman yang lebih mendalam dalam konsep TSQ serta mengajar mereka bagaimana untuk meningkatkan perkhidmatan mereka secara berterusan.

HOTEL SERVICE QUALITY AND THE CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN JORDANIAN HOTELS: A CASE STUDY OF MARRIOTT HOTELS CHAIN

ABSTRACT

In the ever challenging Jordanian hotel industry, service quality is an extremely important competitive policy to maintain customer support and build a strong customer base. The efforts by hotels to win and retain customer loyalty by providing enhanced quality services is ever evolving and becoming more and more challenging. This study attempts to examine the relationship among tourism service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in three selected Jordanian hotels which are branches of a five-star hotel chain. A total of 390 surveys were administrated to tourists who were staying at three branches of the Marriott hotel group in Jordan. The results show that dimensions of service quality such as empathy, reliability, responsiveness and tangibility significantly influence customer satisfaction, which in turn influences customer loyalty. Specifically, among the dimension of tourism service quality, the most significant predictor of customer loyalty is tangibility. This study implies that five star hotels in Jordan should also come forward and try their best to improve their tourism service quality to win and retain their customers' loyalty.

This study also aims to investigate the service quality expectations of the hotel customers and evaluate their satisfaction with regard to tourism service quality (TSQ) in five-star hotels in Jordan. The evaluation of service quality is adapted from the SERVQUAL model. For the purpose of achieving the objectives of this study, questionnaire surveys were used to measure visitor satisfaction. The questionnaire instruments were developed from previous studies and contained 23 proposed TSQ items. From the 322 questionnaires collected, only four service quality dimensions were found to be positively related to customer satisfaction. After that interviews were carried out to support the reliability of the survey. Among the four dimensions, assurance was the highest predictor in measuring customer satisfaction. Therefore, the quality of service is directly related to the customer satisfaction. Theoretically, the findings showed that customers would only be satisfied when the service is perceived to be enjoyable and of high quality. It is also one of the determinants influencing customers' choices of which five-star hotel they will prefer to stay in. Similarly, it was also found that customer satisfaction is also directly related to customer loyalty. Normally a customer would remain loyal to a certain hotel if the customer continues to enjoy the same or even better satisfaction in the services provided by the hotel. The results of this study could provide tourism planners and marketers in Jordan an increased understanding of the concept of TSQ and teach them how they can continually improve their services.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter is a brief explanation of the research background. It describes the general background of the service industry, problem statement, research questions, and research objectives. Finally, it describes the significance and organization of the remaining chapter.

1.2 Background of the Study

Tourism is undoubtedly an important industry to many economies as it is one main source of revenue and foreign exchange for a country. This industry plays a vital role in preserving cultures and historical heritage. It promotes national development as billions of dollars in investment are expended on infrastructure such as roads, airports, telecommunications and hotels which are necessary to foster the industry's growth. It is a vital and crucial factor of employment opportunities especially in the sector of services.

Delivering quality service to customers is a fundamental strategy for the success and prosperity of any firm in the world (Dawkins & Rreichheld, 1990; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990). It is worth mentioning that the chief emphasis of both academic and managerial effort during the 1980s concentrated on determining what service quality meant to customers and on developing strategies for the purpose of meeting customer expectations (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985, 1988). However, the focus has currently been enhanced to include other important issues, such as the impact of service quality on profit and financial outcome of the organization (Greising, 1994; Rust, Zahorik & Keiningham, 1995).

With the obvious expansion of today’s tourism industry, a great attention has been dedicated to keep up with its exceptional development (Al-Shura, 2004). As the industry's supporters attempt to improve the various aspects associated with tourism, sustainability and the long term viability of the industry are strongly highlighted. One of the aspects is the provision of services which is vital to ensure the industry sustained expansion. The quality of service is inseparably bound to the customer perceptions and satisfaction. Consequently, it is pertinent that a comprehensive study of service quality be carried out to clarify the customers’ perception of service and their satisfaction with the services provided .

In view of the importance of the quality of services in the tourism industry as illustrated above, it is imperative to look at the services sector in Jordan prior to studying the effects of service quality on tourism in the country. In general, the services sector plays an important role in the Jordanian economy. With the expansion of economy through the foreign capital influx and the burgeoning growth of the tourism sector, the demand for quality service provision has become increasingly critical (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). The burgeoning growth in the tourism sector is amply reflected in the 23.4$ million revenue generated through tourist activities (Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, 2007). Consequently, more attention has been devoted to analyze the provision of quality services (Stauss & Schoeler, 2004).

The focus on service quality has become increasingly apparent ever since the 1980s as quality service has become a benchmark with which the role and success of service companies are assessed (Al-Taee, 2001). In fact, many studies tackle the strategic benefits of service quality especially in acquiring greater market shares and enhanced profits. This focus on the provision of quality service becomes even more vital in contemporary times as competition becomes more intense with the advent of technology and a more discerning clientele.

With regard to service quality, customer loyalty and customer satisfaction occupy an important position in the well-being and development of the tourism industry. Apparently, customer loyalty and satisfaction have become two critical issues in the evaluation process of service quality. Basically, customer satisfaction is seen as an endless task because of the constant change in demand and expectations. Nevertheless, customer satisfaction is the answer to cost-reduction and long-term benefit-making. In order to ensure customer satisfaction, a functional system supported by the relevant abilities and qualifications need to be in place. This is because service providers must tap into these abilities and expertise in their interaction with customers and thus indirectly forge a positive image of the organization they represent in their client's perceptions. That is, the combination of both tangible and non-tangible personal qualities will be instrumental to overall customer satisfaction.

