

**TOURISM EDUCATION AWARENESS OF  
SOCIAL STUDIES IN SAUDI ARABIA**

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**TOURISM EDUCATION AWARENESS OF  
SOCIAL STUDIES IN SAUDI ARABIA**

by

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATW	Improve Awareness Tourism
AVCE	Advanced Vocational Certificates of Education
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CO	Concepts
CR	Composite Reliability
DV	Dependent Variable
EM	Expectation Maximization
GATNH	General Authority for tourism
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GoF	Goodness of Fit
IUTO	International Union of Office Travel Organization
IV	Independent Variable
KN	Knowledge
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MAS	Tourism Information Center
MM	Mixed Methods
MV	Moderating Variable
NVQ	National Vocational Qualifications
QUAN	Quantitative
SCT	Supreme Commission for Tourism
SCTNH	Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage
SKI	Skills
TRE	Trends

VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
WTO	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
ZTPI	Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory

# **KESEDARAN PENDIDIKAN PELANCONGAN TENTANG KAJIAN SOSIAL DI ARAB SAUDI**

## **ABSTRAK**

Dimensi pendidikan pelancongan dianggap sebagai alat penting bagi meningkatkan kesedaran pelancongan dalam kalangan pelajar. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kesedaran pendidikan pelancongan pengajian sosial di Arab Saudi dengan menyelidik proses dimensi pendidikan pelancongan kurikulum pendidikan, khasnya kurikulum pengajian sosial kerana ia masih lemah dalam memberikan pelajar laluan kepada kesedaran pelancongan. Kekurangan dalam dimensi (pengetahuan, konsep, kemahiran, dan arah aliran) menjadi halangan kepada pelajar di sekolah pertengahan dan menengah bagi mewakili minat mereka dalam meningkatkan kesedaran proses pelancongan dimensi, walaupun dimensi yang diberikan penting untuk masa depan mereka. Pengkaji menjalankan kajian lapangan di Bandaraya Jazan, Kerajaan Arab Saudi pada bulan Julai hingga September 2018, bagi meneroka dan mengenal pasti dimensi pendidikan pelancongan yang penting melibatkan kurikulum pengajian sosial daripada sudut pandangan guru. Penyelidikan ini turut meninjau kesan peningkatan kesedaran pelancongan terhadap pelajar. Kaedah campuran yang menggabungkan kedua-dua kaedah kualitatif dan kuantitatif telah digunakan. Data kuantitatif dikutip menerusi 210 soal selidik yang diedarkan kepada sampel berstrata guru pengajian sosial di sekolah pertengahan dan menengah di Bandaraya Jazan. Data kualitatif dikumpul menerusi enam temu bual separa-berstruktur bersama pakar pengajian sosial. Kajian ini merumuskan bahawa terdapat perhubungan antara senarai dimensi pendidikan pelancongan dengan peningkatan kesedaran pelancongan.

Tambahan pula, demografi (umur) guru adalah signifikan bagi meningkatkan perhubungan antara dimensi dan memperbaiki kesedaran pelancongan.

# **TOURISM EDUCATION AWARENESS OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN SAUDI ARABIA**

## **ABSTRACT**

Tourism Education Dimensions being regarded as an essential tool to improve awareness of tourism among students. This study aims to analyze the tourism educational awareness of social studies in Saudi Arabia by investigating the tourism education dimensions process in social studies curricula in intermediate and secondary schools. In Saudi Arabia, the existing integration tourism education dimensions process in educational curricula especially social studies curricula as it is still weak to provide the students with access to the awareness of tourism. This lack of Dimensions (Knowledge, Concepts, Skills and Trends) has become a barrier for students in intermediate and secondary schools to represent their interest to improve awareness of tourism process, even though they provide these dimensions being made will be significant to their future. The research conducted a field study in the Jazan City, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the month of July until September 2018 to explore and identify important tourism education dimensions that include social studies curricula from the teachers' point of view. The investigation was also explored on the impacts to improve awareness of tourism on the students. A mixed method approach combining both qualitative and quantitative methodologies was adopted, with quantitative data being collected through 210 questionnaires distributed to a stratified sample of social studies teachers in the intermediate and secondary schools in Jazan city. Qualitative data was gathered through 6 semi-structured interviews with social studies experts. The research concludes that there is a relationship between the list of tourism education dimensions and improve awareness of tourism. Furthermore, the teachers' demographics (age) was significant to increase the relationship between dimensions and improve awareness of tourism.



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Tourism is considered as a prominent economic activity in the 21st century as it ranks second among the international economic activities (Deschenes & Greenstone, 2007; Alomairi, 2013). Particularly, it has attracted attention of the governments of developing countries Tembe & Xu (2012). When the governments' economic achievements of tourism are well recognized, the ways in which the education are involved in tourism development are still open to study. School students' participation in the process is mostly limited or sometimes marginalized, especially in developing countries. One reason can be attributed to people's awareness of their own tourism potential (Chimombo, 2005). Also, tourist agencies are responsible for tourism awareness as they fail to provide attention towards tourism and tourist attractions so that tourism development is sustained (Magablah & Deeb, 2000). Fidgeon (2010) and Yahya, Sharbini, Ahdal, & Baridah (2011), emphasized on the importance of dimensions and information's on tourism in social studies curricula during education to the students. Therefore, the curriculum is considered as one of the key factors in the development and learning values, so that learners become role models for correct choices to achieve the desired values and practices (Young, 2014).

