

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE HOLIDAY CHOICES OF SAUDI TOURISTS

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Abstract

This research explores how culture shapes the holiday choices and the decision-making behaviour of Saudi tourists. Previous research has ignored the context of Saudi Arabia leaving gaps in knowledge related to the role of key elements of the Saudi culture e.g. religion, norms, and social structure, on holiday choices. The research was motivated by the argument that studies conducted in other cultural contexts may be of limited applicability to the context of Saudi Arabia. The research was also motivated by the dramatic shift in holiday preferences of Saudi tourists starting in 2008 that resulted in a rapid increase in outbound holidays while domestic holidays declined. Following a qualitative approach, this thesis explored how the culture of Saudi Arabia has contributed to such shift in holiday preferences among a diverse sample of 35 participants, consisting of both male and female interviewees from across Saudi Arabia. The findings showed a generally negative perception of domestic tourism shared among the participants. In addition to this perception, the research highlighted three escape motives: escaping routine environment, escaping social commitments, and escaping social and religious restrictions; and two seeking motives: seeking novel nature, and seeking personal space and freedom. The findings also showed a strong influence of the Saudi culture on choices of outbound tourists, specifically religion, seeking culturally novel destinations but familiar to some extent. The selection of destinations, as well as other holiday choices, were found to be influenced by social trends and recommendations of 'experts'. This was mostly an outcome of the widespread use of social networking platforms, especially through instant messaging apps, e.g. WhatsApp and Telegram, and photo and video sharing apps, e.g. Snapchat. Finally, the research explored the role of women in family holiday choices, uncovering a vital role that previous researchers ignored for cultural reasons. The value of this research comes from its context focus and the themes it covers, contributing to knowledge related to the role of culture in holiday choices of tourists that limited research has considered. Moreover, this research contributes to tourism marketing practice by providing further understanding of the role of social networking applications in tourist choices, the multiple influences of religion on Saudi tourists, and the various roles of women in their family holidays in traditional societies where men are the primary decision-makers.

إهداء

أهدي هذا الإنجاز إلى أمي الحبيبة فاطمة، وأبي الغالي هادي، وإلى زوجتي شريكة حياتي لجين وإلى طفليّ الجميلين، عمر وشادية، فرحي وسعادتي، وإلى عائلتي، إخوتي وأخواتي.

Dedication

I dedicate this achievement to my beloved mother and father, to my loving wife, and my beautiful children, the joy of my life, and to my family, my brothers and sisters.

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List of Abbreviations

GCC	Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf
NTO	National Tourism Organisation
DMO	Destination Marketing Organisation
SMT	The Saudi Ministry of Tourism
MAS	The Tourism Information and Research Centre
GEA	The General Entertainment Authority
STA	The Saudi Tourism Authority
TDF	The Tourism Development Fund
SCTH	Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage
NCM	The National Center for Meteorology

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Until the beginning of 2020, international tourism was growing at four per cent per annum with the latest statistics recording more than 1.5 billion arrivals (UNWTO, 2020). Globally, tourism was estimated to contribute by 10.4% of GDP (US\$8.8 trillion) and 10% (319 million) of total jobs worldwide (WTTC, 2019). In 2020, the UNWTO suggested that tourism will experience a significant reduction in growth as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, tourism continues to be an important industry on which many countries rely economically. These countries use tourism as means to enhance their economic growth, diversify their economic base, create jobs, improve quality of life, promote female empowerment and access soft power as a means to progress cultural diplomacy (Paramati, Alam and Chen, 2017; Enea and Tanasoiu, 2009; Ferguson, 2011a; Carbone, 2017).

Saudi Arabia generates large numbers of outbound tourists, but it receives a limited number of inbound arrivals (other than religious visitors). According to the most recent statistics, tourists from Saudi Arabia made nearly 22 million trips to outbound destinations, spending nearly US\$22 billion (MAS, 2019). As a result, Saudi Arabia had a significant tourism balance of payments deficit, aggravated by a restrictive visa system, which makes it relatively difficult to grow inbound tourism. Before 2019, the visa system meant that inbound tourism to Saudi Arabia was limited to those undertaking a religious pilgrimage, business visitors and people wanting to visit friends and families.

However, in 2019, Saudi Arabia launched its first general-purpose tourism visa and engaged in marketing campaigns to advertise its attractions internationally. Moreover, Saudi Arabia invested in a range of tourism attractions and entertainment projects to encourage the growth in domestic tourism. Statistics on whether these recent developments have contributed to increased domestic or inbound leisure tourists are unavailable. It is unlikely, however, that

these initiatives will have changed Saudi tourists' choices or reduced outbound travel in the short term.

Despite its status as an important source market for many destinations, research has paid limited attention to Saudi tourists and their behaviours (Jafari and Scott, 2014; Almuhrzi, Alriyami and Scott, 2017). The research that exists has mostly focused on tourists from western countries as well as East and South-East Asian countries. Also, the scope in tourism research focused on the Islamic context was limited to a small number of areas, e.g. religious tourism (Almuhrzi and Alsawafi, 2017; Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010), halal tourism (Battour and Ismail, 2016; El-Gohary, 2016; Mohsin, Ramli and Alkhulayfi, 2016), Islamic compliant services (Idris and Abdul Wahab, 2015; Saad, Badran and Abdel-Aleem, 2016; Stephenson, 2014) and the tourist experience in Islamic destinations (Brown and Osman, 2017; Taheri, 2016). Moreover, only a few of these studies were conducted in an Arabic context and none referenced Saudi Arabia.

These limitations in previous studies leave a gap in knowledge related to tourists from the Arab world in general and Saudi Arabia in particular. By focusing on Saudi tourists and creating new insights into their outbound destination choices, this research will begin to fill that gap. Specifically, it will explore the role of culture on Saudi outbound tourists' choices and provide knowledge for marketers and researchers that can enhance their understanding of Saudi tourists.

1.2 The Research Problem

Published tourism research has mostly been undertaken by academics from Europe, America and East Asia and has generally focused on the choices of tourists from those cultures (Mura and Tavakoli, 2014; Zhang, 2018). However, there is limited research focused on non-western societies (Battour, Battor and Bhatti, 2014; Xin, 2017; Wijesinghe, Mura and Culala, 2019). Cultural variations between western and non-western societies, specifically in religion, language and values, require more in-depth exploration as does the role of these factors on

holiday decisions. While there is a growing amount of research produced on the role of these elements in tourism, these studies are limited in their scope and focus.

For example, religion has been discussed in several studies, but these mostly focused on the way it influences tourists' food consumption or constrains tourist holiday choices (Mak *et al.*, 2012; Hashim, Murphy and Hashim, 2007). Battour, Ismail and Battor (2011) investigated the relationship between religion and tourist choices among a sample of Muslim tourists. In their research, they noted that religion influenced the behaviour, choices and the experiences of their participants. However, the focus of their research was limited to students and visitors to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This limited focus is insufficient to allow researchers to fully understand how tourists from cultures such as Saudi Arabia make travel-related decisions.

Generally, societies differ in their attachment to their cultural elements and the degree to which these elements influence their behaviour. For example, although religion played a vital role in the history of western societies, nowadays, its influence has become limited. However, religion continues to be a critical part of many cultures. Muslim societies in general and many of the Middle Eastern ones, in particular, are firmly attached to the principles of Islam and their culture is primarily derived from Islamic heritage. Saudi Arabia is one of these countries where religion has a vital role in every aspect of daily life.

Saudi Arabia is one of the most conservative traditional societies in the world. Saudi culture is in constant flux and the cultural gap between the West and Saudi Islamic culture is wide. The Saudis are a proud people with a closed society, their culture developed through age-old interactions between the Arabian peoples and their harsh desert environment. Saudi Arabia is the birthplace of Islam, and the basic Islamic values of Saudi culture have remained to this day (Long, 2005, p 7).

This study explores the role of culture and religion on holiday choices of Saudi tourists, investigates their decision-making behaviour as regards their choice of destination, accommodation, services and activities at destinations, and assesses their motives for outbound travel. Research on Saudi tourists is limited, and studies conducted in western

contexts may be of limited applicability to Saudi Arabia for various reasons including differences in lifestyle, society, culture and religion. The limited amount of tourism research focused on Saudi Arabia leaves a gap in knowledge related to Saudi Arabia in general. Moreover, tourists' choices, in particular, have been left out of scope in the limited research that exists. Therefore, the current research aims to fill this gap in knowledge.

The tourism literature is also relatively poorly developed in the areas of consumer decision-making models. The most cited decision models in tourism such as the information-processing theory (Bettman, 1979), the model of Woodside and Lysonski (1989) and its extensions (Woodside and Dubelaar; 2003), the theory of planned behaviour as applied to leisure decisions Ajzen & Driver, 1992) and the choice sets approaches by Brisoux and Laroche (1981), and Spiggle and Sewall (1987), were all characterised by their dependence on 'grand models'.

According to Sirakaya and Woodside (2005), grand models refer to the works of Nicosia (1966); Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (1968); Howard and Sheth (1969) which were the earliest and most influential models of consumer behaviour. Researchers noted that these models were generally developed for use in industries dominated by tangible products, hence "conceptualise decision-making as a simple input-output model" (Smallman & Moore, 2009. P 399). Therefore, they have failed to incorporate the unique characteristics of services (intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability). Sirakaya and Woodside (2005) argued that new models for tourists' decision-making are needed. Therefore, in the current research, grand models are not used because of their inability to reflect on the differences between services and tangible products.

The characteristics of tourism products and services make tourists decisions a more complicated process. Later tourism research, however, enhanced these models, taking the characteristics of tourism products and services into consideration. Hyde (2008) built on information processing and planning theories, proposing a model for touring vacation decision-making. His model suggested that pre-vacation decision-making processes consist of three

distinct phases: information search, holiday planning and holiday booking, each with a unique set of antecedents. For the current research, this model is useful because it considers information search as a continuous activity that is embedded in and influences all phases of the holiday planning process.

Therefore, the model presented in Hyde (2008) informed the current research through its focus on information processing. It outlines the various sources used by tourists in the information search phase, highlighting the central role of travel agents. However, as the role of travel agents whilst searching for information has decreased dramatically, nowadays, social media and other online sources of information play the leading role (Ho, Lin and Chen, 2012).

Xiang and Gretzel (2010) examined the emergence of social media as a source of information within the tourism decision making cycle. Their research asserted that social media platforms have become critical in the tourism industry, specifically identifying that they are consumer-centric platforms (Buhalis and Law, 2008). As a result, social media platforms have functioned as a source of information for potential tourists and as a platform through which tourists can share their post-travel experiences. However, the rapid evolution in social media use and the emergence of new platforms means that the need to update research in the area is ever-present. Moreover, previous research has revealed that there are national differences in the adoption and use of social media among the travelling public (Gretzel, Kang and Lee, 2008).

These national differences inform the current research and place the focus on social media use among Saudi tourists as a source of information, as well as a platform through which they interact with other travellers by sharing stories of their holiday experiences and influence the destination and accommodation choices of other potential tourists. The current research will provide a further understanding of how social media shape choices of outbound Saudi tourists. This is important because social media and networking apps e.g. Snapchat, have evolved dramatically in recent years, but research on them remains limited. Moreover, the role of instant messaging applications in tourist decision-making has received minimal attention in research. As a result, previous research produced on social networking apps and tourism, e.g.

(Gretzel, 2017), was insufficient to understand how they influence tourists' holiday choices. Therefore, the current research takes these points to provide a further understanding of how these recent changes in communication technologies influence tourist choice behaviour.

1.3 Practical Problem

The Saudi Ministry of Tourism (SMT) is tasked with promoting domestic and inbound tourism. However, statistics show that despite its efforts, Saudi tourists demonstrate a preference for outbound travel. According to reports from the Centre for Tourism Information and Statistics (MAS) in 2018, Saudi tourists made 43 million domestic trips, of which only 38% were for leisure and shopping. In total, Saudi Arabia recorded 232 million domestic nights and US\$12.8 billion in expenditure. In contrast, outbound tourism from Saudi Arabia recorded 340 million nights and US\$ 22 billion spent by Saudi tourists in outbound destinations. Statistics from earlier years show that holiday choices for Saudi tourists have changed dramatically, from domestic to outbound.