Customer loyalty is the primary goal for most business organization today, given the understanding that customer retention is economically more advantageous than constantly seeking new customers (Kish, 2000; Fisher, 2001; Ehigie, 2006). An important reason for the interest in service loyalty is because loyal customers that indulge in repeat purchases are the bedrock of any businesses.

On the whole, customer loyalty is considered as a main key to organizational success and long term profit (Oliver, 1997). As such, it is not surprising that most companies have strategically focused their objective on developing customer loyalty.

Nevertheless, solely concentrating on customer acquisition may not guarantee long term success for the organization. Instead a long term plan for better customer acquisition and optimizing the performance and stakeholders' value in the long term can be achieved by strategically balancing the acquisition with customer retention and customer development.

On the other hand, customer's loyalty to a tourist service organization is inextricably intertwined with his/her perception of the organization's service quality. In other words, a good service quality leads to decreasing client turnover rates and reduces the cost of attracting new customers. Accordingly, the organization gains constant, high economic returns and a good reputation. The problem confronting administration and service presenters in tourist organization is how to measure service quality, and understand the limitations of such quality. They are also confronted with the task of having to answer customer's demands and expectations besides resolving their own satisfaction and loyalty issues in order to realize their organization's aims (Reichheld & Teal, 2001).

1.3 Problem Statement

Tourism service is an industry fraught with much competition due to the great demand for tourism product and services (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2004). On the other hand, many people believe that successful hotel business depends mainly on the delivery of greater quality, value, and satisfaction. As a result, general hotel marketers try to understand customers' perceptions on quality, value, and the extent of their satisfaction by reviewing onsite comment and conducting occasional customer surveys. Although hotel marketers have become aware of the importance of service quality, it is still practically overlooked

Thus, the most important thing in this circumstance is the provision of a competitive service strategy able to present excellent services which will accrue numerous benefits and advantages for the relevant organization which in turn would contribute to enhance the employee satisfaction and reduce turnover rates (Kashyap, 2001).

It is common knowledge that service encounter research is gaining much importance among the business and academic fraternity (Fornell, 1992). However, it is also noted that the literature on service encounter, especially regarding the theory, methodology, and approaches is insufficient because the disposition of people, product, and process interface during a service encounter is always complicated and complex. According to Keaveney (1995), the largest category of service switching results from core service failures (mistakes, billing and documentation errors, and others) followed by the service encounter failures (uncaring, impolite customer service, and unacknowledged attitudes). Therefore, providing satisfactory service quality is extremely valuable to attract and keep the customer.

Apart from these limitations, there is limited empirical research conducted on customer perceptions in the hotel industry (McDougall & Levesque, 2000). Besides, the Jordanian hotel industry is not highly aware of the power of customer loyalty as hotel services are difficult to differentiate (AL-Alak, 2010).

There is an urgent need to elucidate the customer's loyalty and satisfaction aspects as they are two elements which posed enormous difficulty facing the attempts of finding a relationship between these factors. Invariably, these constraints lead researchers to a false hypothesis that justice in procedure application and the implementation of suitable service strategies create high level expectations which result in customer satisfaction and loyalty (Oliver, 1999). Thus, there is an urgent need to address these assumptions and a clear picture can only emerge through conducting a study of this nature. The study will concentrate on tourist service quality and its influence to fulfill customer satisfaction and loyalty through service encounter and the attainment of positive outcomes which can contribute to the acquisition of key strategies that can serve to vitalize service and enhance profits and competitive capabilities.

Increasing market diffusion and competition compels the industry to seek to differentiate a hotel from its competitors by focusing on developing competitive service strategies (Hart, 1988; Tax & Brown, 1998, Zeithamal, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990). Thus, creating and raising a competitive service strategy is vital to maintain excellent service quality and survival in a competitive marketplace.

Despite the increasing popularity of service quality, practical guidelines of service quality to enhance customer loyalty so as to become repeats service users as a part of the hotel industry (Chen McCain, Jang, & Hu, 2005). In this regard, it is crucial to discover service quality attributes that can build loyal relationship with tourists. In addition, researches on customer loyalty in the tourism sector in isolation are also lacking (Aksu, 2006) in isolation.

Wilkens (2005) also lamented on the lack of empirical research that has investigated customer loyalty even though the relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty has been examined in a number of industries. In retrospect, research that clarifies, and provides empirical evidence to explain the relationships that exist between constructs that affect loyalty is highly valuable to hotel managers, especially in this competitive environment of today.

Drawing from the above discussion, these study investigated tourism service quality, and the satisfaction achieved by customers from the actual service experience. It will also examine the extent to which the perception of service experience fosters the future behavioral and attitudinal response towards repurchasing the hotel service. In other words, the above research areas are the factors that could make the customer become loyal in the hotel industry.

1.4 Objectives of Study

The overall purpose of this research is to identify the relationship between tourism service quality and the customer loyalty. Furthermore, this study examined the relationships among factors identified as potentially related to it. To accomplish this purpose, the objectives of this research are as follow:

1. Studying the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.
2. Examining the linkages between service quality and customer satisfaction.
3. Examining the linkages between service quality and customer loyalty.
4. Investigating the mediating role of customer satisfaction on the relationship between tourism service quality and customer loyalty within the hotel sector in Jordan.

1.5 Research Questions

This current research was conducted to identify the relationship between tourism service quality and customer loyalty and the effects of customer satisfaction on service quality and customer loyalty as a mediating variable. Thus, this study attempts to answer the following broad research questions namely:

1. What is the relationship between the tourism service quality and customer

satisfaction?