### 1.2 Background of the Study

Around the globe, the economic diversification represents a stable source of the economy that involves tourism. Tourism plays a key role in expanding economic

opportunities in the developing countries, as well as the developed world. The developed world and developing countries, are now more interested in enhancing the tourism sector through global innovation because tourism contributes to the countries' Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Al-Rabaani, 2013). Tourism increases job opportunities and improves people's living (Alomairi, 2013). Many countries consider tourism as a priority on their agenda. Therefore, special ministries for tourism have been established in some countries. Independent bodies and specialized institutions have been founded for tourism purposes (Ashley, De Brine, Lehr, & Wilde, 2007). Furthermore, political forces were established in several countries. These forces aim to maintain tourism potential. However, several developing countries have not directed due attention and focus towards tourism. These countries consider tourism as a luxurious of civilization (McLaren, 2003). Education was largely limited to instruction for a select few in Islamic schools. Today, public education from primary education through college is open to every Saudi citizen. The second largest governmental spending in Saudi Arabia goes for education. In general, the educational system in Saudi Arabia is divided into governmental and private education. The system consists of four main levels of schools as follows: Pre-primary, Primary, Intermediate, and Secondary schools.

It is a paradox that some citizens, who live in countries that possess many tourist attractions, travel overseas and excessively spend money to enjoy natural scenes. They are fascinated by and admire another country's heritage, even though they can enjoy nature, landscapes, culture, and heritage places in their own countries (La Porte, 2010). One reason can be attributed to people's awareness of their own tourism potential. Also, tourist agencies are responsible for tourism awareness as they fail to provide attention towards tourism and tourist attractions so that tourism

development is sustained (Magablah & Deeb, 2000). Abu Arad (2008) affirms the proposal of Magablah and Deeb's (2000) by acknowledging the need to create awareness through educational platforms. Tourism is a vast economic resource providing a good income to the county. Therefore, countries have started to direct more attention to tourism. Ministries and independent agencies for tourism have put forward plans and designed suitable tourism programs based on the country's policy and culture to fit the social situation (Pohjola, 2002). It is important that people's attitudes and perceptions towards tourism should be taken into careful consideration as people's acceptance or their rejection effects successful tourism activities.

The Middle East is relatively undeveloped as a tourist region, but future growth is anticipated, and Saudi Arabia provides an interesting case study of a country which has recently moved to begin to exploit its untapped potential as a destination. With this development, raise the awareness becomes a necessity to the government (Sadi, M. A., & Henderson, J. C. (2005). Over the last few decades, the kingdom of Saudi Arabia has witnessed a huge development, but with the fact that the Saudi Arabia's oil will not last forever is a compelling reason to push ahead with efforts to diversify and build up other areas of the economy which give the priority for raising the awareness about tourism in the kingdom.

Tourism has become one of the most important economic and social phenomena and reflects on the behavior of humans and the movements at any place and time. Tourism has become an incorporated part of our life. Therefore, it has become one of the main areas of social studies. Tourism should not be deemed as a luxury but has become a necessity to fill the vacuum of official holidays and breaks. This is the main reason to satisfy the needs of the natural and cultural resources surrounding humans unless they find their needs and desires in other environments

(Alomairi, 2013). Tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is paramount because of its important role in the economic, social and cultural development. Tourism contributes to drawing the features of the components of the Saudi society on the world map through tourists, who visit the Kingdom (Alomairi, 2013) (Figure 1.1). Furthermore, KSA exhibits rich and unique Islamic cultural heritage. KSA is renowned for its hospitality as the Saudi people are friendly. They are generous in their reception of guests, visitors or strangers. KSA is known for its Islamic values and indigenous habits of the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, the Kingdom has achieved much so far through the comprehensive renaissance in various fields as the country is in a fast growth. There are also many other elements that contribute to the promotion of tourism to KSA providing security, low costs of living, lower rates of taxes including zero tax rates (Abu Arad, 2008).