Figure 1 shows that between 2004 and 2012, domestic tourist trips made within Saudi Arabia fell from 35 million in 2004 to 21 million in 2012. In contrast, outbound tourist trips from Saudi Arabia increased from 3 million in 2004 to 20 million in 2012. The chart suggests that post-2008 Saudi tourists began to shift their choice of destinations from domestic to outbound. It is important to note that in the years following 2012, domestic trips increased from 21 million, reaching 37 million in 2014, 46 million in 2015, 47 million in 2016 and 43 million in 2018. While this may suggest an increase in domestic holiday trips, the Deputy Minister of Tourism for strategy and investment said in an interview that the calculation methods used by the Ministry of Tourism changed to focus on visitors of all purposes rather than focusing on tourists only (Aljeraisy, 2020). This means that travel purposes that were previously not calculated in tourism statistics, e.g. religious visits to Makkah and Madina (Gawy, 2017) have been reconsidered as tourism activities, and are now calculated in the country's tourism statistics. Nonetheless, of the total number of domestic trips made in Saudi Arabia, only 38% are for leisure and shopping purposes (MAS, 2018).

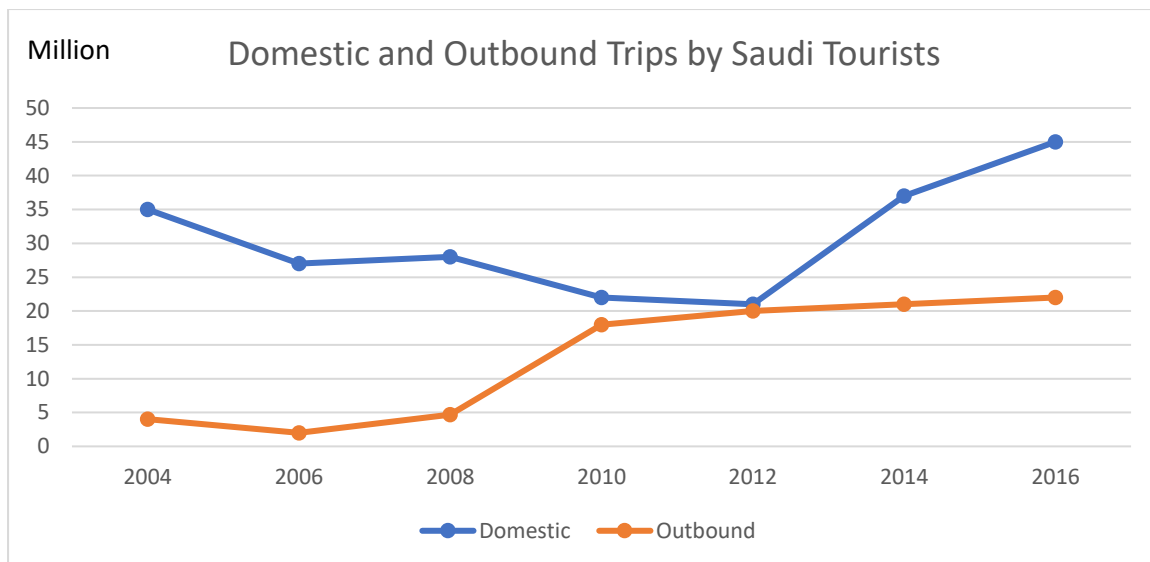


Figure 1 Domestic and Outbound Trips by Saudi Tourists (Mas Centre, 2016)

However, although domestic tourism trips as a percentage of all trips by Saudi nationals increased when compared to outbound tourism, the number of nights spent in outbound destinations far exceeded those spent domestically. Figure 2 shows that between 2008 and 2012, a significant shift in holiday preferences occurred among Saudi tourists. The number of domestic nights fell from 200 million in 2008 to 103 million nights in 2012. In contrast, the number of nights spent by Saudi tourists in outbound destinations increased from 54 million in 2008 to 177 million in 2012. This dramatic change provides evidence of the change in holiday preference for Saudi tourists to favour outbound destinations. Hence, expenditure on outbound tourism has increased dramatically.

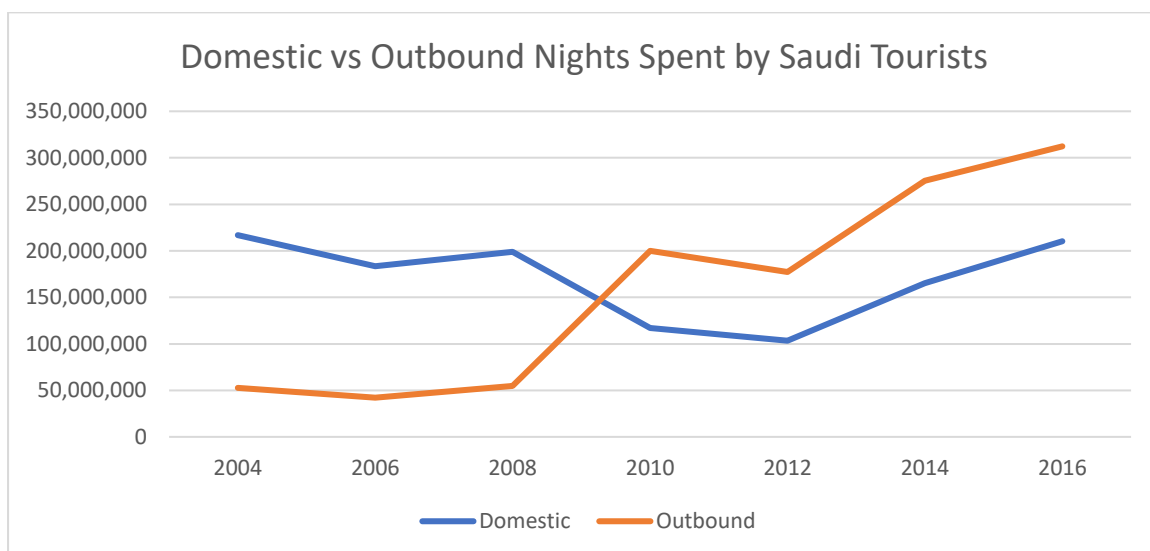


Figure 2 Domestic and Outbound Nights Spent by Saudi Tourists (MAS centre, 2019)

Figure 3 shows that Saudi tourist's expenditure on outbound tourism is far more extensive than the expenditure on domestic tourism. For example, Saudi tourists' expenditure on outbound tourism increased from around US\$ 1.6 billion in 2006 to over US\$ 16.5 billion in 2012 while domestic tourism did not record a similar rise, with expenditure only increasing from US\$ 8.5 billion to US\$ 10 billion between 2006 and 2012. Although domestic tourism experienced some improvement in its statistics post 2012, the increase in tourists' expenditure on outbound tourism was far more significant. This results in economic leakage for Saudi Arabia and contributes to the economies of popular destinations among Saudi tourists.

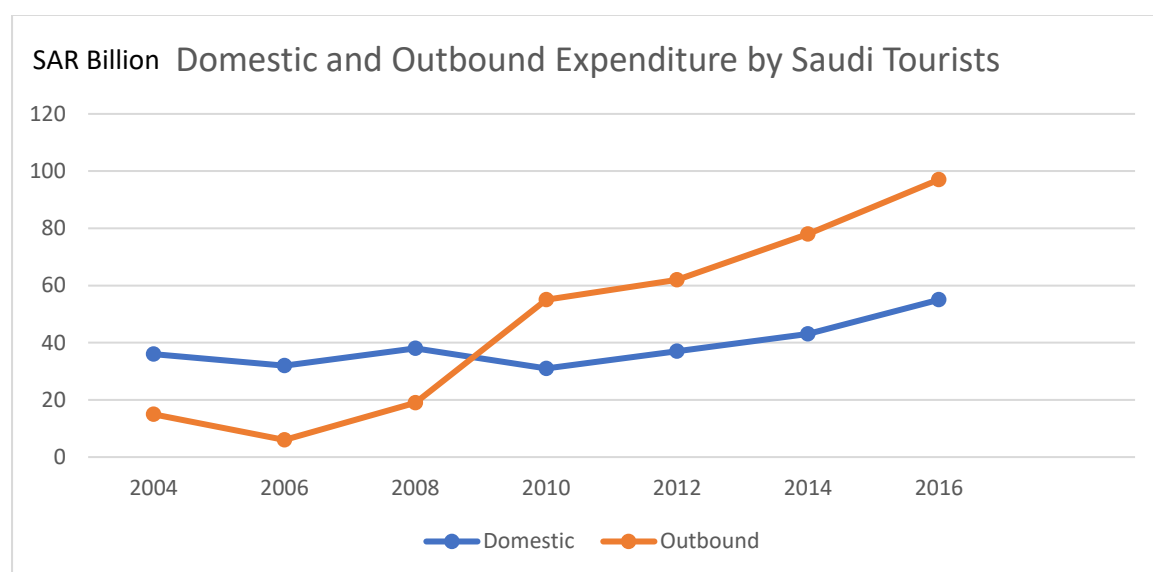


Figure 3 Domestic and Outbound Expenditure by Saudi Tourists (MAS Centre, 2016)

1.4 Scope of the Research

This research focuses on the role of culture and its elements in shaping Saudi tourists' choices and decision-making process. This focus will allow the research to explore the factors that led to the shift in holiday preferences of Saudi tourists and understand the motives and the factors that influence their choices of destination, accommodation, services and activities.

In summary, the research was motivated by a number of factors:

- The Scarcity of research focussed on Saudi tourists in general and their holiday choice behaviour in particular.
- As Saudi Arabia is a country in which religion influences every aspect of daily life and so it is essential to explore its role in tourists holiday choices and behaviour. Previous

research on the role of cultural elements (especially religion) is limited, which leaves a significant gap in knowledge to be addressed.

- The shift in the holiday choice behaviour of Saudi tourists post 2008, and their preference for specific outbound destinations (e.g. Islamic countries and choosing places and activities with limited cultural contact when visiting non-Islamic countries) suggests a latent role of culture that needs to be explored.

1.5 Research Aims and Objectives

This research aims to explore how culture shapes the holiday choices and the decision-making behaviour of Saudi tourists. To achieve the aim of the research, four specific objectives have been formulated. They are as outlined below:

1. To analyse the key theories on tourists' decision-making process and determine the factors that influence holiday choices focusing on the Islamic and Saudi context.
2. To investigate the motives for holidays, the role of culture on holiday choices and how social networking applications influence holiday decision-making behaviour among a sample of outbound Saudi tourists.
3. To determine the motives for outbound holidays among Saudi tourists and the role of culture in shaping their choices of destinations, accommodations, services and activities.
4. To contribute to knowledge and practice by explaining the pervasive influence of culture on tourists' choices.

1.6 Research Questions

Wertz *et al.* (2011) noted that research questions are important because they clarify the research scope and purpose. Creswell and Creswell (2017) added that research questions serve as a guide for the researcher throughout the different phases of the research process. Three questions guide the current research:

1. How do Saudis perceive domestic tourism?
2. What are the travel motives for outbound Saudi tourists?
3. How does culture shape the choices of outbound Saudi tourists?

1.7 Significance of the Research

The outcomes of this research will contribute to knowledge by addressing the holiday choices of Saudi tourists and the factors that influence them. The research will provide insights into the motives for travelling outside of the Kingdom among Saudi nationals. Tourism researchers already outline a range of motives that drive destination choice, and these differ among tourists from different countries. Previous research focussed on Saudi tourists was limited. The current research, therefore, will provide new insights into the travel motives of outbound Saudi tourists. This contribution will help future research as well as marketers targeting Saudi tourists to gain a better understanding of their leisure travel behaviour and allow markets to serve better their needs (Battour and Ismail, 2016).

The research will also help to understand how the religious culture of Saudi Arabia influences tourists' holiday choices. This understanding is critical for the current research as Saudi Arabia is a country where religion influences every aspect of daily life and the influence of religion from the perspectives of Saudi tourists has not yet been investigated in previous research. Moreover, the thesis will demonstrate why specific destinations are more popular among Saudi tourists and explore the factors that influence their choice behaviour. These potential

contributions can be of use to future research on the behaviour of tourists from Saudi Arabia and Arab countries that share similarities with it. It will also allow researchers focused on Muslim tourists to have a better understanding of a relatively under-explored Muslim tourist market.

The study also provides methodological insights, specifically for those seeking to engage in cross-gender research in the Saudi contexts. It identifies challenges in conducting interviews in Saudi Arabia and explains the steps taken to overcome these challenges. The social norms in Saudi Arabia discourage people from different genders from communicating (unless related). As a result, female participants are under-represented in most qualitative studies undertaken by male researchers with Saudi Arabian participants. In this study, women are represented, and their perspectives provide vital new insights. On a practical level, this research will provide recommendations to policymakers about steps that can be taken to make domestic tourism more appealing for Saudi nationals.