2. What is the relationship between tourism service quality and customer loyalty?

3. What is the relationship between the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty?

4. Does customer satisfaction mediate the relationship between tourism service quality and customer loyalty within the hotels sector in Jordan?

1.6 Significance of Study

The service sector is one of the fastest growing sectors of the global economy as 90% of employment opportunities and 75% of national incomes completely depend on this sector (Heskett, Sasser & Shlezenger, 1997). As such, creation of a quality service sector is a vital demand for quality service employees who increase faster than others. Consequently, service organizations should implement good administrative strategies designed to choose qualified, experienced and highly motivated personnel to achieve the tasks of employment and training.

Reviewing the service sector, the importance of the study lies in:

1. Increasing the competitiveness of the Jordanian service sectors on the one hand, and increasing customer awareness on the other hand.

2. Highlighting the importance of service quality in influencing the customer satisfaction and the customer loyalty in the sector of tourism.

3. Increasing the number of employees in the sector of tourism by enhancing their ability to perform high services quality.

4. Trying to make the sector of tourism conform to a scientific standard when measuring tourist service quality in order to improve and develop its current services, to retain its present customers, and to attract new clients.

5. Focusing on the customer's satisfaction to ensure continued customer loyalty to assist in planning future marketing strategies.

6. Emphasizing the importance of service quality and the customer's satisfaction and loyalty in enhancing the profits of tourist organizations.

1.7 Contributions of Study

Based on the literature review, it is discovered that currently the development of the conceptual foundations of tourism service quality and customer loyalty still has much room for improvement. Apart from this, the key elements that secure this perception are absent (Eiriz and Wilson, 2006), especially those concerning studies that concentrate on analyzing the relationship of tourism service quality models in the context of hotel industry (Kim and Cha, 2002).

This study is one of a few studies on the quality of tourist services provided in Jordanian hotels and its relationship with customer's satisfaction and loyalty. Furthermore, its findings are expected to be useful to be considered by Jordanian tourist organizations.

Another aim of this study is to add to the literature concerning the theories and practices related to the relationship between tourism service quality and customer loyalty. Thus, the proposed model contributes to existing theories on tourism service quality by empirically investigating the association between its derived satisfaction and customer loyalty applied to international tourists of five-star hotel chains. Another aim of this study is to add to the literature concerning the theories and practices related to the relationship between tourism service quality and customer loyalty. Furthermore, this research intends to provide an implication of the customer loyalty that is of greatest importance to help hotels managers. This information is vital not only for sustaining successful hotel business, but also for understanding and improving customer loyalty. Finally, there was lack of sufficient data to design and develop tourism service quality and customer loyalty program for the hotel that responds to service perceptions of customer so far. So, in behalf of this study, hotel management would develop and improve their service quality and loyalty program.

1.8 Procedural Definitions

1.8.1 Service Quality

Service quality is defined as the difference between customer expectations of service and perceived service. If expectations are greater than performance, then perceived quality is less than satisfactory and hence customer dissatisfaction occurs (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

1.8.2 Service Quality Dimensions

- Tangibility: This presents the tangible aspects related to services such as equipments needed to present service like buildings, materials of communications, furniture's, appearance of officers and employees, and so on.
- Reliability: It is the ability of presenting the promised service neatly and confidently; i.e., it is reliable.
- Responsiveness: This is the desire to help tourists and present instant service.
- Assurance: It is the cognition and courtesy of officer in addition to their capability of showing confidence in themselves and others.
- Empathy: The personal care presented by the company for its customers (Parasuraman, et al., 1985, 1988; Cronin & Taylor, 1992).

1.8.3 Tourists' Satisfaction

It is the person's feeling of happiness or disappointment that results from the realized performance of service (the product), with his/her expectations. If the performance is less than the expectations, the tourists will be unsatisfied. The opposite is true when the performance is more than the expectation, then the tourist will very satisfied and pleased (Kotler & Killer, 2006).

Tourist' satisfaction is measured through:

- The happiness of getting the service from the company (hotels).
- Getting the expected service.
- Evaluating the relationship with the company (hotels).
- The decision of getting the service from the company (hotels).

1.8.4 Tourists' Loyalty

Tourists' loyalty can be defined as a deep commitment of the customer to continue dealing with the provider of service as his/her first choice among other alternatives in response to his/her real behavior and cognition sensation related with his/her preferable attitude and away from any marketing efforts exerted to cause transformation behavior (Oliver, 1999).

Tourists' loyalty is measured through:

- Going on dealing with the current provider of service.
- Recommending other customers to deal with the company.
- Talking about the service positively by 'WOM'.
- Being ready to pay the required price even if price increase.
- Not to hesitate in applying for the new service of the company.

- Ignoring all attitudes influential and marketing efforts to be the first choice in customers' mind (Oliver, 1999; Harrison-Walker, 2001; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

1.8.5Hotel Services

These are a complementary set of services that include lodging, food, and drinks in addition to the supporting services presented by the service provider (Bardi, 2006).