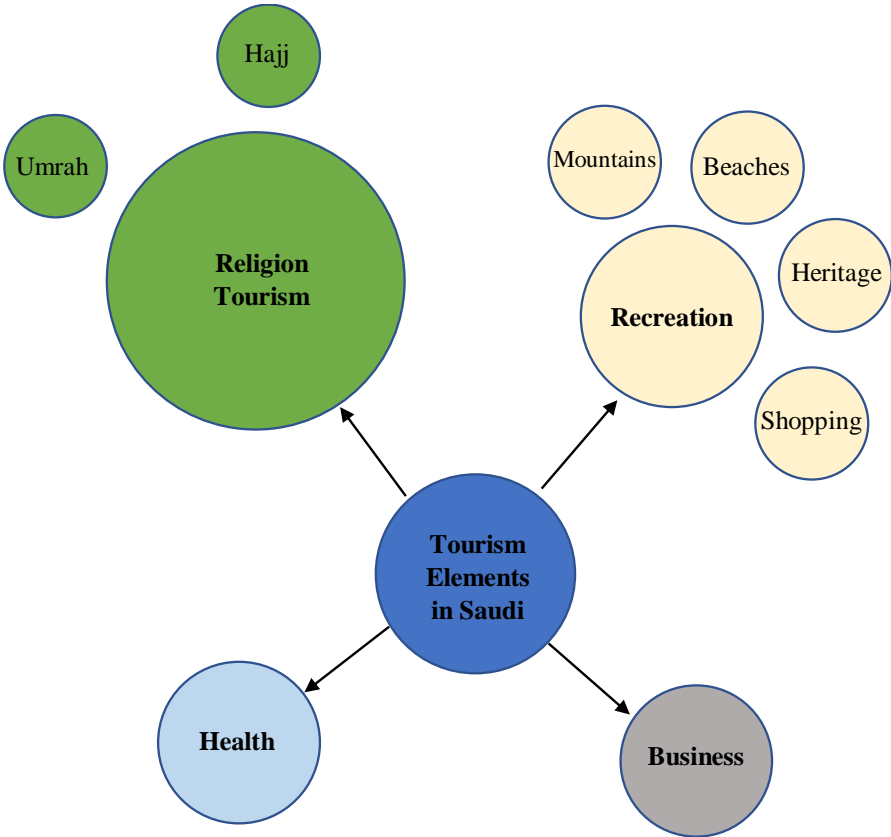


Figure 1.1: Tourism elements in Saudi Arabia

Tourism is considered as a prominent economic activity in the 21st century as it ranks as the second activity among the international economic activities (Deschenes & Greenstone, 2007). Saudi Arabia has recently focused on the tourism sector because of many sacred religious places in the Kingdom like Mecca. It is in the region of Hijaz in the Arabian Peninsula. It is the capital, as well as Makkah's administrative headquarters. Mecca is the Muslim pilgrims' destination, every year many pilgrims all-round the world gathers to offer their religious obligations. Mecca is the holiest city because it is the birthplace of Prophet Muhammad and His first site of the Quran revelation. Pilgrimage to Mecca is called Hajj, which is compulsory for Muslims. Mecca is also home to Kaaba, which is the direction of Muslims in their prayers. Mecca has become the most cosmopolitan city in the Islamic world. During summer and spring seasons, the climate is moderate in many regions of the Kingdom making it a popular destination for tourists from the Gulf area and the non-boring Arab countries (Abu Arad, 2008). In Saudi Arabia, tourism has been increasing in recent years and, therefore, it has become an integral part of the tourism development policy that is adopted by the State (AL-Dosary, 2014).

Tourism involves various activities in different domains of life including industrial sector, natural sciences and management. This has encouraged the researchers to examine and explore people attitudes towards tourism, hence many have stressed to focus on curricula and human psychology. (Robinson & Picard, 2006). A process, which incorporates education at scientific, as well as technical levels, is, therefore, crucial. This is the reason why countries focus on tourism education, as well as the tourism sector. Lickorish and Jenkins (2007) indicated that various countries play an important part in education at the professional, as well as the technical levels. Tourism education necessitates a specific program of study. This program consists of

vocational and professional knowledge, social science, as well as humanities (Dredge *et al.*, 2012). Through such a program, skills are enhanced, and business demands are promoted. It also achieves a balance in the educational level. In this regard, Fidgeon (2010) emphasizes that students should be armed with the necessary knowledge so that they can be the leaders in the industry of tourism and have essential skills. This can be achieved by applying specific programs and content. Such content in the educational curriculum enhances the role of tourism by including curriculum, as well as teaching/learning strategies. Tourism objectives should be achieved, and this needs huge efforts that are exerted by relevant authorities. The curriculum should include disciplines like tourism economics, tourism planning, development of tourism, and environment preservation (Gunn, 1998). Tourism, after all, is a discipline that cannot be separated from other disciplines.

Tourism represents the largest industry in the globe. Economic influences of tourism are the focus of governments, businesses, and academics. Previous academic studies have focused on tourism development including its economic aspects. However, in the early 1970s, social and cultural in addition to political, and environmental consequences are thoroughly investigated emphasizing the social consequences (Getz, 2008). The environmental effect of tourism, as well as the urgent need to achieve sustainable development, have multiple implication. Sustainable tourism has become a joint curriculum topic. It deals with sustainability in terms of programs' viability with internships and provides content analysis for the courses' titles, which emphasize sustainability in the United Kingdom's universities (Inui, 2006). In 1991, in a study by Surrey University, it was suggested that large tourism enterprises place a great emphasis on training and education because companies began to realize the key role played by these elements in enhancing the companies'

profitability and productivity in addition to turnover are recognizable (Cooper & Shepherd, 1997).