1.8 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters, as described in Table 1:

Table 1. Structure of the thesis

Chapter One	Introduces the reader to the research, its background and aims and objectives. This chapter also explains the nature of the problem, the rationale for the study, and the significance of the research.
Chapter Two	Presents a background about Saudi Arabia, its culture, religion and social structure. The chapter also describes the economy of Saudi Arabia, its 2030 vision and the characteristics of its tourism industry.
Chapter Three	Provides a review of previous research on tourists' holiday choices, motives for travel and the role of culture in the decision-making process, highlighting the key theories that have discussed the topic of the research.

Chapter Four	Explains the approaches used to collect data for the study and the rationale for its design and methodology. It also describes the data collection process, its ethical considerations, the pilot study and the data analysis process.
Chapter Five	Presents and discusses the findings of the study related to Saudi tourists' motives for outbound travel. Specifically, the chapter discusses the perception of domestic tourism shared among the research participants and their escaping and seeking motives.
Chapter Six	Presents and discusses the findings of the study related to the role of culture on Saudi Tourists Choices. Specifically, the chapter discusses the role of religion, cultural novelty and familiarity seeking behaviour and the role of language in holiday choices.
Chapter Seven	Presents and discusses the findings of the study related to the role of social influence on the research participants, the use and influence of instant messaging and social networking apps, the role of travel influencers in shaping the participants holiday choices, and the role of Saudi women in the decision-making process.
Chapter Eight	Provides a conclusion to the research and explains the contribution of its findings for research and practice. The chapter also presents the limitations of the current study and provides suggestions for future research.

2. THE SAUDI ARABIAN CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a large Middle Eastern country located in the Arabian Peninsula. It plays a significant political role in the Middle East and is recognised for its economic power and its religious sites. Politically, Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East by land size with a strategic location and borders with seven countries and close to three strategically important bodies of water. Economically, Saudi Arabia has the largest economy in the Middle East and the 16th largest economy in the world by GDP whilst also being the leading oil exporter (HSBC, 2020). As a result, many countries in the Middle East rely on Saudi Arabia for logistics, energy and employment with over 10 million expatriates working in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is also religiously important for around 1.7 billion Muslims worldwide because it is home to the two holiest sites in the Islamic faith (Makkah and Madina). Makkah is the birthplace of Prophet Mohammed and the Islamic religion. It is also the direction for prayers for all Muslims around the world as it is home for the Ka'ba. Every Muslim is obliged to perform Umrah (minor pilgrimage) and Hajj (major pilgrimage) to Makkah at least once in their lifetime. Madina is the second holiest Islamic city, to which the Prophet Mohammed emigrated, established the first Islamic state and died. Although religious visits to Madina are not obligatory, people visit it to pray in the prophetic mosque, visit the Prophet Mohammed's tomb and other historical Islamic sites.

This chapter introduces Saudi Arabia and includes content on its history, geography, culture, society, and economy, focusing on the context of this research. The chapter will highlight the elements of the culture that are related to the context of the research, e.g. describing the lifestyle and the role of religion in individuals' life. Moreover, the chapter will describe the tourism sector of Saudi Arabia, its development and future role in the Saudi Vision 2030.

2.2 Background

The history of Arabia usually is divided into two phases, pre-Islamic and Islamic eras. The rise of Islam in Makkah and its expansion throughout the Middle East and North Africa led to the spread of Arabs and their culture throughout the region. As a result, today the region that includes Arabia, Iraq, the Levantine, Egypt, Sudan and North Africa including Mauritania, are known collectively as the Arab World. Moreover, Islam which originated in Arabia, has spread through Asia, Africa and parts of Europe. This spread of Islam and the Arab's culture gave Arabia a central role, culturally, religiously, politically and economically.

2.2.1 History of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is a monarchy that is ruled by the House of Saud, which was first established in 1744 in central Arabia. The Saudi rule was established as a result of an agreement between a political leader (Mohammed ibn Saud) and a religious scholar (Mohammed ibn Abdul-Wahab) which gave the state a religious orientation. This has subsequently played a large role in its history and culture. The current Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the third Saudi re-establishment of the state after two earlier collapses (see figure, 4). The third Saudi state (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) was revived and founded in 1902 by King Abdul-Aziz Al Saud who unified over two-thirds of the Arabian Peninsula under his rule (see figures, 5 and 6).

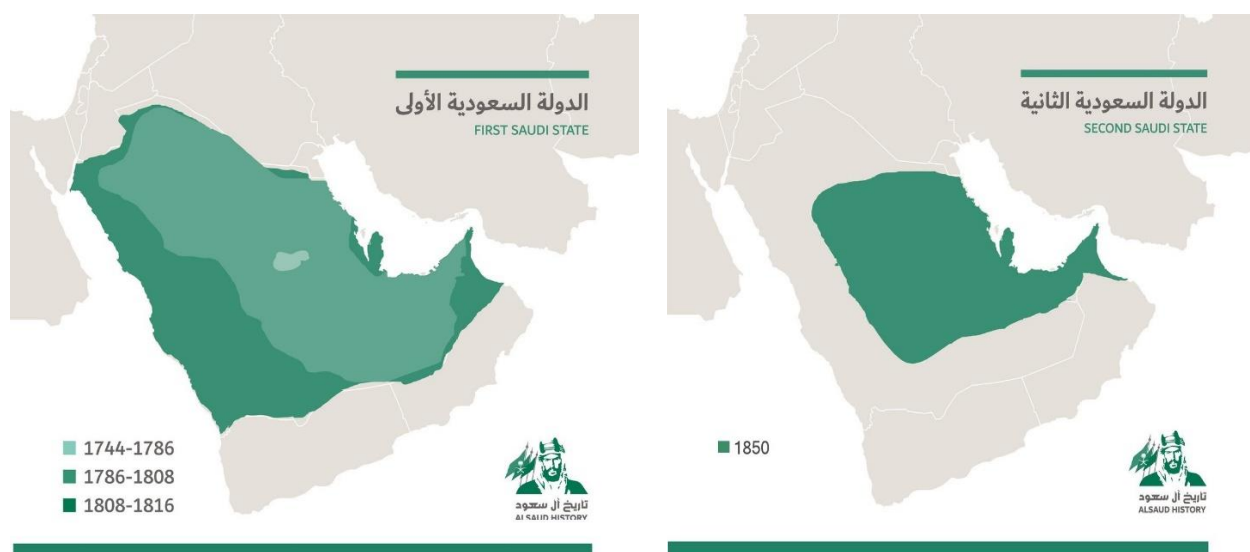


Figure 4. The Development of the Saudi Rule in the First and Second States (Al-Saud History, 2018)

2.2.2 Geography of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia enjoys a strategic location in the world linking Asia and Africa and being located close to important shipping channels and roads, e.g. Suez Canal, Bab-el-Mandeb and the Strait of Hormuz. This allows Saudi Arabia to play major trading, economic and political roles. It is located in the Southwest of Asia and is bordered by Yemen in the south and Oman in the southeast, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait in the east, Iraq and Jordan in the north and Egypt in the northeast (see figure, 5).



Figure 5. Map of Saudi Arabia

As a result of its size, Saudi Arabia enjoys a diverse terrain and climate and has varied tourism resources. It consists of 13 administrative regions, as shown in Figure, 6. Although deserts cover more than half of Saudi Arabia (Rub' al Khali or 'The Empty Quarter' desert, Al-Dahna desert and Al-Nufud desert), the country also has a chain of mountains stretching from its southern to the northern borders. It also enjoys the longest coastline on the red sea. This coastline stretches from Jordan in the northwest to Yemen in the southwest. It also has the second-longest coastline on the Arabian Gulf. The country has a total of 1300 islands, of which 1150 are in the red sea (General Commission for Survey, 2016).

Interior lands such as central regions, e.g. Riyadh, Qassim and Hail, central-southern regions, e.g. Najran, and central-northern regions, such as Al-Jawf and the Northern Borders are generally characterised by their hot and dry climate in the summer and cold winters. However, coastal areas such as west of Makkah, west of Madina and Jazan have hot and humid summers and warm winters, while Tabuk is known for its cold winters with temperatures falling to below 0°C in December and January. The mountainous regions, e.g. Al-Baha and Asir, enjoy relatively cooler summers and cold winter (see table, 1). This explains the national designation of Mountainous regions as 'Masayef' which means summer destinations and coastal regions especially (western coastal regions) as 'Mashaty' which means winter destinations.

Table 2. Average high and low temperature in Saudi Arabia (NCM, 2018)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Riyadh	H	17	23	27	33	39	43	44	44	39	33	25	19
	L	7	9	13	18	23	26	27	26	23	20	13	10
Hail	H	15	19	23	29	34	38	39	40	36	31	23	17
	L	3	4	9	15	20	21	22	22	16	12	10	5
Makkah	H	30	31	35	38	42	44	43	43	43	40	35	32
	L	18	19	21	25	28	29	29	29	29	28	25	21
Madina	H	24	26	30	35	39	43	43	43	40	36	30	26
	L	13	15	17	21	26	29	30	30	27	21	17	13
Najran	H	24	26	31	34	37	39	39	39	34	30	26	25
	L	8	10	16	18	21	23	25	25	20	14	10	9
Jazan	H	30	31	33	35	37	38	38	38	35	32	30	30
	L	21	22	24	26	28	29	30	29	28	26	24	22
Abha	H	19	21	23	25	28	31	30	30	28	25	23	20
	L	7	9	11	13	15	17	17	17	14	11	8	7
Dammam	H	20	23	29	34	40	43	45	44	40	37	30	23
	L	9	11	15	20	25	28	30	29	25	21	16	11
Tabuk	H	15	18	25	30	34	38	39	39	27	22	18	15
	L	0	3	9	14	18	21	23	24	19	15	10	5

2.2.4 Population

Saudi Arabia has a population of 33.4 million people, of whom 21 million are nationals, and 12 million are foreign labourers. According to the General Authority of Statistics (2018), men make 57.5% of the total population of Saudi Arabia, while women make 42.5%. Foreign residents are primarily male, and when they are removed from the data, Saudi men make up 50.9% of the population while women make up 49.1%. The most populous region is Makkah with 8.5 million residents, followed by Riyadh with 8.2 million and the Eastern Province with 4.9 million residents, these three regions account for over 60% of the total population.

The majority of Saudi nationals are of tribal Arab origins. Nevertheless, Makkah and Madina regions are multi-cultural with many nationals from African, Central and East Asian and Syrian origins (CIA, No Date). Saudi Arabia remains a country where tribes continue to have their Sheikhs (tribal leaders) but with a more modern political structure in which these Sheikhs have a minimal role. Nonetheless, the culture of Saudi Arabia continues to be influenced by tribal traditions and norms.

2.2.5 Culture

Culture has a significant influence on people's lives, influencing their lifestyles, behaviour and everyday decisions (Hofstede, 1980a). Therefore, research considers culture an essential element of tourists' and consumers' decision-making (Willer, 2006). There is no universally accepted definition of culture, yet researchers agree that culture is about shared values, beliefs, behaviours, norms, and meanings in a society (Brumann, 1999; Griswold, 2012). According to Keating (2008) understanding cultures can help explain social practices. Therefore, numerous researchers have attempted to study how culture influences human behaviours.

One key theory that laid foundations for many later studies was developed by Hofstede (1980b). Hofstede viewed culture as "the collective programming of the human mind that

distinguishes the members of one human group from those of others” (Hofstede, 1980a, p. 24). The original theory proposed four dimensions of national cultures, i.e. power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity (Hofstede, 2011). Researchers have used these four dimensions to understand peoples’ behaviour in cross-cultural environments. Despite the heavy use of Hofstede’s theory in various disciplines (Litvin, Crofts and Hefner, 2004; Williams and Zinkin, 2008; De Mooij and Hofstede, 2011; Nayeem, 2012; Minkov *et al.*, 2019), the theory and its application in various contexts received several criticisms.

For example, Venaik and Brewer (2013) noted that Hofstede theory focuses on national cultures while in marketing the aim is to fulfil the needs of individuals and groups. Therefore, they view that the theory is inapplicable in marketing contexts. Nasif *et al.* (1991) also criticised Hofstede’s theory for its view that national population are homogenous while most nations consist of heterogeneous groups. Similarly, Kang and Moscardo (2006) noted drawbacks in Hofstede theory that limit its effectiveness to predict tourist behaviour. Nevertheless, according to Zainuddin *et al.* (2018) the extensive testing of Hofstede’s theory in different contexts and disciplines showed that some of its dimensions can help to understand cultures and predict behaviours.