1.9 Organization of the Remaining Chapters

This chapter described the reasons for undertaking this research. This quantitative study is comprised of five chapters. Chapter one is the introductory chapter containing the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study. Chapter Two includes a review of both past and current literature related to the tourism service quality and customer loyalty. Chapter Three outlines the methodological approach, methodology, the sample, data collection procedures, the variables, and data analysis of the study. Chapter Four discussed the data analyses. Lastly, Chapter Five summarizes the research and provides conclusions. Recommendations for practice and future research are also presented in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER TWO

TOURISM INDUSTRY IN JORDAN

2.1 Introduction

Jordan is a small Arab country located in the heart of the Middle East, bordered by Saudi Arabia on the south, Syria on the north, Iraq on the east, and Palestine on the west. Further, Jordan is divided into twelve governorates, namely: Amman, Zarqa, Irbid, Karak, Jerash, Mafraqq, Ramtha, Madaba, Salt, Maan, Tafielah and Aqaba (See figure 2.1). Each of these governorates is headed by a governor and subdivided into administrative regions (Aldipas, 1999). The population of Jordan is estimated to be approximately 6.30 million, and most of the population resides in the governorate of the capital Amman. 38.8 per cent of the population is under 15 years of age and 58.7 per cent is between 15 and 44 years of age (MOICT, 2008).

Since its independence in 1946, Jordan has been transformed from being a rural and poor country to an urban country with a highly educated population, with an adult literacy rate of 90 percent and youth literacy rate of 99.4 percent (Saheer & Chris, 2003). This was a result of a combination of factors, including a hard working population, an enlightened leadership and a consistent focus on human development dimensions such as education, healthcare income and equitable opportunities to participate in all aspects of the society (UNDP, 2000).

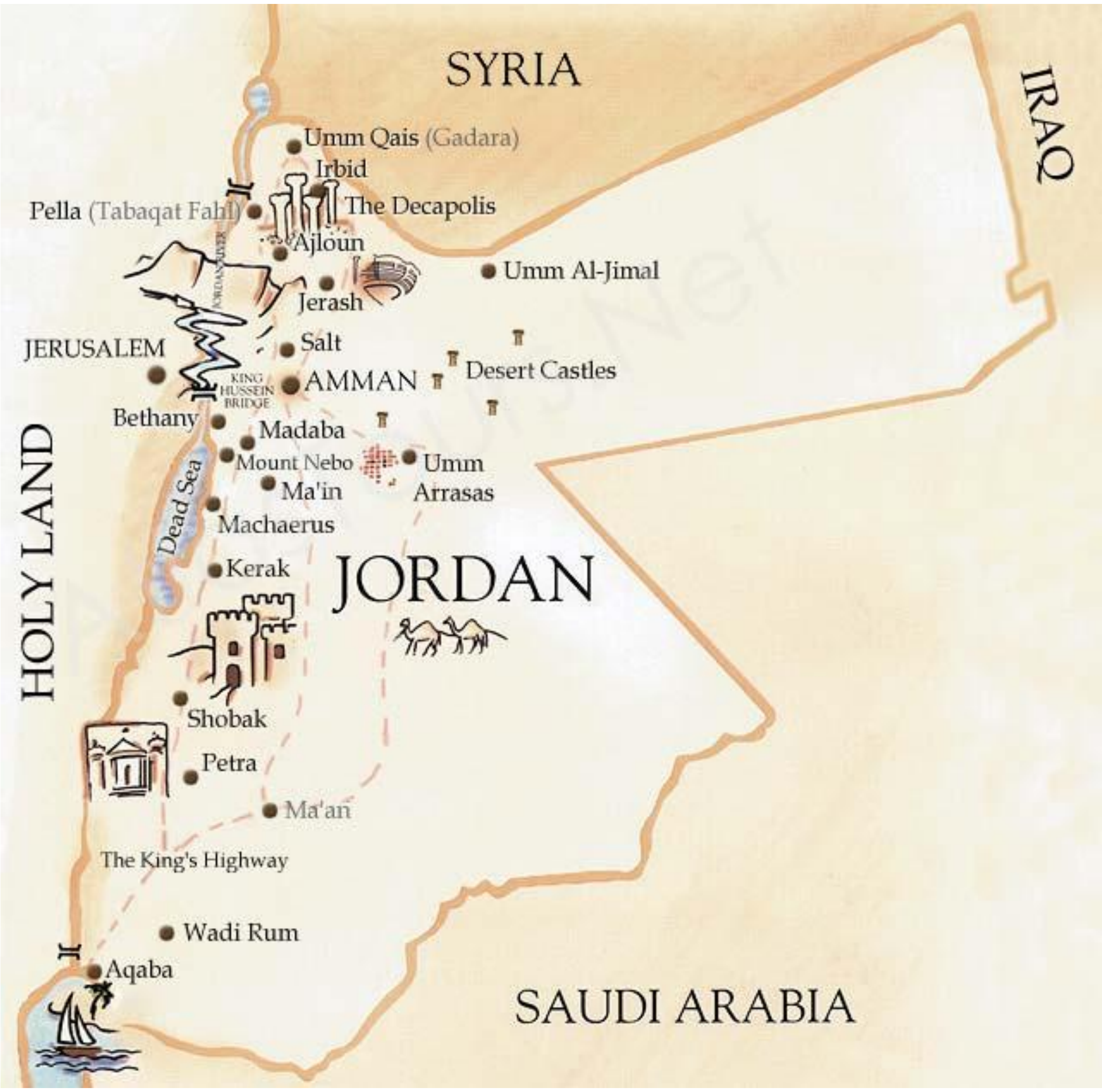
SYRIA
IRAQ
Umm Qais (Gadara)
Irbid
Pella (Tabaqat Fahl)
The Decapolis
Ajloun
Umm Al-Jimal
Jerash
JERUSALEM
Salt
Desert Castles
KING HUSSEIN BRIDGE
AMMAN
Bethany
Madaba
Mount Nebo
Umm Arrasas
Ma'in
Machaerus
Dead Sea
HOLY LAND
Kerak
JORDAN
Shobak
Petra
Ma'an
The King's Highway
Wadi Rum
Aqaba
SAUDI ARABIA

Figure 2.1 Jordan Map
Source: Jordan Geographical Center (2007)

2.2 Tourism Industry in Jordan

Nowadays the tourism in Jordan plays an important role in the economy of Jordan in terms of foreign exchange, revenue and jobs opportunities. As such, Jordan pays a great deal of attention to the sector of tourism. Thus, tourism occupies a great area in the modern structure of the national economic of the country. It became a developing productive sector which takes part in the success of the plans of its economic development (USAID, 2006).