Almarshad (2017) asserts that Saudi Arabia is yet to take the rightful position in the world as to become first destination of tourism choice because of many factors. Some of the factors are the lack of tourism awareness of the desired shape with a broad cross-section of members of the Saudi society, the lack of basic skills and requirements of technicians to receive tourists, and inadequate access to the ancient and unique geographical and archaeological heritage rich history. However, Hübner and Pintér (2014) indicated that it limits the focus of tourism in terms of the religious Hajj and Umrah, as well as visiting the Holy sites in the Holy city of Mecca and the city of Medina. The authors affirm the fear of harassment that some tourists might be exposed to and the unacceptable treatment from some members of the society towards them. It is, therefore, essential to educate the youths through tourism education in their early educational career on how to welcome and accommodate tourists (General Authority for Tourism and National Heritage, 2015). Due to the large number of pilgrimages who come to do their holy worship of hajj at the same time, students as part of the education system participate in the organizing and give help to the pilgrimages and guide them. Figure 1.2 shows the number of students participate in the Hajj guidance. (Ministry of Education, 2019)

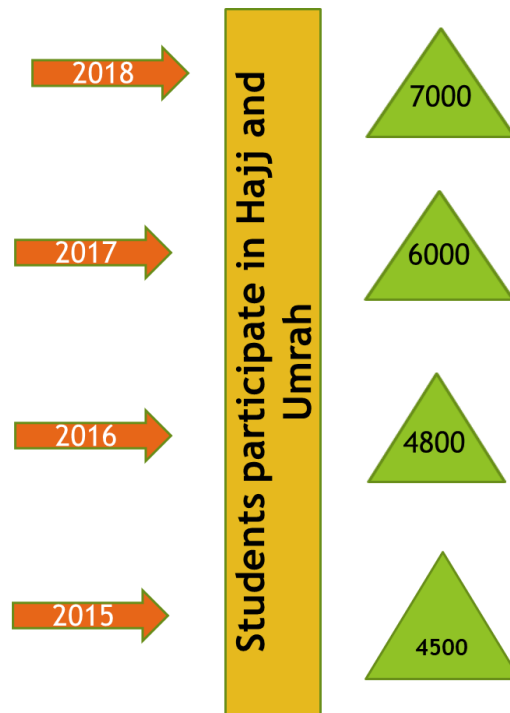


Figure 1.2: Number of students participate in the Hajj guidance.  
Source: Ministry of Education, 2019

Several attempts have been made to improve tourism in Saudi Arabia. In one of the programs that were carried out by the General Authority for Tourism and National Heritage (GATNH), schools were their target. The program was about tourism education under the slogan “smile” aimed at spreading the culture of tourism among students (Ministry of Education, 2015). The program involves working with the school community to achieve the promotion of national belonging and loyalty through sensing the importance of national gains, and pride in the political tenets, aspects of civilization and historical places in the Kingdom. Unfortunately, the government could not sustain the program due to unknown reasons.

Introduction of tourism to the culture of young people, which contributes to the resettlement of work in the tourism sector, has promoted culture and values of respect and understanding to accept others (GATNH, 2015). This was followed by many complementary programs in collaboration with the Ministry of Education to promote



tourism in communities and to manage tourism in these areas. The commission launched a program entitled “color” in collaboration with the Ministry of Education to raise awareness towards the importance of monuments and architectural heritage among young people and to promote the Kingdom’s national identity (Ministry of Education, 2015). The essence of the program is to promote cultural heritage as a form of tourism awareness. A total of 7,000 students benefited from the first phase of awareness across the country. AL Dosary (2014) highlighted the need for complementary actions among relevant authorities (Ministry of Education, General Authority for Tourism and National Heritage, Ministry of Economy and Planning, Ministry of Culture and Media, and Ministry of Labour) to develop strategies and build human capacity in tourism.

The General Authority for Tourism and National Heritage has begun to establish effective partnerships with the Ministry of Education and the General Organization for Technical Education and Vocational Training, and some universities to apply the concept of sustainable tourism education. This is because the development and advancement of tourism in the country and the preservation of national development are achieved through these educational institutions. Hence, the need to expose the group that represents the future of tourism education at the early age cannot be overstressed. GATNH (2011) points out that one way to achieve this goal is through “domestic tourism” and engagement in formal jobs in the tourism industry. To achieve tourism education, the need to unite efforts from all disciplines that will increase the tourist movement within the state cannot be over-emphasized (Yahya, Sharbini, Ahdal, & Baridah, 2011). This integration is based on a common vision, which aims at achieving an optimal tourism culture for young people to preserve the Islamic values and principles. This would lead to spreading the culture of tourism among students.

The Supreme Commission asserts the importance of the partnership for tourism in coordination with the Ministry of Education to prepare and present tourism education programs (GATNH, 2015). This cannot be done through the addition of new materials, but through the activation of educational positions within and outside the classrooms. It can also be done using the schools' facilities to support the tourist behavior to provide students with concepts that will give them new attitudes, practices and skills so that they can interact with and considered by domestic tourism in the positive form of the Saudi tourist market in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (GATNH, 2010). Therefore, textbooks represent the best place for the deployment of the dimensions and vocabulary of tourism education (Abdel Gawad, 2014). Scardamalia and Bereiter (2006) emphasized the concepts and dimensions of tourism education in the curriculum at all stages of general education, and how they are related to addressing current and future issues that promote the value of this study.