In the Arabic context, Obeidat *et al.* (2012) noted that Hofstede studied the culture of seven Arab countries and found them to have a large power distance, relatively strong uncertainty avoidance, high collectivism and moderate masculinity/femininity. However, some researchers viewed Arabs as heterogeneous groups, which share similarities, but have major differences (Ali and Wahabi, 1995; Sidani and Gardner, 2000) and hence, they could not be studied as a single homogeneous group. In contrast, Wilson (1996), believed that the shared beliefs and attitudes among Arabs from different countries as seem to cross national and social boundaries. One reason for such similarity can be linked to the influence of the Islamic religion, which sets the basic values for Arabs and Muslims across the world and influences their behaviours to a great degree (Obeidat *et al.*, 2012; Ali, 1995; Al-Shaikh, 2003).

In the Saudi context, Mellahi and Wood (2001a) suggested that “Saudi Arabia could be described as high in power distance, high in uncertainty avoidance and collectivist within the in-group (tribe or extended family) and individualist with the out group (non-kin and guest workers)” p. 145. According to Bjerke and Al-Meer (1993) these characteristics can be attributed to the influence of the Islamic religion and tribal traditions. Therefore, the emphasis in this research is on religion and social norms, as they are particularly relevant within a study of Saudi culture. Aldraehim *et al.* (2012) noted that the Saudi culture is based on two main principles, first is the Islamic religion, which sets the moral foundations of the society, and second is the tribal system, which influences people’s choices, values, and behaviours.

2.3 Religion

Saudi Arabia was established on the principles of Islam, and its culture is mainly derived from the teachings of Prophet Mohammed and the early Islamic generations (Nevo, 1998). Some religions have a strong influence and strict teachings that emphasise forbidden and permitted actions, while others are more focused on spiritual orientation. Communities also vary in terms of the extent to which they follow different religious teachings. According to Fam, Waller and Erdogan (2004), in several communities, religion has a minor influence on peoples’ cultures while in others, religion forms the primary source of values and beliefs. Morris and Al Dabbagh (2004), the influence of religion on people’s culture, values, ethics, and other aspects of social life increases when a specific religion dominates.

As a result, the society of Saudi Arabia is generally religious, and henceforth its culture is dominated by Islamic principles. The influence of the Islamic religion surpasses promoting spiritual believes, values, traditions and practices and also embraces within its scope the imposition of systems of life, finance, economics, social structure, and politics, etc. (Wilson and Liu, 2011). Therefore, the cultures of Muslim societies are largely influenced by religious teachings.

Saudi Arabia is a religious country where Islam is the base of almost all aspects of daily life. The Basic Law (the constitution) of Saudi Arabia clearly states in article one that “the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an Arab Islamic state with Islam as its religion; Quran and prophet’s Mohammed teachings are its constitution” (Basic Law of Saudi Arabia, 1992). It is widely believed among Muslims that a good Muslim is the one who follows the teachings of Islam. Therefore, although many Muslim countries have adopted modern lifestyles, their cultures remain strongly influenced by religious teachings.

There are many practices in several countries that are prohibited in Saudi Arabia because they contradict Islamic teachings. For example, alcohol consumption, sex outside of marriage, and consumption of pork meat. Those who engage in these practices are punished. This difference between Muslim and western societies, combined with a growth in economic wealth in many Islamic states, has resulted in growing interest from researchers seeking to understand how Muslim consumers behave towards products and services (Adnan, 2011).

According to Stephenson (2014), Muslim tourists account for over 12% of the total global outbound tourism revenue, and Saudi Arabia is the largest source of outbound Muslim tourists. However, elements of the Islamic culture that are derived principally from its religion such as prayers, rulings related to food and beverage consumption, clothes and gender segregation have received limited research in tourism.

2.3.1 Prayers

Performing prayers is one of the five pillars of Islam that each Muslim must observe. Muslims pray five times a day, and these prayers form the basis of daily life as they influence times and appointments (British Council, 2015). Prayers can be performed anywhere that is considered clean and provides a safe and suitable atmosphere, but they must be performed on time, or as soon as it becomes possible (Quran, 4:103).

Therefore, because prayer is critical for the Islamic faith, all motorway services in Saudi Arabia include mosques for land travellers to use. Similarly, Saudi Arabian Airlines provide a prayer

area in many of its international flights for its passengers (Saudia, 2014b). In Saudi Arabia, prayer times affect several aspects of daily life, from shop opening hours to social activities. For example, musical events and weddings in Saudi Arabia typically begin after Isha prayer (the last prayer of the day) to avoid prayer stoppages.

During travel, Muslims are permitted to perform shortened prayers if certain conditions are met. Moreover, due to the scarcity of Islamic facilities in some countries, several Muslims perform their prayers in public places. Many tourist facilities have understood the importance of meeting the religious needs of Muslims. For example, hotels have started providing services such as prayer directions in rooms, information about Islamic facilities and providing prayer mats (Stephenson, 2014). This makes prayer an essential element of culture that has an influence on Muslim tourists' behaviour and their choice of destination, accommodation and activities.

2.3.2 Sex

Sex outside marriage, regardless of how it is practised or with whom, is forbidden in Islam. In English, two words describe sex between man and woman outside marriage, i.e. fornication (sex between an unmarried man and woman) and adultery (unlawful sex performed by a married person). In Arabic, both actions are referred to as Zina and several verses of the Quran have made clear that Zina is forbidden, for example, "And come not near unto adultery. Lo! it is an abomination and an evil way" (Quran, 17:32).

In Saudi Arabia, sex outside marriage is illegal according to Islamic teachings and the law of the country, and it is a strongly punished act. It is also a topic that people do not like to talk about or discuss. Therefore, most people will feel offended when they are asked about their sexual experiences and may refuse to answer questions related to it. Therefore, no previous research has directly analysed whether sex is among the travel motives of Saudi tourists and whether it influences their destination choice. However, Alghamdi (2007) found that it is perceived among Saudis that some people choose specific destinations for sexual purposes.

This raises a question on whether sex is among the motives for outbound travel of Saudi tourists.

2.3.3 Alcohol

Similarly, Alcohol consumption is forbidden in Islam as per the Quran and Prophet Mohammed's teachings. Therefore, although many Muslim countries allow Alcoholic drinks in hotels and specific places, the majority of Muslims understand that drinking alcohol is religiously forbidden and hence, socially unacceptable. In Saudi Arabia alcohol sale and consumption is illegal, and those who do not abide by the law will face criminal charges.

Therefore, people, including non-Muslims, mostly avoid the consumption of alcohol in Saudi Arabia. Although it is perceived that the majority of Saudis do not consume alcoholic drinks, some of them may drink it while outside the country (Alghamdi, 2007). As is the case for sex, people will normally not speak about their consumption of alcohol. Therefore, previous research has failed to provide direct answers on whether Saudis consume alcohol while they are in other countries. Nevertheless, although it is widely believed among people that some outbound tourists from Saudi Arabia drink alcohol, it is not clear whether the desire to consume alcohol influences their destination choice (Alghamdi, 2007).

2.3.4 Food

Islam is clear about the food that is permitted for Muslims to eat. There are two main sources for all forbidden and permissible things in Islam, i.e. Quran (God's words) and Sunnah (Prophet Mohammed's words, actions, practices and habits, and silent approvals). All food is permissible except that has been forbidden. For example, the Holy Quran forbids meat of dead animals, blood, pork, and meat of permissible animals which have been sacrificed for others than Allah, and which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by headlong fall, or that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal (Quran, 5: 3).

Other verses of the Quran also explain permissible food which includes meat and dairy of Cattle, sheep, camels, and other animals that have not been labelled as forbidden. Also, most

creatures that live in the sea (seafood) are permissible to eat (including fish, shellfish, lobster, shrimp and scallops) (Quran, 5:96). Moreover, all vegetable and fruit products are permissible. However, it is important to note that permissible food must not be mixed with forbidden meat, alcohol, or any other forbidden item.

Food of Christians and Jews (People of the Scripture) is generally permissible for Muslims to consume. “The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you, and yours is lawful to them” (Quran, 5:4). Yet, many Fatwas (legal opinions by Islamic religious leaders) have been issued forbidding meat produced by Christians that use electrical stunning or any other way of animal killing that does not meet with Islamic dietary law. Therefore, Halal certified products are necessary for many Muslim tourists. Alternatively, most Muslims trust Kosher food (prepared according to Jewish dietary law) as they understand its similarities with the Islamic dietary law (Emasi, 2014).

2.3.5 Appearance and Outfit

All Muslims, regardless of their gender, must observe modesty in their appearance and outfit. Rules include that men must wear clothes that cover their entire bodies, and such clothes must not be thin or tight or expose any part of the body. Similarly, women must follow the same pattern but also cover their hair (and in some Islamic schools their faces too). Therefore, Hijab (which means cover) has different interpretations by Muslims depending on their culture.

Most Muslim women today wear Hijab in different ways, e.g. (covering hair and neck only (Hijab), covering head, neck and face (Burka), and covering head, neck and face except eyes (Niqab)). In Saudi Arabia, the most popular form of Hijab is Niqab which has been widely accepted as the true form of Hijab. However, in some areas, especially with large immigration and multi-cultural backgrounds such as Makkah, Jeddah and Madina, Hijab (hair and neck scarf) are popular among women. Most women in Saudi Arabia also wear Abaya (a long robe mostly in black) to cover the body from top to toe.

According to the official Saudi tourism website, most Saudi men wear Ghutra and Shemagh (traditional Arab headdress normally red and white or entirely white) and a long white robe, known as Thawb, which is considered as the national dress. While women normally wear different clothes and do not have a national dress, they mostly cover their clothes with Abaya in places where men are present. These clothes meet with the Islamic dress code that requires modesty for both men and women and have been used for centuries. However, the national dress for men is mostly used at work and social events and gatherings, e.g. weddings. Generally, men have fewer restrictions on what they wear in public, and the majority of the younger generation wear western designs.

2.4 Social Structure

Saudi Arabia is a tribal country where most people belong to specific tribes. Also, people who do not belong to tribes normally live in an extended family system. A tribe is a social system that involves many people that share roots and backgrounds. Some tribes are large to include an extended list of clans (a smaller form of tribes) and normally all tribe/clan members share the same last name. Similarly, with extended families, members of the family normally have the same surname.

The official naming system in Saudi Arabia follows the tribal norm that is widely accepted in most GCC countries where people use five names, including the person's first name, their father's name, grandfather, extended family/clan and finally tribe's name. This makes it easy for people to identify each other and tell to which tribe a person belongs. Some tribes extend over multiple regions and include thousands of members. The tribe's name makes it easy to identify where an individual comes from and reach their relatives.

Before the foundation of Saudi Arabia, the tribal naming system was considered to provide protection and support for tribes' members. It remains today and provides support for some people and is also a motive for some negative practices such as nepotism in services and employment (Aldraehim *et al.*, 2012). In a tribal society, members of the tribe have a strong

commitment towards other tribe members. Therefore, people bear the responsibility to protect their tribes' names, provide support to their members and aim to represent their tribes in a good manner based on social norms. For example, the hospitality of guests is normally exaggerated to show off good conduct that valorises a person's name and their relatives, extended family and tribe.

As a result, people avoid any negatively perceived conduct to avoid social criticisms. Nonetheless, although many people today are less tribally connected especially in large and metropolitan cities such as Jeddah, Makkah, Riyadh, Madina and Dammam, the majority of people in Saudi Arabia pay attention to social criticisms as one person's action can influence their extended family's reputation. The weakening of tribal links may explain why more women in large cities do not wear Niqab compared to smaller towns. In the latter, it is easier to identify people, as it is considered against the norm for a woman to show her face.

2.4.1 Gender Segregation

The social structure of Saudi society allows an authority to protect social norms and control individuals' behaviours. One of the key aspects of Saudi culture is its gender segregation, something that is socially accepted as a suitable lifestyle that fits the culture. For example, in 1960, when female education was introduced, the majority of society refused it (Yizraeli, 2012). However, with the assurance from the government that female education will meet religious and cultural requirements, the society gradually accepted it (Hamdan, 2005). Among those cultural principles that the government assured it would protect is gender segregation.