The tourism industry in Jordan includes tourism services like hotels, restaurants, shopping malls and etc., as well as tourist attractions like Amman, the Dead Sea and Petra.

2.2.1 Tourism Services in Jordan

The service sector in Jordan plays an important role in the economic and social fabric of the country, and also contributes significantly to the tourism industry (Hourani, 2006). Product and service quality have always been drivers of success in the sector, but as the operating environment increases in complexity, it is beneficial to consider how quality across the sector can be further enhanced in order to better inform the consumer of the diversity of product available and to increase awareness of the differing levels of quality on offer (Abu-Ayash, 2005).

Tourism is one of the most dynamic economic sectors in Jordan which has been identified by the government as one of the priority sectors to be developed. Tourism receipts surged by 12% year-on-year to JOD 1,639 million in 2007, according to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA, 2007). The number of arrivals increased from 4,700 000 in 2002 to 6,300,000 in 2007, and employment in the sector rose from around 23,000 people in 2004 to 34,500 in 2008. The National Tourism Strategy (2004–10) set a target of JOD 1.3 billion in sector revenues for 2010 (this has already been reached) and an increase in employment to over 91,000. In order to meet these goals the National Tourism Strategy and the authorities are employing a variety of means (USAID, 2006).

It is worth mentioning in this respect that the size of tourist investments and facilities and services results in flourishing the Jordanian tourist marketing on both the internal and external levels. The tourism sector in Jordan constitutes one main source of flowing foreign currencies which in turn constitute one tenth of the local income. Moreover, it is expected that this sector will be one of the basic columns of Jordan economy, especially in case it is well exploited so as to properly serve the Jordanian economy.

2.2.2 Tourist Attractions in Jordan

There are many popular tourist destinations in Jordan which attracts tourists from all over the world. Some of the more popular destinations include Amman, the Dead Sea, and Petra. Annually a total of more than 6 million international tourists visited these three well known locations in Jordan (MoTA, 2008). Each of these destinations has their own distinct features and interesting appearance that attract and encourage tourists to visit them. The three most popular destinations are described as follow.

2.2.2.1 Amman (A modern city built on the sands of time)

“Amman, the capital of Jordan, is a fascinating city of contrasts – a unique blend of old and new, ideally situated on a hilly area between the desert and the fertile Jordan Valley.

In the commercial heart of the city, ultra-modern buildings, hotels, smart restaurants, art galleries and boutiques rub shoulders comfortably with traditional coffee shops and tiny artisans' workshops. Everywhere there is evidence of the city’s much older past. Due to the city’s modern-day prosperity and temperate climate, almost half of Jordan’s population is concentrated in the Amman area. The downtown area is much older and more traditional with smaller businesses producing and selling everything from fabulous jewelry to everyday household items. The people of Amman are multicultural, multi-denominational, well educated and extremely hospitable. They welcome visitors and take pride in showing them around there (JTB, 2011)

Amman's history spans nine millennia dating back to the Stone Age. It boasts one of the largest Neolithic settlements (c.6500 BC) ever discovered in the Middle East.

The Citadel hill contains early Bronze-Age tombs (3300-1200 BC). By the beginning of the Iron Age Amman had become the capital of the Ammonites, referred to in the Bible, and was called Rabbath-Ammon. It was here that King David of Israel killed Uriah the Hittite. Fortress towers ringed the city at that time - the best preserved of these can still be seen today - but they were little protection against King David's attack. His forces toppled the Ammonites and, apart from a brief revival in the 9th and 8th centuries BC, the area was ruled in succession by the Assyrians, Babylonians and Persians for several hundred years. By the 4th century BC the city had been renamed "Philadelphia" after its Ptolemaic ruler, Philadelphus. Seleucid and Nabataean rule followed until 63 BC, when it was absorbed into the Roman Empire and the Roman general, Pompey, annexed Syria and made Philadelphia part of the Decapolis League - an alliance of ten free city-states with overall allegiance to Rome (CITG, 2011).

The Romans rebuilt the city with colonnaded streets, baths, a theatre and impressive public buildings. Philadelphia found itself at the centre of the new Roman province of Arabia and of lucrative trade routes running between the Mediterranean and an interior which stretched to India and China as well as routes north and south. The city flourished. During the Byzantine period, when Christianity became the official religion of the Eastern Roman Empire the city was the seat of a Christian Bishop and two churches were constructed. By the early 7th century, Islam was already spreading northwards from the Arabian Peninsula and, by 635AD, had embraced the land as part of its domain. The city returned to its original Semitic name of Ammon, or as it is known today, Amman (Swiss Travel, 2011). With various shifts in political power over the following centuries, Amman's fortunes declined

During the Crusades and under the Mamelukes of Egypt, Amman's importance was overtaken by the rise of Karak in the south. By 1321 AD, it was reported that Amman was 'a very ancient town and was ruined before the days of Islam' there are great ruins here and the river al-Zarqa flows through them." Under the Ottoman Empire, Amman remained a small backwater with Saltbeing the main town of the area. By 1806 the city was reported to be uninhabited except for the Bedouins. The departure of the Ottomans from the region coincided with the exodus of large numbers of Circassian and other persecuted Muslims from the Caucasus. They found refuge in the area and established a settlement on the east bank of the Jordan River. Although they were mostly farmers, amongst these early settlers there were also gold and silversmiths and other craftsmen, and it were not long before they built rough roads linking their settlement to Amman (Petra Pioneers, 2011).