Schools represent a comprehensive system, which comprises the structure, as well as the function of different structures/functions pertaining to the teacher's administration and the learner, the curriculum, as well as the community participation. This is the result of the educational system's qualities and effectiveness. This system includes subsystems (McKimm, 2003). Therefore, it is the right place to promote the educational values of having students and the community participation (AL-Jeraida, 2014).

Dolnicar (2001) findings confirmed the need to incorporate vocational training into education from an early stage in the education from the age of 15 years old until students can determine orientations and desires. This is what makes it tend to specialize the desire at the university level. Schools have roles to play in the development of the educational values of the students as an official educational institution (AL-Barakat &

Dawagrah, 2007). Therefore, the school's curriculum is considered as one of the key factors in the development and learning values, so that learners become role models for correct choices to achieve the desired values and practices. Hence, to achieve this goal, educational values should be incorporated into the school curriculum so that values are taught, and students can build their own character and morals.

AL-Zahrany and AL-Bsher (2004) emphasize the need to enhance the curricula of schools in tourism economic activity, social, and cultural of general education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This should be related to job aspects for the human, history, and heritage of civilization. It can be achieved through social studies, science, and materials on the environment, conservation, and how to deal with environmental variables in life. Also, religious materials that teach and educate students about appropriate relationships showing other people respect and good manners. Arabic materials are important as they promote the linguistic aspects making students proud of their mother tongue, the language of the Quran (Ministry of Education, 2012). Such materials are related to students and their activities that promotes awareness (Goodwin, Nelson, Ackerman, & Weisskopf, 2008). Therefore, based on the above background, this study examines tourism education dimensions of social studies curricula in the intermediate and secondary schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that helps on improve awareness of tourism among the students. This case study conducted of the Jizan region in the Kingdom.

With the new vision 2030 of the Saudi Kingdom' government many steps were taken in order to improve the tourism sector in the country. Recently, the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage are working together to achieve the desired Vision of 2030. Hence, the focus

should be on tourism education, which is a key endeavor to achieve the goals of the 2030 Vision in the Kingdom (Ministry of Education, 2017).

### **1.3 Problem Statement and Research Gap**

Importance of tourism has been widely accepted by researchers, practitioners, and governments of developing to developed nations. Enriching and increasing the tourism benefits all sectors associated with it. To promote tourism in KSA, it is important to start it from the grass root level. Including the curriculum in the schools have a great emphasize in promoting tourism. But, the results from previous studies demonstrated low rates of tourism values in the primary school especially in social studies textbooks in KSA (AL-Dosery, 2014). The reason is due to the nature of the issues addressed by the educational curricula. In addition, the absence of joint coordination between the Ministry of Education and Saudi Commission Authority for Tourism and National Heritage when designing the curriculum and planning for development has established the problem of this study.

Therefore, AL-Dosery (2014) recommended to add tourism values in the Social Studies curricula in the primary stage. In the past few years in Saudi Arabia, many subjects in the curriculum are developed to keep pace with the ongoing development of various aspects of the Saudis' life. Despite the importance of tourism education dimensions and the need to include tourism subjects in the curricula of social studies in the intermediate and secondary schools in Saudi Arabia, tourism education dimensions are insufficient. This has been confirmed by an interview that the researcher has conducted with the experts of social studies, who were experts in the subject matter. It was found that tourism awareness among students in Saudi Arabia was considered to be below expectations compared to other lower-middle-income

countries. This indicates that more vocabulary pertaining to tourism education, as well as dimensions of tourism education should be incorporated into the school curriculum, i.e., in the curricula of social studies in the intermediate and secondary schools. This is the main gap that is addressed and investigated in this study.

The perceptions and attitudes of social studies teachers in these stages are also investigated and evaluated regarding the important tourism education dimensions that should be incorporated into social studies curricula. This aspect of the school curriculum is missing in the existing literature. Therefore, this study aims to find appropriate solutions and put forward recommendations to address this gap. In doing so, the study identified and evaluated the necessary tourism education dimensions that should be incorporated into the curricula of social studies based on teachers' viewpoints and suggestions to improve awareness of tourism among students. Moreover, a comparison has been made between dimensions in the intermediate and the secondary schools, especially now that the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage are working together to achieve the desired Vision of 2030. Hence, the focus should be on tourism education, which is a key endeavor to achieve the goals of the 2030 Vision in the Kingdom.

One-way of creating tourism awareness in Saudi Arabia was to introduce tourism in intermediate and secondary schools as subject; Saudi Arabia plans to attract 3.5 million tourists by 2020 compared with 200,000 foreign tourists from non-pilgrims in 2015, and to raise the contribution of tourism to the economy from 5% to 18% (SCTNH, 2017). The importance of tourism education, the need for diversity of tourism education dimensions, and their inclusion in the social studies curricula would surely increase the students' awareness towards tourism.