Thus, Saudi Arabia remains a gender-segregated society and segregation influences all aspects of life, e.g. education, government organisations, business and commerce, entertainment and many other sectors of the country. Education is gender-segregated from primary schools to universities. Most restaurants in Saudi Arabia have special seating sections for men only and other sections for females and families only. Unaccompanied men are not

allowed into female or family areas. Most government organisations also have specific areas for females.

However, recently, gender segregation rules have begun to ease slightly in some places. For example, some universities have started mixed-gender education classes, especially in fields such as medicine, nursing and other medical studies. Moreover, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) have a mixed-gender policy in most of its departments. Similarly, some private higher education institutes have mixed-gender classes. Moreover, in the past few years, several initiatives have been taken to ease the restrictions on single men using shopping malls.

Despite these changes, the social norms of Saudi Arabia make it difficult for non-related men and women to communicate with each other except in specific circumstances. Also, several women cover their faces and mostly refuse to be seen by non-related men, while men also do not like other men see their female relatives' faces. Therefore, placing the gender segregation rule in government organisations, coffee shops, restaurants and entertainment places allows women more freedom to wear what they like, uncover their faces and remove Abayas, as they can enjoy a larger space of privacy away from men.

The gender segregation rules in the Saudi society influence the leisure activities of both men and women as men get limited access to entertainment, and women are not able to enjoy their time with male relatives around. It also influenced the conduct of the current research as specific adaptations have been made to reach and interview female participants. Therefore, gender segregation is an important element of the current research.

2.5 The Economy of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is among the largest 20 economies in the world, with a GDP of US\$ 782.5 billion (Aleqtisadiah, 2019b). Since the first commercial exploitation of oil in 1938, Saudi Arabia has seen major economic progress. Today, Saudi Arabia is a G20 member and its economy is ranked 16th worldwide (Aleqtisadiah, 2019b). It is the world's largest oil exporter, and the

majority of the country's exports are oil-based. According to KPMG (2018), oil revenues represented 68% of total revenues in Saudi Arabia and nearly 80% of export earnings. Therefore, the Saudi economy has been largely dependent on oil production and export.

However, in recent years plans have been made to diversify the economy of Saudi Arabia. The Ministry of Economy and Planning (2010) launched the ninth development plan for the period from 2010 to 2014, which included a plan to increase non-oil exports by 10% by the end of the period. As a result, non-oil exports increased from US\$ 32 billion in 2014 to US\$ 57 billion in 2015 (Alhejiri, 2017). In 2014, the tenth development plan was launched for the period from 2015 to 2019. This plan outlined a number of sectors that would be the focus of the development to achieve economic diversity. Sectors targeted included investment, industrial and service sectors. Moreover, the plan outlined tourism and heritage as key sectors to develop. However, in 2016 this plan was replaced by the Saudi Vision 2030.

2.5.1 The Saudi Vision 2030

Saudi Vision 2030 aims to make use of the country's economic, religious and strategic strengths to reduce the country's dependence on oil, diversify the economy and improve the country's status domestically, regionally and internationally. Vision 2030 has three main themes:

- A vibrant society focused on urbanisation, culture and entertainment, sports, religious visits (Umrah and Hajj) and improving life expectancy.
- A thriving economy focused on employment, female participation in the workforce, international competitiveness, attracting foreign investment, enhancing the private sector and non-oil exports.
- An ambitious nation focused on non-oil revenues, improving government effectiveness, e-government services, and non-profit and volunteering sector development.

Tourism and entertainment are identified as key sectors for development in vision 2030. As a result, over the past four years, a number of projects and initiatives were launched. These

initiatives led to a major transformation in tourism services. The National Transformation Plan 2020's objectives (part of Vision 2030) aims to invest a total of US\$ 45.7 billion in the Saudi tourism sector (Al Yousif and Al Bakr, 2017). These investments are expected to increase the contribution of tourism to the country's GDP and create new employment opportunities. The Saudi Minister of Tourism noted that the plan is to increase tourism contribution to GDP from 3% to 10% in 2030 (Aleqtisadiah, 2019a).

2.5.2 Tourism in Saudi Arabia

Traditionally, Saudi Arabia has been a popular destination for religious tourism. However, although other forms of tourism were practised by domestic tourists, e.g. leisure, medical, cultural, and business tourism, the first strategic steps towards tourism development began in 2000 when the Supreme Commission for Tourism (SCT) was established (changed later to Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage SCTH).

In 2020, a royal decree by King Salman established the Ministry of Tourism (SMT) to replace the SCTH. SMT was tasked with developing the tourism industry of Saudi Arabia and serve as the National Tourism Organisation (NTO) of the country. Also, in 2020, the Saudi Tourism Authority (STA) and the Tourism Development Fund (TDF) were established to help market, promote, and develop tourism in the country. Both STA and TDF are organisationally affiliated with SMT where the minister of tourism is their chairman.

In advance of the publication of Vision 2030, the General Entertainment Authority (GEA) was established and tasked with the development of entertainment events and promoting event tourism in Saudi Arabia. Since then, there have been major developments in resources, destinations, products and services for the tourism sector. In 2018 the GEA launched the first form of tourist visa (Sharek visa) for nationals of other countries who want to attend concerts, events and other entertainment activities in Saudi Arabia. Issued electronically, the visa represented a major opening up of Saudi Arabia, allowing its holders to attend selected entertainment events as well as remain in the country for up to 30 days. According to the

General Director of one event, the number of Sharek visas issued for Jeddah Season exceeded 7000. The success of the Sharek visa motivated the government to launch its first full tourist visa in 2019.

Despite the development of international visas, the main target for the development of Saudi tourism is to grow the domestic market. The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia (President of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs) states that one of the aims of the 2020's National Transformation Plan is to persuade Saudi tourists to spend their holidays domestically (SaudiTV, 2017). Therefore, several initiatives have been launched to achieve this goal, e.g. increasing investment in the tourism sector, developing tourist resorts and entertainment projects, developing cultural tourism sites and museums, and increasing the number of entertainment events. Yet, despite these initiatives, Saudi tourists continue to prefer outbound over domestic tourism.

Most outbound Saudi tourists seek countries that provide novel natural environment. Alhamdi (2019) noted that Saudi tourists seek destinations with cool climates, tasty food, a diverse range of leisure activities and inexpensive holidays. Turkey has become an important destination with the number of Saudi tourists increasing from 56,000 in 2008 to 676,233 in 2018, and their spending increasing from US\$ 185 million to US\$ 2.4 billion (Alraqib, 2019). Other popular destinations for Saudi travellers include East Asian and European countries. The key characteristics shared among these destinations are their green nature and cooler climate compared to Saudi Arabia.

Also, neighbouring countries are popular, accounting for 48% of outbound tourist trips (Aleqtisadiyah, 2018). The general perspective among Saudis is that GCC countries are places that share many similarities with Saudi Arabia in terms of culture but with fewer restrictions on mixed-gender activities, cross-gender communication and religiously restricted and forbidden practices. Metwally (2004) noted that many entertainment services and activities that Dubai and Bahrain provided were not available in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, by providing such services, these destinations aim to attract many tourists from Saudi Arabia.

The current research seeks to explore the holiday choices of outbound Saudi tourists and understand their motives for travel. It aims to understand why Saudi tourists prefer to spend their holidays in outbound destinations, including countries that share many similarities with Saudi Arabia, e.g. culture and the natural environment. However, to build the research on a theoretical understanding of the problem, it is important first to review and analyse the tourism literature on holiday choices of tourists and understand the role of different factors on them.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on reviewing the academic research that has been published on topics that the current research aims to explore. Specifically, the review will include research conducted on the decision-making process of tourists, motives for outbound travel and the role of culture on tourist choices. Moreover, the review will also embrace research on the role of social media and the role of women on tourist destination selection.

Several authors have researched the tourist decision-making process and concluded that a wide range of factors influences final destination choice (Cai *et al.*, 2015; Nicoletta and Servidio, 2012). These include tourist-related factors, i.e. social (e.g. family and friends), psychological factors (e.g. feelings and mood), and personal factors (e.g. preferences and interests). Moreover, general marketing studies considered gender, level of education and other demographic attributes of individuals such as age and marital status as factors that influence consumer decisions (Blackwell, Miniard and Engel, 2006; Chong, Chan and Ooi, 2012; Rani, 2014; Wang *et al.*, 2004). Other factors that influence tourist choices include the attributes of the destination, e.g. its image, attractions, natural environment, location and culture (Chen and Chen, 2015; Mittal, 2013). These factors mainly influence the selection of destinations.

These factors guide the current research in its focus on the holiday motives of Saudi tourists and help understand the reasons for their travel. They also help the research consider the relationship between the characteristics of tourists, the characteristics of destinations and the motives for travel and destination choice. For example, Prayag and Ryan (2011) found nationality to be a determining variable for destination choice through push factors. Moreover, nationality was found in other research to influence the structure of the destination image and hence its pull attributes (Beerli and Martín, 2004; Kozak, 2002). This suggests that the holiday

decision-making process differs depending on the tourists' nationalities and cultural backgrounds (Kozak *et al.*, 2003).

3.2 The Decision-Making Process

Research about decision-making has been the focus of studies from various social science disciplines. The ultimate goal of these studies was to understand how individuals made their decisions and what factors influenced the process. In marketing, the earliest and most influential studies to understand buyers' decision-making process were those referred to in research as grand models of consumer behaviour, i.e. (Nicosia, 1966; Engel, Kollat and Blackwell, 1968; Howard and Sheth, 1969) as they formed the foundations of consumer behaviour studies (Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005). Early tourism research adopted grand models to explain tourist purchase behaviour. Therefore, grand models have shaped research on tourists decision-making.

Tourists select their destinations for several reasons; a tourist may be interested in exploring the culture, the wildlife or a specific attraction. Sirakaya and Woodside (2005) mentioned that literature on tourist decision-making has generally followed two main approaches: the behavioural approach and the choice-set approach. They concluded that studies which followed the behavioural approach were heavily dependent on grand models which viewed holiday destination selection as a process with multiple stages. The most cited model among these studies was that created by Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (1968), which divided the purchase decision process into five stages: 1) need recognition, 2) search for information, 3) evaluation of options, 4) actual purchase, and 5) post-purchase evaluation.

In the choice-set approach, studies accepted the assumptions of the behavioural approach. However, according to Saito and Strehlau (2018), the choice-set approach provided a more simplistic and practical explanation of the selection process. Based on Spiggle and Sewall (1987), the decision in the choice-set model is formed of a series of transitions where tourists start the process with a list of potential destinations. These destinations are normally recalled from memories and awareness generated by reading, media watching and word of mouth.

Then, decision-makers will narrow their list of choices to select the destination that best fit their needs. As in the case of behavioural studies, the process of destination selection is influenced by internal and external factors. For Um and Crompton (1990), the process of narrowing the shortlist of choices was formed of two phases. In the first phase, external factors influenced the mental construction of the tourists' potential shortlist of destinations. In the second phase, the internal factors worked to make the final decision from the remaining set of destinations.

However, the over-dependence on grand models in the studies that followed the behavioural approach has drawn many criticisms. Grand models have been primarily designed to explain the consumer decision-making process in markets with traditional tangible products. The tourism industry is characterised by intangible products, i.e. services and experiences. Also, tourism products and services are generally associated with high costs and mostly purchased through savings made over a long time. Therefore, researchers questioned the applicability of grand models in the tourism industry, where the process is more complex (Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005).

Gilbert (1991) explained that grand models shared six similarities: (1) their view that consumer behaviour is a constant decision-making process; (2) the behaviour of consumers is emphasised; (3) behaviour is a functional process that can be explained; (4) buyers are individuals who search, evaluate and store information; (5) buyers narrow their range of information search in time and select from alternatives options they have developed throughout the decision-making process; (6) evaluation of decision post-purchase. Hence, they view the decision to be a simple multi-stages process.

Based on these assumptions, it can be argued that the use of grand models to explain tourists' decision-making process may be of limited applicability. Hyde and Lawson (2003) believed that the unique context in which holiday decisions are made lies at the core of the complexity of tourist consumer behaviour. For example, products and services included in holidays cannot be tested or returned as they are intangible. Also, normally there are multiple actors involved in the decision-making process, e.g. family members, friends. Moreover, several social and

cultural variables may influence the decision-making process. This is particularly important as tourism is an international phenomenon that is influenced by various socio-cultural elements.

Rani (2014) outlined that socio-cultural factors play a critical role in tourist consumer behaviour as they influence needs and wants. The influence varies from one country to another, and therefore, tourism marketers need to consider socio-cultural aspects when studying consumer behaviour in different tourism contexts. For example, in China, customers may prefer to buy a cup of coffee for \$8 over buying the same cup of coffee from another shop for \$4, simply because in the Chinese culture number 4 is an unlucky number while number 8 is a lucky number (Kramer and Block, 2007). This has implications for the decision-making process performed by different tourists.