Commerce, once again, began to flourish. But it was the construction of the Hejaz Railway which really brought the city back to life. Linking Damascus with Medina, the railway passed through Amman in 1902 Once again, Amman became the centre of a busy trade route and its population began to grow. By 1905 the city held a mixed population of some 3000 people. On 15th May 1923, the Emirate of Transjordan came into existence, with Emir Abdullah, a Hashemite and direct descendant of the

Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), as its undisputed leader. On the 22nd March 1946, Transjordan secured its independence (JTB, 2011). Two months later, Abdullah's title of Emir, was changed to King, and the country was renamed the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan with Amman as its capital (See Figure 2.2).

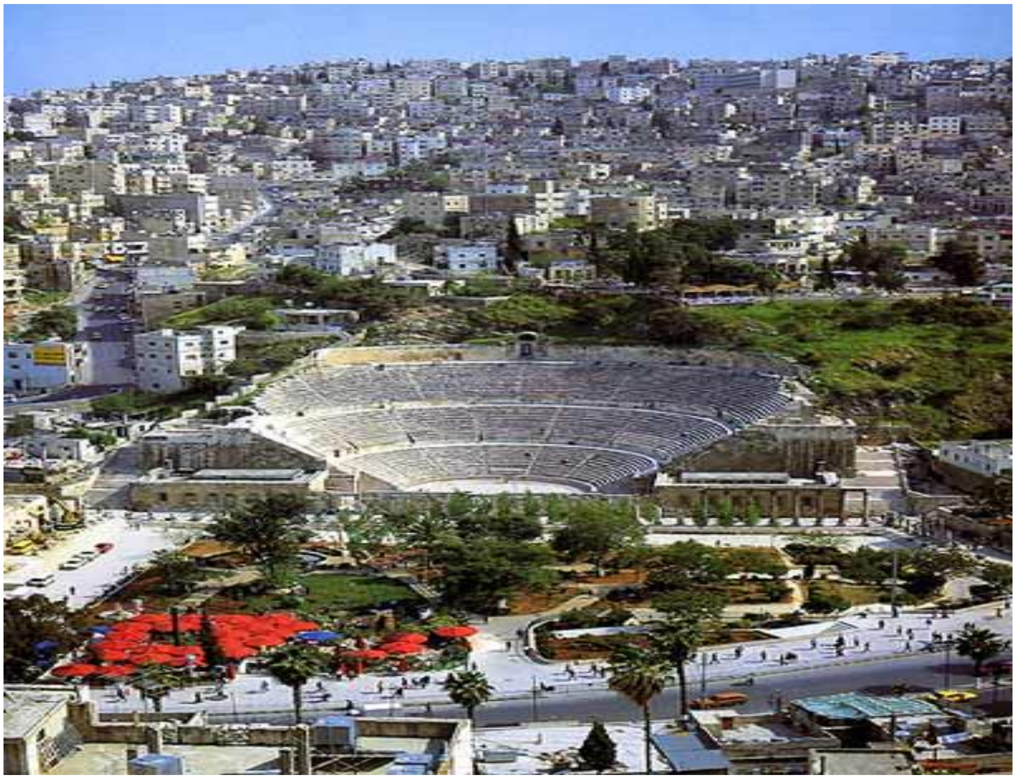

Figure 2.2 Amman City
Source: http://www.atlastours.net/jordan/amman.html

2.2.2.2 Dead Sea

Without doubt, the world's most amazing place, the Jordan Rift Valley is a dramatic, beautiful landscape, which at the Dead Sea, is over 400 meters (1,312 ft.) below sea level. The lowest point on the face of the earth, this vast, stretch of water receives a number of incoming rivers, including the River Jordan (Global Explorer, 2011). Once the waters reach the Dead Sea they are land-locked and have nowhere to go, so they evaporate, leaving behind a dense, rich, and cocktail of salts and minerals that supply industry, agriculture and medicine with some of its finest products.

The Dead Sea is flanked by mountains to the east and the rolling hills of Jerusalem to the west, giving it an almost other-worldly beauty. Although sparsely populated and serenely quiet now, the area is believed to have been home to five Biblical cities: Sodom, Gomorrah, Adman, Zebouin and Zoar. One of the most spectacular natural and spiritual landscapes in the world, the Jordanian east coast of the Dead Sea has evolved into a major hub of both religious and health & wellness tourism in the region (Rose City, 2011).

The leading attraction at the Dead Sea is the warm, soothing, super salty water itself – some ten times saltier than sea water, and rich in chloride salts of magnesium, sodium, potassium, bromine and several others. The unusually warm, incredibly buoyant and mineral-rich waters have attracted visitors since ancient times, including King Herod the Great and the beautiful Egyptian Queen, Cleopatra (JTB, 2011). All of whom have luxuriated in the Dead Sea's rich, black, stimulating mud and floated effortlessly on their backs while soaking up the water's healthy minerals along with the gently diffused rays of the Jordanian sun(See Figure 2.3).