In their study, Alomairi (2013) and Al-Dosary (2014) confirmed this aspect of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between tourism education dimensions using demographic teachers (age) as a moderator. It might be important to mention here that no studies, to the best knowledge of the researcher, have adopted the social studies teachers' demography (age) as a moderating variable to enhance tourism education dimensions in KSA. However, studies like Popescu and Băltărețu (2012) acknowledged the relationship between education and tourism, but it did not specifically investigate social studies. In addition, this study investigates the relationship between tourism education dimensions in the intermediate and secondary schools, tourism concepts, as well as the integration of tourism education into the social studies curricula. The study provides useful suggestions that would benefit the current generation and future generations to come.

According to Wang *et al.*, (2010), there exists a gap between tourism education that is provided by educational and the requirements of the tourism industry in terms of knowledge and skills. Tourism education is an important factor in promoting values, knowledge, and the skills of general education students in all stages. It is closely related to the community. It helps change and improves the students' practices in the current era of the technological revolution because the curriculum is an integral part of the educational system all over the world. As such, students receive educational values through the curriculum (Akareem & Hossain, 2016). Global trends exist in tourism education, which focuses on tourism education theme in the curriculum of schools (Kunwar, 2018). The activation of tourism education taught in educational reflects its impact on the tourism behavior of the students. Tourism education has become a key demand of the members of the community. This is because of its

importance in the cultural and social interaction as a revolution in information has become a reality for everyone in the community. This is consistent with modern educational studies that emphasize the exposure of young students in their thinking, feelings, behaviors, and interactions with their community (AL- Zahrary & AL-Bsher, 2004).

Tourism is growing worldwide. Therefore, there is an urgent need to include its dimensions in the curricula and education (Kunwar, 2018). However, the tourism field has certain issues, which complicate the development of the curricula. Tourism comprises many variables in comparison with economic, as well as social phenomena (Gunn, 1998). GATNH (2015) observes that in the field of the educational curriculum in KSA, a shortage of tourism education and educational subjects are obvious. KSA is one of the largest economies countries world and has a vision based on to diversify the economy, in various fields, including tourism (Ministry of Economy and Planning, 2017). Therefore, tourism education needs to be addressed. This would assist in creating suitable subjects to refine the talents of our children in tourism education and curriculum to enhance the quality of tourism education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Tourism education is related to people's social and cultural well-being. The social studies teachers' perceptions and attitudes, as trainers, are important. Teachers play an influential role for students to imitate and students decode their body language. Uusimaki and Nason (2004) support the notion that teachers influence students' views and way of thinking towards subjects. Teachers are people, who train their students based on self-belief values in any subject matter. Social studies teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism dimensions and tourism vocabulary are, therefore, very important indicators in determining understanding and practices of students in the

intermediate and the secondary schools. Accordingly, evaluating the teachers' perceptions towards how important to identify tourism dimensions, as well as vocabulary. This will, in turn, help researchers, educators, and scholars to evaluate tourism dimensions, as well as vocabulary severity levels in the secondary and the intermediate schools. Lindberg and Johnson (1997) indicate that some individuals do show negative perceptions and attitudes towards the importance of tourism education dimensions in social studies curricula. This is because of the increasing number of crimes, overcrowding, as well as the increasing prostitution that is connected to tourism. If the school teacher belongs to one of these categories, his/her attitude would certainly influence students and affect teaching resulting in tourism education that is poor and distorted.

During the last forty years, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has witnessed rapid levels of growth in providing tourism education at higher levels of education. However, questions were raised about content, as well as the nature of tourism education, and how such tourism education is in line with the requirements of the tourism sector (Dale & Robinson, 2001; Airey, 2004). Based on debates that revolved around tourism education in the early 1990s, it was proposed that core curriculum is the most important aspect in tourism education (Airey, 2004) as the educational specification level is not high enough in the tourism industry (Wang, Ayres & Huyton, 2010). Alomairi (2013) also mentions the absence of tourism education dimensions in the curriculum. The author investigated dimensions in tourism education that are incorporated into the intermediate school stage. However, there is a need to investigate the relationship between tourism education dimensions that are incorporated in the intermediate and the secondary schools as it represents a gap in the literature. Alomairi (2013) identified tourism education dimensions in social studies curricula that are used



in the intermediate stage, but not in the secondary school social studies curricula. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this gap through this study's first objective and subsequently evaluate them with the existing tourism education dimensions the level of importance in this study's Second Objective. The study also aims to provide useful suggestions to close the existing gap. Finally, AL-Naimi (2008) investigated the reality of the tourism education to suggest ways of developing it such as designing summer school training so that students can participate in the educational development process. Tourism education dimensions in the school curriculum is insufficient focusing on the theoretical aspects, not the important practical aspects of education, and as a result, the educational outcomes are unsatisfactory (Inui, Wheeler & Lankford, 2006). All the previously mentioned gaps in addition to the poor tourism education have established the problem statement of this study.