Similarly, destination selection may also be influenced by the socio-cultural background of tourists. Seddighi and Theocharous (2002) criticised existing literature for its dependence on “econometric models which follow a single-equation time-series approach” (p. 475). They noted that previous research generally ignored the characteristics of the tourism product and attitude of tourists. Previous research also tends to treat the destination as separate from the products and services that tourists consume during their holidays, and this is rarely the case in real life. Hence, tourists’ attitude towards the characteristics of the destination, including its attractions, services and products may be critical to the destination selection process. This suggests that when tourists consider a destination for a visit, they consider its attributes. Therefore, in the current research, the focus will be on why Saudi tourists prefer outbound destinations over domestic ones. This focus will help explain what Saudi tourists seek and what domestic destinations need to offer to attract them.

In the original works of Lancaster (1966); (1971) the theory of characteristics demand was introduced to oppose the traditional demand theory. Papatheodorou (2001) noted three drawbacks of the traditional demand theory that would limit its application to tourism context:

- (1) It was unrealistic, as it assumed that tourists would visit all destinations they consider. In tourism, consumer heterogeneity is fundamental, and all marketing efforts are made to discover the diverse behaviours of different consumer segments.
- (2) It was inapplicable, as the traditional demand theory did not consider the evolutionary features of the tourism industry, especially the continuous rise of new destinations and the fall of others.
- (3) The theory could only function within a competitive business environment in which producers are incapable of controlling their prices and their consumer flow.

Hence, the characteristics demand theory state that individuals derive utility not from the products themselves but their characteristics. Based on this theory, consumer choices change once the characteristics of the product change. For instance, in the tourism context, this means that tourists do not select destinations for their own sake, but rather for their characteristics which include all cultural, natural and other attributes of the destination. This adds to the complexity of tourist decision-making process and leads to continuous change in their behaviour towards destinations. Therefore, it is important in the current research to explore what natural and cultural attributes of destinations Saudi tourists seek in their outbound travel.

3.2.1 Psychographic Personality Model

One of the first theories that studied the destination choice behaviour among tourists was the Psychographic Personality Model. It was first published in a conference in 1972 but gained popularity in (1974) when it was published as a journal article (Cruz-Milán, 2017). The model was revisited and updated in Plog (2001). The purpose of the model was to answer the question 'why destinations rise and fall in popularity' and focussed on explaining tourist destination selection from a psychological perspective. The model identified three main personalities for tourists, i.e. psychocentrics, midcentrics and allocentrics (see figure, 7).

The travel patterns of these tourists differed depending on their personalities and hence their choice of destinations. The model implied that psychocentric tourists are normally less risk-

taking, prefer structured and routine lifestyles, and like to be around people they know and trust. i.e. families and friends. Hence, their choice is normally focused on familiar destinations that are attractive to a high volume of tourists. In contrast, allocentric tourists are normally curious and explorer in their nature. Therefore, their choice of destinations is normally focused on high levels of novelty, and their travel planning is mostly less structured. In between these two categories are the mid-centric tourists whom choices are in the middle between psychocentrics and allocentrics, e.g. visiting destinations that are past the stage of discovery but still not popular among tourists (Kim, Yilmaz and Choe, 2019)

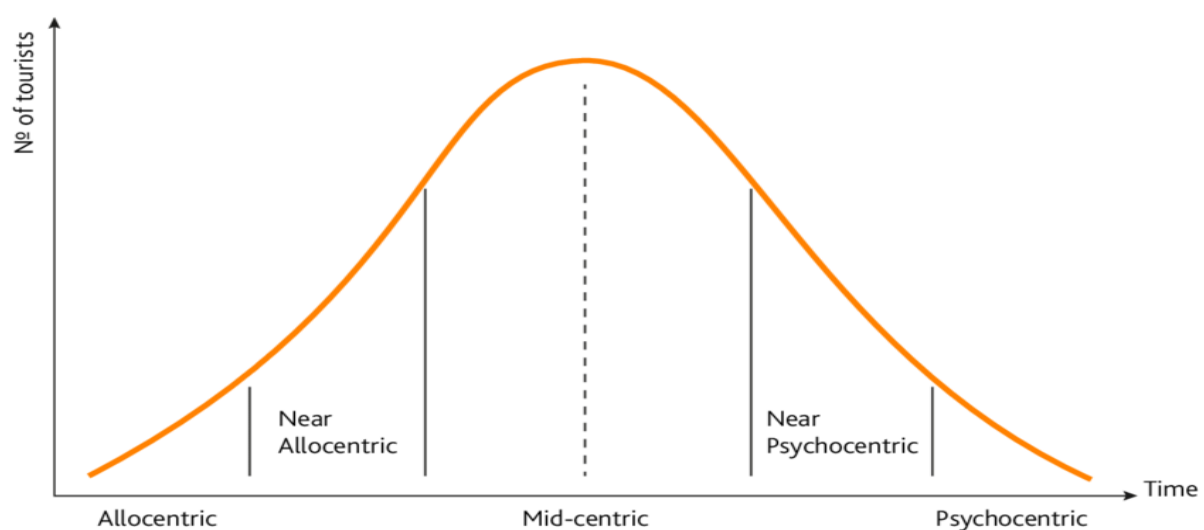


Figure 7. Plog's Psychographic Personality Model (Piuchan, 2018).

In the study, Plog (2001) provided a list of destinations and classified them based on how psychocentric, mid-centric or allocentric they were from the perspective of American tourists. For example, the study suggests that Atlantic City, Orlando and Mexico are psychocentric destinations; Brazil and England's are mid-centric; Africa, China and Alaskan Wilderness are allocentric destinations.

Several researchers have tested the model proposed by Plog (2001) and found it consistent in predicting tourist choices of destinations (Nickerson and Ellis, 1991; Griffith and Albanese, 1996). More recently, Weaver (2012) also found that the model provides a good predictive measure for tourist behaviour towards destinations choice. However, the latter focused only

on those who had more adventurous personality types. Although the findings supported the model, it suggested that its dimensions (allocentric 'venturers' and psychocentric 'dependable') need to be re-defined as visitors to the forest, despite falling into the same category, showed variant venturesome characteristics.

Similarly, Jeon, Ok and Choi (2018) found the model to be useful in predicting tourist behavioural intentions in relation to online search for information. The study suggested that different categories of tourists will respond favourably to different features in DMOs' websites, e.g. allocentrics require more information while psychocentrics require interactivity. However, despite its wide use in tourism literature, the model received several criticisms.

McKercher (2006) noted that the model was not primarily developed to understand tourist behaviour but to understand the lifecycle of tourist destinations. Litvin (2006) presented some of the criticisms the model received: (1) despite being highly cited, it only received limited independent empirical testing; (2) its inability to consider the different travel motivations of tourists in different occasions; (3) its inability to account for the external forces that may change selection behaviour among tourists, e.g. financial reasons; (4) its inability to consider the complex nature of tourist behaviour as it is not always possible to classify tourists according to single simple category; (5) the theory was developed based on U.S. samples and may not work in another context.

Similarly, McKercher (2006) argued that if the study was conducted in a different location, it would have provided completely different results. This argument supports the critique in the current research that findings based on studies conducted on tourists from specific cultures may be less transferable to explaining the behaviour of tourists from other cultures, e.g. Saudi tourists.

3.2.2 Push and Pull Model

Motivation can be defined as the cause of behaviour and action. It is "a state of need, a condition that exerts a 'push' on the individual towards certain types of actions that are seen

as likely to bring satisfaction” (Moutinho, 1987 p. 16). One of the key questions that tourism researchers aim to answer is why tourists select a specific destination. Answering this question helps marketers create segments of tourists based on their motives for travel and the factors that influence their destination choices (Smallman and Moore, 2010). Among the earliest attempts to understand holiday destination choice was the work of Dann (1977) which argued that two groups of motives influence tourist decisions: push and pull factors.

Push factors refer to the motives that lead tourists to the decision to travel, while pull factors are those that lead tourists to choose a specific destination (Goossens, 2000). In other words, push factors are tourists-specific motives that form internally and are driven by psychological and personal forces. Pull factors, however, are destination-specific motives that form externally and are driven by destination characteristics, its attractions and marketing messages. According to Klenosky (2002), the decision to travel is a process that includes two separate stages, travel intention and the stage of destination selection.

A review of the push and pull factors in tourism literature suggested that the factors differ from one tourist to another and from one destination to another (Pesonen *et al.*, 2011). On the one hand, push factors include seeking knowledge and education, prestige enhancement, novelty, relaxation, and enhancement of family relations. On the other hand, pull factors include destination attributes such as attractions, cultural aspects, nature and landscapes, service quality. The list of factors, however, is not limited, and several more can be identified by different tourists and for different destinations (Gallarza, Saura and García, 2002).

Using the Push and Pull framework, Yuan and McDonald (1990) studied travel motivation among tourists from four different countries (the UK, France, Japan and West Germany). They found major culturally driven variations between their study participants. The study identified five key push motives shared among the participants: novelty seeking, prestige enhancement, escaping routine life, enhancing family relations and relaxations. The study also identified seven pull motives: culture and history, nature, ease of access, cosmopolitan environment, budget, facilities and hunting. However, it concludes that although respondents may share

similar push motives to travel, the reasons for choosing their holiday destination can be different.

The differences between tourists in their push and pull motives is the results of multiple variables. First, tourists are naturally heterogeneous and, hence, every tourist can be different (Seddighi and Theocharous, 2002); second, their cultural background may influence their choices; and third, socio-demographic variables, e.g. age, occupation, gender and income, are also likely to play a role (Kim, Lee and Klenosky, 2003). Therefore, the current research seeks to explore the holiday motives of Saudi tourists and understand how different they are from tourists that previous research considered. This is important for both research and practice focused on Saudi tourists. It is also important as it guides the current research on the different variables that can influence the tourist decision-making process of Saudi tourists.

3.2.3 Iso- Ahola's Model

Iso-Ahola (1982) used the push and pull framework to develop the two-dimensional tourist motivation model. The theory suggests that tourist decisions are influenced by two key motivational forces: escaping and seeking. Tourists at the escaping phase will be motivated by the feeling and the desire to escape their current environment and routine life. They later move onto the seeking phase in which they aim to satisfy their desires by travelling to a place where they feel psychologically rewarded. Snepenger *et al.* (2006) believed that both dimensions, seeking and escaping, are interrelated and influenced by internal and external forces.

Similarly, Jamal and Lee (2003) classified forces that influence tourist motivations into micro and macro factors. They found that the macro factors are the external forces that result from social forces, while micro factors are internal psychological forces. In their study, they suggested that both micro and macro forces motivate people to travel. This is in line with Iso-Ahola (1990), who explained that both seeking and escaping motives have personal (psychological) and interpersonal (social) components.

Several studies agree with these assumptions, e.g. (Hsu, Cai and Wong, 2007; Norman and Carlson, 1999; Wolfe and Hsu, 2004). Also, Lazarus (1991) considered the escape-seeking motivation model and found that motivation is both a psychological feature that results from individuals seeking to achieve certain goals and a reaction to certain environmental conditions. Snepenger *et al.* (2006) also examined Iso-Ahola's theory of motivation. In their study, they created eight hypothetical scenarios of tourism and recreation experiences based on Iso-Ahola model. They tested them in three separate investigations: testing the structure of the theory, assessing the similarities and differences in motivation accruing from tourism experiences, and studying the statistical linkage between the number of recent personal travel experiences and motivation.

Snepenger *et al.* (2006)'s study findings agreed with the assumptions provided in (Iso-Ahola, 1980; 1982) and later studies that used the model. However, Snepenger *et al.* (2006)'s research was limited in two ways. First, the sample of the study was limited to a student population of similar age and socio-demographic characteristics. This has implications to the generalisability of the findings and its applicability to other populations. Second, the eight hypothetical scenarios included only four forms of tourism activities, i.e. beaches, national parks, amusement parks and sporting events. Therefore, their study was limited in its scope, and the gap in knowledge related to holiday motives of tourists from other cultures remains in place.

More specifically, these studies were limited in their applicability to tourists from Saudi Arabia, which the current research considers. Nonetheless, although this research does not aim to test the Iso-Ahola (1980) model on tourists from Saudi Arabia, it uses the two dimensions provided in the model, i.e. 'seeking and escaping', to categorise the motives for travel among the participants of the research.