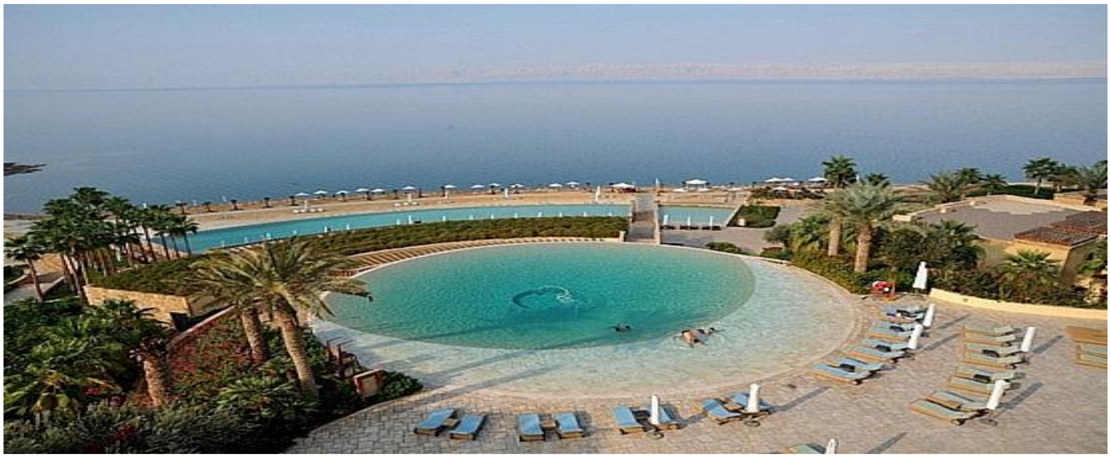

Figure 2.3 Dead Sea
Source: http://www.wherejesuswalked.org/sightseeing/dead-sea

2.2.2.3 Petra

The giant red mountains and vast mausoleums of a departed race have nothing in common with modern civilization, and ask nothing of it except to be appreciated at their true value - as one of the greatest wonders ever wrought by Nature and Man. Although much has been written about Petra, nothing really prepares you for this amazing place. It has to be seen to be believed (Dilloona, 2011).

Petra the world wonder, is without doubt Jordan’s most valuable treasure and greatest tourist attraction. It is a vast, unique city, carved into the sheer rock face by the Nabataeans, an industrious Arab people who settled here more than 2000 years ago, turning it into an important junction for the silk, spice and other trade routes that linked China, India and southern Arabia with Egypt, Syria, Greece and Rome (Al-Shafaq, 2011).

Entrance to the city is through the Siq, a narrow gorge, over 1 kilometer in length, which is flanked on either side by soaring, 80 meters high cliffs. Just walking through the Siq is an experience in itself. The colours and formations of the rocks are dazzling. As you reach the end of the Siq you will catch your first glimpse of Al-Khazneh (Treasury). This is an awe-inspiring experience. A massive façade, 30m wide and 43m high, carved out of the sheer, dusky pink, rock-face and dwarfing everything around it. It was carved in the early 1st century as the tomb of an important Nabataean king and represents the engineering genius of these ancient people. The Treasury is just the first of the many wonders that make up Petra (Petra, 2011). You will need at least four or five days to really explore everything here. As you enter the Petra valley you will be overwhelmed by the natural beauty of this place and its outstanding architectural achievements. There are hundreds of elaborate rock-cut tombs with intricate carvings - unlike the houses, which were destroyed mostly by earthquakes, the tombs were carved to last throughout the afterlife and 500 have survived, empty but bewitching as you file past their dark openings.

Here also is a massive Nabataean-built. Roman-style theatre, which could seats 3,000 people. There are obelisks, temples, sacrificial altars and colonnaded streets, and high above, overlooking the valley, is the impressive Ad-Deir Monastery – a flight of 800 rock cut steps takes you there. Within the site there are also two excellent museums; the Petra Archaeological Museum and the Petra Nabataean Museum both of which represent finds from excavations in the Petra region and an insight into Petra's colorful past (JTB, 2011).

A 13th century shrine, built by the Mameluk Sultan Al Nasir Mohammad to commemorate the death of Aaron, the brother of Moses, can be seen on top of Mount Aaron in the Sharah range. Inside the site, several artisans from the town of Wadi Musa and a nearby Bedouin settlement have set up small stalls selling local handicrafts, such as pottery and Bedouin jewellery and bottles of striated multi-coloured sands from the area. Petra was first established sometime around the 6th century BC, by the Nabataean Arabs, a nomadic tribe who settled in the area and laid the foundations of a commercial empire that extended into Syria. Despite successive attempts by the Seleucid king Antigonus, the Roman emperor Pompey and Herod the Great to bring Petra under the control of their respective empires, Petra remained largely in Nabataean hands until around 100AD, when the Romans took over (Word Press, 2011). It was still inhabited during the Byzantine period, when the former Roman Empire moved its focus east to

Constantinople, but declined in importance thereafter. The Crusaders constructed a fort there in the 12th century, but soon withdrew, leaving Petra to the local people until the early 19th century, when it was rediscovered by the Swiss explorer Johann Ludwig Burckhardt in 1812

(i) Petra Archaeological Park

The Petra Archaeological Park (PAP) covers a 264 dunum (264, 00 square meters) area within Wadi Musa, which is considered tourism and archaeological site and a World Heritage Site registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list since 1985 (Petra Archaeological Park, 2011). The area encompasses a breathtaking landscape of pink-hued rock mountains, the focus of which is the amazing ancient Nabataean city of Petra, which was carved into the rock more than 2,000 years ago (See Figure 2.4).