In the stream of tourism education, literature findings indicate that 86 % of studies focused on curriculum issues, while only an insignificant number of researches examined quality, teaching, learning, student progression and achievement, and resources (Hsu *et al.*, 2017). This study attended to identify the perceptions and attitudes of social studies teachers in intermediate and secondary government schools on the significant education dimensions of the tourism that should be taken into the educators' and administrators' consideration to improving awareness of tourism. Moreover, in this study, age is assumed to be a mechanism through which the four dimensions of tourism education (knowledge, concepts, skills, and trends) are able to influence the improving awareness of tourism and the rationale for such moderating role have not been examined empirically (Gomez-Garibello, C. & Talwar, V., 2015).

As a summary the researcher found:

- Tourism education research is still relatively absent in social studies curricula at intermediate and secondary Schools to improve student's awareness about tourism (AL-Ahmadi, 2014).
- The current tourism subjects just focus on the religious' tourism in Saudi Arabia (Hübner & Pintér, 2014; Almarshad, 2017).
- Studies on tourism education dimensions in social studies curricula adoption of improve awareness of tourism among students in Saudi Arabia are still limited (Aldosery, 2014).
- A gap exists in what is presently practice by ministry of education and the planned future goals which focuses on tourism as a local product in Saudi Arabia.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The current study addresses four questions to achieve the objectives of the study, which are:

1. What is the relevance of tourism education dimensions from social studies experts' point of view in the field?
2. What are social studies teachers' perceptions towards important tourism education dimensions that should be incorporated into social studies curricula in the intermediate and secondary schools in Saudi Arabia?
3. What is the relationship between tourism education dimensions' and improve awareness of tourism?
4. Does a teachers' demographic age moderate tourism education dimensions' score and improve awareness of tourism?

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

This study aims to carry out a comparative study of tourism education dimensions of social studies curricula in the intermediate and secondary schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This study is a case study of the region of Jazan in Saudi Arabia. The study aims to enhance tourism awareness among the next generation in the early stage of their lives due to the economic values of tourism in KSA. Accordingly, the study aims to achieve the following research objectives:

1. To examine tourism education dimensions importance from social studies experts' point of view.
2. To evaluate social studies teachers' perceptions towards important tourism education dimensions that should be incorporated into social studies curricula in the intermediate and secondary schools.
3. To examine the relationship between tourism education dimensions (knowledge, concepts, skills and trends) and improve awareness of tourism.
4. To examine the moderating effect the role of age on the relationship between tourism education dimensions and improved tourism awareness.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Tourism represents one of the important sources to earn foreign exchange around the globe including KSA, where tourism is considered as the third largest source for the industry after energy, as well as manufacturing (Sadi & Henderson, 2005). Tourism is an industry that is information-intensive. It comprises planning and development, marketing, as well as daily operations, in addition to current information, which can be fulfilled through appropriate knowledge environment including the rapidly undergoing changes around the globe. Sheldon, Fesenmaier, Woeber, Cooper, and

Antonioli (2008) pointed out that training is essential for students to catch up with the continuous changes in the tourism sector. This aspect is apparently missing in the Kingdom in terms of the skills, trends, as well as knowledge. This indicates that the educational system needs to be changed to meet the requirements of the tourism industry. All people have the right to receive an education. Quality education depends on the type of education, as well as the students' motivation.

According to the theory of the human capital that was introduced by Theodore W. Schultz in 1979, education is a key factor to develop the human capital. It strengthens the people's ability in dealing with uncertain issues and solving problems (Krasniqi & Topxhiu, 2016). Many world countries have already made great strides in developing tourism education. Studies in 2007 revealed that about 57.5 million journeys have been taken by Saudi residents. This includes overnight stays and expenditure rates that were estimated at US\$15 billion (Johnson, 2010). The study revealed that 36% of these journeys were leisure trips, 26% of the trips were taken to visit friends, relatives, etc., and 23% were taken to visit religious sites. Therefore, tourism activities in the Kingdom contribute about 4.6% to the country's GDP; over 600,000 trip are connected to tourism. The Supreme Commission for Tourism (SCT) (In 2016 renamed Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage) was founded in 2000 aiming at enhancing tourism and developing a sustainability framework of tourism (MAS, 2016).

In KSA, not much has been done regarding tourism education apart from few authors, for example, Alomairi (2013) that identified dimensions and vocabulary that should be used in intermediate school stage. Hence, the body of knowledge regarding dimensions and vocabulary in tourism education in KSA in the intermediate and secondary schools is limited, insufficient, and it needs to be developed. This is a

significant aspect of tourism education that is investigated in this study, which aims to develop tourism dimensions and vocabulary in tourism education in the intermediate and secondary schools in KSA through modifying and upgrading the social studies educational curriculum. The Kingdom is undergoing a major economic transformation in accordance with the Vision of 2030, which focuses on tourism as an alternative source of foreign exchange against crude oil. Therefore, the role of social studies curricula in the intermediate and secondary schools in the development of tourism awareness and its impact on the formation of students' behaviors cannot be underestimated.