3.2.4 Information Processing and Touring Planning Theory

Hyde (2008) focused on pre-vacation decision-making proposing the information processing and touring planning theory. The model illustrates three distinct but interrelated phases of vacation decision-making, i.e., information search, vacation planning and vacation booking. The study gives special consideration to the role of information in holiday planning. Unlike many theories concerning tourists decision-making process, which view search for information as a step within the decision-making process, Hyde (2008) viewed information search as a continuous activity that is embedded throughout the process of holiday planning. Hyde (2009) identified number of information sources that tourists used in different stages when planning a holiday, e.g. advertisements, word of mouth, travel agents, brochures, articles and reports about destinations, television and movies, guidebooks, and the internet.

Although the study has received a substantial number of citations, the model received limited empirical testing from researchers on tourist decision-making behaviour. A possible explanation for this limited consideration of the model is that many scholars view information search behaviour as a heterogeneous activity that differs among different tourist segments (Ho, Lin and Chen, 2012; Sun, Law and Luk, 2020). Another explanation can be related to the major changes in information search behaviour since the publication of the model, resulting from the rise of online sources of information, whereas the model gave limited attention to these sources.

Nevertheless, despite these drawbacks, and although the current research does not aim to test the model, Hyde (2008) informs the current research through its view that information search is a continuous activity rather than a step within the decision-making process. This is important, as with the continuous development in social networking platforms, they have become important sources for information for many tourists. These platforms influence tourists by motivating them to travel, offering information to help the decision-making process, helping them communicate with experts in travel to learn from their experiences and help with holiday planning and bookings. (Fotis, Buhalis and Rossides, 2012; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014;

Sotiriadis, 2017). Therefore, in the current research, information search is not viewed as a step in the decision-making process but an activity that begins before the holiday planning stage and continues throughout the process. This makes it important for the current research to investigate such role of social media in holiday choices.

3.3 Motives for Travel

Early tourism research has attempted to examine tourist behaviour and motivation ultimately to understand why tourists travel and what influences their choices (Cohen, 1972; Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979; Iso-Ahola, 1980). Later research expanded on these foundational theories in various settings and outlined several motives. Researchers divide travel motives into two broad categories, i.e. push/escaping and pull/seeking motives. Push/escaping motives are the stimuli that motivate tourists to travel while pull/seeking motives are the stimuli that motivate tourists to select the destination to which they travel. To expand on these categories, researchers noted that each motive, regardless of the category, stems from both personal and social factors.

Moreover, although these motives exist in both domestic and outbound travel, researchers have noted that some motives are stronger among specific groups than others. Also, some motives can function as both push/escaping and pull/seeking. In the current research, the Iso-Ahola escaping and seeking model will be used to describe and classify motives that previous research has identified.

To achieve consistency, the same categories will be used in the research findings and discussions. The two dimensions provided in the Iso-Ahola (1980) model have shown effectiveness in many studies that used them. Moreover, the terminologies used in the model help to describe the various motives for leisure travel. Therefore, the current research uses them to describe the motives for holidays among the participants of the research.

In previous research, some studies focused solely on escaping motives (Chiang and Jogaratnam, 2006; Kim, Oh and Jogaratnam, 2007) while others focused on both seeking and

escaping motives (Kim, Lee and Klenosky, 2003; Kim Lian Chan and Baum, 2007; Mohammad and Som, 2010; Kassean and Gassita, 2013). Furthermore, other studies focused on examining the relationship between seeking and escaping motives (Correia, do Valle and Moço, 2007; Kim and Lee, 2002). In many cases, tourists were found to share some of the travel motives, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, e.g. routine escape and novelty seeking. The following sub-sections will review the most common escape and seeking motives related to findings of the current research.

3.3.1 Escaping Routine Environment

Tourism research defines the escape motive as the individual's desire to leave their usual environment for the sake of relaxations from routine and responsibilities (Crompton, 1979; Crandall, 1980; Beard and Ragheb, 1983; Yuan and McDonald, 1990). Typically, the escape motive is viewed to be the cause of the desire to travel. Tourists may be escaping their work pressure, social life, urban lifestyle, their usual natural environment or any other component of their routine environment (Smith, 1993; Jamrozy and Uysal, 1994; Jang and Cai, 2002; Jönsson and Devonish, 2008). According to Crompton (1979), the importance of the escape motive comes from the differences between home and the tourist destination, which allows people to feel mentally free from daily stress.

The escape motives differ between individuals and societies. For example, a person with an extreme workload may be primarily motivated to travel to escape their work while a person with social commitments will be motivated to escape such responsibilities. Similarly, in countries where the weather is rainy or cold, dry or hot, people may be primarily motivated to travel to escape their usual weather (Kozak, 2002; Jang and Cai, 2002). Nonetheless, although the escape motives are viewed to cause the desire to travel, they also influence the choices that tourists make during the decision-making process. For example, if the escape motive is related to the natural environment, the decision-making process will be focused on choices that satisfy this escape motive. Hence, the choices of destination, accommodation,

activities and services at the destination are normally dictated by the type of the escape motive.

This research will explore the various escape motives among a sample of participants from Saudi Arabia. With the dramatic rise in outbound holidays from Saudi Arabia, it is important to understand what motivates Saudi tourists to spend their holidays in outbound destinations. As one of the most commonly shared holiday motives, it is anticipated that escaping routine environment is one of the main travel motives for Saudi tourists. Moreover, this escape motive is normally associated with the novelty-seeking motive (Crompton and McKay, 1997).

3.3.2 Seeking Novelty

The seeking motive in the current research refers to the attributes of the destination that influence their selection among tourists. One of the most commonly shared seeking motives among tourists is the desire to experience novelty (Chang and Hui Chiang, 2006). People travel to escape their routine environment and seek novelty of place, lifestyle, culture and weather. However, Hutt (1970) argued that perceptions of novelty differ based on their sources. Therefore, a place, activity or an object that is considered novel by some tourists may not be perceived similarly by others.

However, Lee and Crompton (1992) noted that an extremely novel destination might discourage tourists from exploration. Therefore, researchers found that destinations rise and fall in popularity among tourists as a result of the perception of their novelty and familiarity (McKercher, 2006). This is because of tourists with low novelty-seeking behaviour associate novelty with risk. In other words, unadventurous tourists normally prefer to travel to places in which they can communicate, and their culture is understood.

Furthermore, a higher level of novelty seeking among tourists will normally result in lower intention to revisit in the future (Assaker, Vinzi and O'Connor, 2011). This suggests that tourists repeating visits to certain destinations are normally low novelty seekers. This is

important for the current research as it will help to explain the holiday choices of Saudi tourists and why specific destinations are popular amongst them.

3.3.3 Seeking Prestige

Tourism research defines seeking prestige as a motive for travel that aims to achieve a high standing in the eyes of other people (Crompton and McKay, 1997). According to Riley (1995) prestige can be achieved through two forms of behaviour: visiting attractions, destination and engaging in activities that are still not popular among other tourists, to secure a first position (Kerr, Lewis and Burgess, 2012); and showing knowledge, skills and abilities to others in the society (Belk, Tian and Paavola, 2010; Ferguson, 2011b). Researchers found that such behaviour has increased among tourists, especially with the widespread of social networking sites and apps (Singh and Srivastava, 2019).

According to Liu, Wu and Li (2019), the desire to achieve prestige transfers to other people as they watch acquaintances and friends share their experiences. Therefore, Kerr, Lewis and Burgess (2012) suggested a relationship between seeking prestige behaviour and destination choice. In their research, they argued that the level of prestige believed to be gained from a destination influence the decision to visit it. Moreover, Mehmetoglu and Normann (2013) believed that prestige seeking also influences the type of activities that tourists engage in when they are at the destination.

Several cross-cultural studies suggest that seeking prestige is a common motive among collectivist societies as people tend to seek social approval (Shukla and Purani, 2012; Nayeem, 2012; Aliyev and Wagner, 2018). This suggests that in a society like Saudi Arabia, which is characterised by its tribal structure and extended families, prestige enhancement is a key factor that influences both the desire for travel and the destination choice. The current research will explore how this prestige influences the choices of Saudi tourists and whether it influences their preference for outbound holidays.

3.3.4 Seeking Natural Resources

Travelling to enjoy a novel natural environment is one of the most common travel motives among tourists. In this form of tourism, people seek to travel to enjoy components of the natural environment such as wildlife, eco-sites, protected natural areas such as national parks and forests., deserts, mountains, rivers, beaches. It also includes travelling to enjoy nice and novel weathers, e.g. warmth, coolness, snow. (Kim and Jogaratnam, 2003; Awaritefe, 2004; Førlund *et al.*, 2013; Kuenzi and McNeely, 2008).

Travelling to enjoy natural resources is common among all type of tourists. However, according to Uysal and Jurowski (1994), the desire to engage in nature-based activities increases among tourists motivated by their escape motives. Because enjoying the natural environment is mostly associated with the need for relaxation, most people seeking these kinds of activities are those who travel to escape the pressure of their work and daily routines. Nonetheless, other nature-based activities such as beach holidays can also be driven by other motives, e.g. seeking pleasure and fun (Xu, Morgan and Song, 2009).

3.3.5 Deviant Behaviour

Tourism and hospitality have been associated with behaviour considered by many societies as deviant (Lugosi, 2019). According to Harrison and Lugosi (2013) and Lugosi (2019) in the tourism context, deviant behaviour is mostly motivated by tourists' spatial-temporal distinction from their usual environment where society limits their ability to break social norms. However, as they are away from their society, they feel liberated from their social norms and hence, tend to break them.

However, deviant behaviour perceptions vary from one society to another and hence what is considered deviant in some countries may not be considered so in others (Clinard and Meier, 2015). As a result, although tourism research has produced much research on tourists behaviour in general, only limited research focused on deviant behaviour by tourists. However, in recent years some tourism researchers investigate deviant behaviour across different

categories of tourists (Uriely, Ram and Malach-Pines, 2011; Li and Chen, 2017; Li and Chen, 2019; Lugosi, 2019).

Based on the discussion provided in these studies, tourists' deviant behaviour can be defined as "behaviours that are against the law or regulations or that violate the generally accepted norms of conduct" (Dootson *et al.*, 2016 p. 751). This definition suggests that deviant behaviour includes all practices by tourists that are against the law or the norms of the host destination as well as all practices by tourists that contradict with the law and norms of their countries of origin. Therefore, deviant behaviour may include practices such as consuming drugs, alcohol, sex purchase and prostitution, shoplifting, vandalism, practices that disrespect local communities and cultures.

Tourism research has acknowledged that culture plays a critical role in both the seeking and escaping motives. However, to date, limited or no research has been published on deviant behaviour by Muslim tourists. Therefore, it is in the interest of the current research to explore whether social and religious norms motivate Saudi tourists for outbound travel and influence their destination choices. This is particularly important because it will explain the role of social and cultural norms in the holiday choices of Saudis.

3.4 The Role of Culture in Tourists' Choices

As "manifested in behaviours" (Hofstede and McCrae, 2004 p. 58) of people in general, culture influence tourists in all stages of their decision-making process as well as their holiday experience. Therefore, culture lies at the heart of tourism and marketing literature (Craig and Douglas, 2006). There is no universally accepted definition of culture. Nevertheless, some definitions have gained more traction than others in tourism literature. Hofstede viewed culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes one group or category of people from another" (Hofstede and McCrae, 2004 p.58). Linton (1945) described culture as "the configuration of learned behaviour and results of behaviour whose component elements are

shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society” cited in (Ng, Lee and Soutar, 2007 p. 1499).

Almost all definitions of culture accept that it is comprised of shared behaviour and meanings among a group or a category of people (Chaminade and Johanson, 2003; Smith, Peterson and Schwartz, 2002). For Correia, Kozak and Ferradeira (2011), culture is constructed of several elements which include religion, language, heritage and values. These cultural elements influence the way in which people perceive and evaluate information about potential travel opportunities and, hence, their choices (Foscht *et al.*, 2008).

The influence of cultural elements varies according to the characteristics of the individual, the culture they come from and the nature of their social interactions. Willer (2006) found that consumer behaviour is not only influenced by social, political and economic circumstances but is also influenced by cultural aspects of the consumers’ environment. Religion is one of the most influential cultural elements of societies and plays a key role in individuals’ behaviour (Abu-Alhaija *et al.*, 2018). However, although religion is a key element of cultures and researchers have noted its importance in consumer behaviour, only a few studies have referenced religion in the field of tourism (Poria, Butler and Airey, 2003). Moreover, most studies on this topic are dated, e.g. (Bailey and Sood, 1993; Sood and Nasu, 1995; Hirschman, 1981). These studies, however, investigated the influence of religion on product-related consumer behaviour. This has implications that there is a gap in knowledge related to the role of religion on consumer behaviour in general and tourist consumer behaviour in particular.