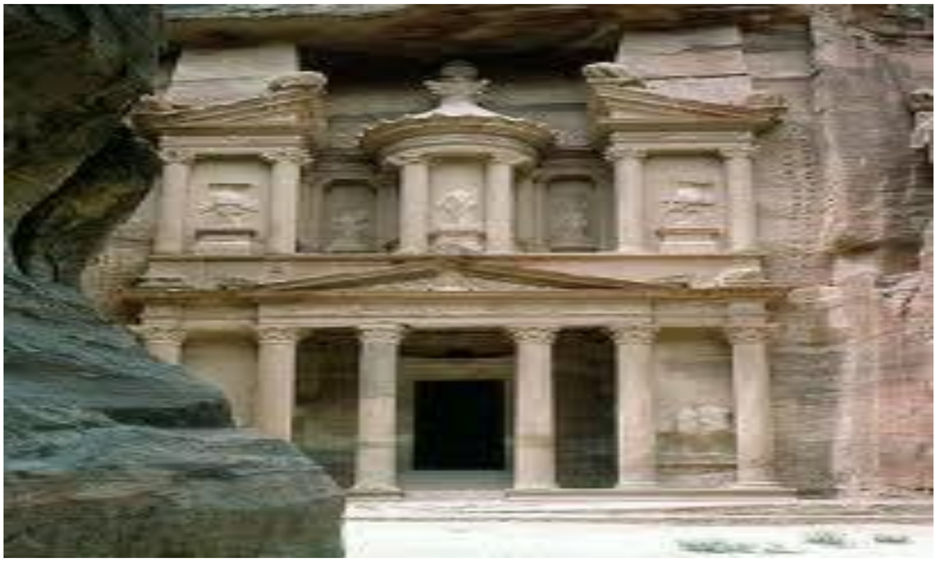

Figure 2.4 Petra City
Source: http://www.atlastours.net/jordan/petra.html

So many tourist attractions, then Jordan needs hotel lines that can cater to the needs of tourists, ranging from the budget hotels to the 5-star hotel.

2.3 Hotel Services in Jordan

The period that follows 1990 has witnessed great development in the field of hotel building. As seen in Table 2.1. The number of 220 hotels in 1990 jumped to 224 in 1993, and then to 468 in 2008. In relation, the capacity of hotels increased to 20827 rooms in 2008 from of 7181 rooms in 1990, and the number of beds arrived at 40480 in 2008 rather than 14229 in 1990. As regards assorted hotels in the kingdom in 2008, they were 198 hotels with 14679 rooms and 27631 beds as illustrated in Table 2.2. (MoTA, 2008). This shows that the numbers of workers in these hotels were 11566 only. 803 of them were not Jordanians and the other 10673 were Jordanians, constituting 93% of the total number of the Jordanian workers in such hotels. This percentage emphasizes the fact that the hotel sector depends on local manpower.

Table 2.1.Number of Hotels, Rooms and Beds during the Period (1990-2008)

Year	No.of Beds	No.of Rooms	No.of Hotels
1990	14229	7181	220
1991	14308	7265	219
1992	15134	7458	223
1993	15302	7576	224
1994	15624	7592	223
1995	16315	8083	241
1996	16691	8384	254
1997	17360	8680	262
1998	17696	8848	274
1999	22735	11493	324
2000	23777	12109	336
2001	27050	13704	380
2002	31765	16181	422
2003	34433	15800	418
2004	37385	19200	472
2005	37289	19389	461
2006	37859	19698	458
2007	38658	19945	463
2008	40480	20827	468

Source: Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities (2002-2008)

Regarding gender of the working resources in the tourist sector, Table 2.2 shows how the Jordanian woman participates in tourism in general and in assorted hotels in particular. The number of Jordanian working women is 689 whereas the number of foreign working women is only 184. This is real evidence that Jordan possesses rich human sources of both genders. As shown in Table 2.2 the geographical distribution of hotels indicates that Amman has the greatest share of the total hotels in the country (MoTA, 2008). The number of hotels in Amman is 119 constituting 60% of the whole assorted hotels found in the kingdom.

Table 2.2.Number of Classified Hotels, Beds and Rooms and No. of Employee (2008)

Site		Employee						No. of Beds	No. of Rooms	No. of Hotels
	No. of employee	Total	Foreign		Total	Jordanian				
			Female	Male		Female	Male			
Amman	7761	382	107	275	7379	539	6840	17548	9468	119
Aqaba	1485	318	51	267	1167	56	111	4198	2188	27
Petra	901	47	3	44	854	9	845	3287	1752	26
Irbid	55	0	0	0	55	6	49	353	147	6
Madaba	54	5	2	3	49	21	28	171	86	4
Dead Sea	1129	37	20	17	1092	49	1043	1308	682	3
Karak	14	6	1	5	8	1	7	86	42	3
Zarqa	6	1	0	1	5	0	5	122	51	2
Azraq	13	0	0	0	13	1	12	52	24	1
Ajlun	11	2	0	2	9	0	9	74	35	2
Jerash	21	2	0	2	19	1	18	80	38	2
Rweeshed	3	0	0	0	3	0	3	28	10	1
Fuhees	3	1	0	1	2	0	2	40	14	1
Ma’en	110	2	0	2	108	6	102	284	142	1
Total	11566	803	184	619	10673	689	10074	27631	14679	198

Source: Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities (2008)