Five values were identified by Sheldon, Fesenmaier, & Tribe (2011), these values should be incorporated into the curriculum: stewardship, ethics, knowledge and mutuality in addition to professionalism. The next intermediate and secondary schools' generations, as future tourist workers, should interact in a real environment as what they learn in school is obsolete. To upgrade the curriculum reflects reality and to face future challenges in tourism education is a necessity in the intermediate and secondary schools. The current educational system regarding tourism education needs fundamental changes. The skills, as well as the knowledge sets including some individuals' perceptions, should be redefined (Daggett, 2010).

Teachers' attitudes can influence students' learning behavior, which justifies the first objective of this study. The main aim of this study is to evaluate the social studies teachers' perceptions towards the importance of tourism education dimensions. To the best researchers' knowledge, no research has been conducted in KSA to evaluate social studies teachers' perceptions of how important the tourism education dimensions are in the intermediate and secondary schools. Therefore, they should be

incorporated in the curricula of social studies of the two stages students to achieve sustainable development in KSA.

Based on Alomairi (2013) study, the dimensions and vocabulary of tourism education that should be included in the textbooks of social studies of the intermediate school students are investigated and evaluated. However, Alomairi's (2013) study did not tackle tourism education in the secondary schools in KSA. For Example, to fulfill the employment requirements in the tourism field in the Republic of Croatia, prospective employees' education is achieved at three stages of schooling: the secondary stage, higher education including a formal education system, and informal education (Perman & Mikinac, 2014; Bartoluci, Hendija & Petracic, 2014).

Furthermore, the study aims to test the validation of additional dimensions in tourism education in social studies curricula for the intermediate and secondary schools. New dimensions may emerge based on the conducted interviews in this study, which will be tested through the questionnaire survey for the secondary stage in schools in Saudi Arabia. The focus is on tourism education as one of the important aspects of tourism to be incorporated in social studies textbooks in the intermediate, as well as the secondary schools in the Kingdom. The study aims to provide a list of dimensions and vocabulary in tourism education that can be used in the planning, designing, and developing curricula. This will help the curriculum committee in designing social studies textbooks by the Saudi Ministry of Education.

This study is significant research because there are no relevant studies in the literature, which investigated and compared tourism education dimensions in the curricula of social studies for the intermediate and secondary schools. This study also aims to evaluate social studies teachers' perceptions towards the importance of the identified tourism education dimensions for the intermediate and secondary schools.

The study aims to provide useful suggestions and guidelines to enhance tourism education among intermediate and secondary school students and raise their awareness of the importance of tourism education, as there is a lack of awareness of tourism education dimensions in KSA and other Arab countries.

Knowledge regarding Saudi tourism education dimensions, at intermediate and secondary school level, is limited and insufficient. This is supported by Johnson (2010), who indicates that the existing literature about aspects pertaining to tourism development in Saudi Arabia is scarce. Previous studies (Ahmed, 1992; Bhardwaj, 1998; Seddon & Khoja, 2003; Bogari, Crowther, & Marr, 2004) focused on the religious aspects of tourism and Hajj. Seddon and Khoja (2003) aim to examine Saudi tourism patterns, as well as attitudes. The study concluded that Saudi tourism is tending towards the mass market. The infrastructure development has proceeded without assessing the environmental impact, which results in damaging tourism activities to the country's natural resources (Damanhour, 2016). Bogari *et al.*, (2004) investigated motivations behind Saudi domestic tourism. It was found that the developing countries, as well as the Islamic culture, have received minor attention. From the perspective of Abdulaziz (2007), there is a lack of a unified and cohesive structure of tourism in KSA before 1999 due to a lack of official tourism agencies that are mainly devoted to tourism.

### **1.7 Research Hypotheses and Development Hypotheses**

Based on the proposed theoretical framework, several hypotheses were developed to examine the direct and indirect relationship among independent, dependent, and moderating variables. Hypotheses development is an act of developing a theory or hypothesis based on thorough literature and search model formulated as presented in

Figure 3.1 in Chapter 3. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) identified directional and non-directional hypotheses as two types of hypotheses. In the context of this study, the non-directional hypothesis was adopted. This is because the postulated relationship did not offer the direction of the hypotheses, an indication that though it may be conjectured, one may not be able to say whether the relationship is positive or negative. Also, there is not enough evidence to show that this relationship has been explored within the study area and, therefore, there is no basis for indicating the direction.

### **1.7.1 The Relationship between Tourism Education Dimensions and Improve**

#### **Awareness of Tourism**

Previous studies (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2010; Alomairi, 2013) concluded that although there are elements of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the tourist status has not been considered because of some reasons. The former author found that over the years, the attitude and behavior of residents towards tourists and tourism activities in their communities greatly influenced tourism development sector. This is an indication that some tourists may have been possibly harassed or received with an unacceptable treatment. However, the latter author indicated that the reason may be due to a lack of tourism awareness among a large segment of the Saudi society with the requirements and techniques of receiving tourists, and a lack of adequate knowledge of the unique history, geography, and archaeological heritage. Khizindar (2012) emphasized the need for more research in the KSA's society, which is known for its conservative and cultural context of tourism aiming to improve understanding of tourism impact on the sustainable tourism industry. Although the government has made several efforts to achieve this via the "SMILE" program to spread tourism culture among students, achieve meaningful tourism in the community, and deepen the