Nevertheless, the most recent study that referenced religion by (Mathras *et al.*, 2016) focused on providing a conceptual framework for research on religion and consumer behaviour. They did not investigate the influence of any religion but rather provide a guiding agenda for future researchers. However, the study noted that different religions and level of religiosity could result in different influence on consumers.

Other elements of culture, such as language, values, also influence tourists' choices. However, despite their importance, with the exception to religion, tourism researchers paid limited attention to the role of other cultural elements on tourists' choices. As an exploratory study, the current research will investigate how these cultural elements influence the choices of Saudi tourists. Specifically, the investigation of the current research will be focused on religion and social norms as two strong elements of the Saudi culture.

3.4.1 The Role of Religion

Countries and societies vary in their attachment to religions. In some countries, religion is something that people can choose to engage with. For example, it is taught in schools as a part of a multi-cultural educational activity (in which students learn about a variety of religions, their origins and practices). In these countries, individuals can choose to follow any religion or none at all, and normally religion has a minor influence on society. In other countries, however, a single religion can be the base of lifestyle and culture as it forms the primary source of values and beliefs (Fam, Waller and Erdogan, 2004).

According to Morris and Al Dabbagh (2004), the influence of religion on people's culture, values, ethics and other aspects of social life increases when a certain religion dominates. Similarly, in some countries, religions have a strong and direct influence on consumers through strict teachings that emphasise forbidden and permitted actions, while others are more of spiritual orientation. Religions also have an indirect influence on consumers through the classification of all phenomena, codes of conduct and establishing priorities among these codes (Sood and Nasu, 1995).

The western dominance of research in tourism and marketing means that early attempts to study the role of religion in consumer behaviour have mainly been addressed from a western perspective, e.g. in (Bailey and Sood, 1993; Cutler, 1992; Delener, 1994; Essoo and Dibb, 2004; Poria, Butler and Airey, 2003; Sood and Nasu, 1995). However, in recent years, research focusing on non-western perspectives emerged, i.e. Hong Kong (McKercher, 2008),

Malaysia (Som *et al.*, 2012), Jordan (Mohammad and Som, 2010), Iran and Saudi Arabia (Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010).

Despite these studies, the literature has paid little attention to the influence of religion on tourist destination selection. As stated earlier, in the Islamic context, the scope in tourism research was mostly limited to religious tourism (Almuhzzi and Alsawafi, 2017; Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010), halal tourism and Shariah-compliant services (Stephenson, 2014; Idris and Abdul Wahab, 2015; Battour and Ismail, 2016; El-Gohary, 2016; Mohsin, Ramli and Alkhulayfi, 2016; Saad, Badran and Abdel-Aleem, 2016) and the experiences of tourists in Muslim countries (Brown and Osman, 2017; Taheri, 2016).

Also, Mak *et al.* (2012) investigated the influence of religion on food consumption among tourists. While this is relevant, the study did not conclude on its influence on destination selection. Henderson (2006); (2008) studied the role of religion as a constraint to tourism. Nevertheless, although the studies were conducted in Muslim destinations (Dubai and Bahrain), they continued to focus on collecting data from the perspectives of western tourists to these destinations. This has implications that the Islamic perspective on the role of religion on tourism generally remains an under-researched area of study. This resulted in a clear gap in knowledge related to the role of Islam on holiday destination selection.

Although studies referencing religion concerning tourism and marketing are scarce, some researchers have considered its influence (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). Marketing literature suggests that consumer decision-making is a process that is influenced by several consumer-related factors and that culture is at the top of the list (Chiu *et al.*, 2014). The influence of religions on the cultures of the Middle Eastern societies, in general, is clear.

In Saudi Arabia, as the origin of Islam, culture has been greatly shaped by religious aspects. For example, appointments and meetings are set according to prayers times (British Council, 2015). The Islamic religion is one with strong influence over people's lives. In particular, the influence of religion surpasses promoting spiritual believes, values, traditions and includes

within its scope the development of practices that should be embedded within the way of life finance, economics, social structure and politics (Wilson and Liu, 2011).

Mykletun, Crofts and Mykletun (2001) asserted that tourists travel to international destinations carrying their norms and cultural values with them, which influences their behaviour in their holiday destination, e.g. interactions with people of the host culture. Crofts (2004) argued that tourists of different culture visiting the same destination generally have different interests. Some of these interests are influenced by personal preferences, while others are the results of external influences, including culture.

Hofstede (1984) cited in Kong and Jogaratnam (2007) believed that cultures create specific mental systems that control people's activities and motivations. Hence, people will likely consider the degree to which the desired destination is similar or different when making their decisions (Crofts, 2004). This has implications for the current research insofar as tourists with a strong attachment to the Islamic religion may prefer to visit destinations that provide an Islamic environment. Therefore, the demand from Muslim tourists for destinations that suit their cultural needs has resulted in the growth of Halal tourism.

3.4.2 Halal Tourism

The rise of Halal Tourism is a clear example of the role of religion on tourist choices. The word 'halal' means permissible, and it refers to any practise or activity that is permissible and compliant with Islamic teachings, e.g. the action of travel is permissible 'halal', but travelling to practice unlawful actions is prohibited 'haram' (IslamQA, 2012). Halal tourism is not only concerned with providing food products but also services that meet with the requirements of Muslims and Islamic teachings. The need for products and services that are compliant with Islamic teachings (halal) has existed since the beginning of Islam.

As a result, many Muslim tourists require special services and products to meet with their religious requirements. For example, Muslim women require 'female only' swimming pools, spas etc., while Muslim men also require 'male-only' swimming pool, spas and massage. Food

products must also be halal or compliant with Islamic teachings. Therefore, Muslims are generally critical regarding what they do, use and consume. This led to the rise of Halal tourism which is primarily developed to cater to those needs of Muslim tourists (Henderson, 2010). Halal tourism is defined as “offering tour packages and destinations that are particularly designed to cater to Muslim considerations and address Muslim needs” Halbase (2015) cited in (El-Gohary, 2016 p. 126).

Although a recent theme in the tourism literature, the integration of halal into tourism experience is ancient. Zamani-Farahani and Henderson (2010) for example, noted that many Muslim countries in the Middle-East and beyond have always forbidden the sale of alcohol and hospitality businesses are required by law to observe religious teachings in the production, presentation and delivery of their products and services.

For example, in Saudi Arabia, hotels and restaurants do not serve alcohol, pork or any other products that are not religiously permissible. Cafes and restaurants in many areas of the country provide two sections, male-only section and family and women sections. This is to prevent mixing of unrelated men and women based on religious and social laws. All shopping centres and road service stations must include a Masjid (Mosque) for people to pray. Also, Saudi Airlines (the flag carrier of Saudi Arabia) provide a prayer area in its aeroplanes travelling to most long haul international destinations (Saudia, 2014a). This strong observation of Islamic teachings in Saudi Arabia stems from its desire to remain a strongly Islamic country that hosts the holiest Islamic sites and the first home of Islam; and because these are consumer needs and wants in the Saudi tourism market.

In recent times, some Muslim countries have relaxed their observance of Islamic teachings when it comes to developing their tourism industry, although interestingly - recognising growth in the travel demand from Arabic countries – some of these have started to develop or re-introduce halal services. According to Hamdi (2019), the global Muslim travel market is expected to be worth \$220 billion with the number of travellers expected to exceed 158 million. Battour and Ismail (2016) believed that understanding and observing Islamic teachings in the

tourism and hospitality industry can be a competitive advantage for many tourism service providers and may lead to higher consumer satisfaction.

As a result, tourism and hospitality businesses today seek to reach potential markets by advertising these halal services to Muslim tourists. According to Akyol and Kiliç (2014), most of these advertisements take place on social media platforms which provide effective methods to reach potential markets. Moreover, social media platforms also allow businesses to understand tourists' needs and wants. Furthermore, the nature of social media as user-generated content platforms makes tourists share their holiday experiences, which also influences the holiday planning of future tourists (Lu and Stepchenkova, 2015). Therefore, today, tourism scholars consider social media and networking websites important players in the tourism industry, for both businesses and tourists (Cox *et al.*, 2009; Marchiori and Cantoni, 2015; Marine-Roig and Clavé, 2015).

3.5 The Role of Social Media in Tourism

The role of social media in tourism is massive as it has become involved in every aspect of the industry. According to MDG Advertising (2018), 74% of tourists used social media while on holiday and 60% shared photos of their holidays. Therefore, tourism organisations today use social media applications as communication methods through which they pass their messages to tourists and receive their feedback and reviews on destinations, products and services. This affects the planning, development, marketing and management of the tourist destination (Pennington-Gray *et al.*, 2011; Floris and Campagna, 2014). Similarly, tourists use social media applications to plan their holidays and share their experiences with other users and hence influence other people's holiday planning and experiences (Fotis, Buhalis and Rossides, 2011).

Tourism research has responded to this role of social media with a growing body of literature. At the early stages of its development, the focus was mostly centred around the impact of social media on the tourism industry and businesses (e.g. Dwivedi, Shibu and Venkatesh,

2007; Grant-Braham, 2007; Thevenot, 2007; Sigala, 2011; Hays, Page and Buhalis, 2013). In recent years, researchers began to focus on the way that social media influences tourist behaviour (Ho, Lin and Chen, 2012). In these studies, researchers have documented how travellers became the source of information and how they influence destination image, intention to travel and holiday planning for potential tourists (Garay Tamajón and Cànoves Valiente, 2017; Ráthonyi *et al.*, 2016).

The interactivity of social media platforms allows users to become consumers as well as content generators (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014). Posts shared over social media platforms normally contain information in the form of photos, videos, comments and reviews. According to Filieri (2016), this consumer-generated content has become an important and trusted source of information for many travellers. For example, Brogan and Smith (2010) noted that travellers were found to trust content generated by Trip Advisor's active contributors.

Early marketing scholars have produced a significant amount of research on consumers' pre-purchase behaviour. According to Gursoy and McCleary (2004), there have been three major streams of literature on pre-purchase information search process: 1) the psychological/motivation approach; 2) the economics approach, and 3) the consumer information processing approach. Recent research on tourist information search has been mostly focused on the latter approach, e.g. (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008; Xiang and Gretzel, 2010; Munar and Jacobsen, 2013; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014; Fang *et al.*, 2016). However, despite this abundance in research production, Gursoy (2019) believed that the development in online and mobile technologies changed tourists information search behaviour and holiday decision-making process. Therefore, tourism research must continue to address these changes.

Based on MDG Advertising (2018), 97% of millennial tourists use social media to share photos and experiences of their holidays. This shows the significant importance of social media and networking applications for the tourism industry. Moreover, Gretzel and Yoo (2008) believed that the nature of social media and networking apps as consumer-generated content platforms give them a higher level of credibility amongst tourists. In their research, they found that

travellers trust reviews and information produced by other tourists more than content posted by tourism organisations.

The continuous changes in social media, e.g. rise of new applications and changes in user behaviour require researchers to continuously assess these developments and their impacts on tourist behaviour and the industry. Among the recent changes that tourism research needs to examine is the role of instant messaging applications on tourists' holiday planning. Among these apps are WhatsApp, Telegram and Snapchat. The current research will focus on these three applications in particular as they are extremely popular for everyday communication. Therefore, the research will explore how these have shaped the decision-making process of Saudi tourists.

3.5.1 Instant Messaging Apps

According to Assaad and Gómez (2011) "Instant messaging (IM) is a form of real-time direct text-based communication between two or more people using personal computers or other devices, along with shared software clients" p. 16. IM applications have evolved dramatically in the past ten years, moving from text-based instant messaging to platforms that allow sharing photos, videos, audio, documents and online video and audio calls. Currently, WhatsApp is the most popular IM apps with 2 billion users (WhatsApp, 2020), Facebook Messenger (1.3 billion users), WeChat (1.1 billion), QQ (823 million) and Telegram with nearly 300 million users (Bucher, 2020).

Despite their large number of users, research on IM apps has been mostly limited to the field of information technology. However, research from marketing and tourism fields on the role of IM apps on consumers' decision-making behaviour is scarce. One of the few studies that referenced IM apps by Sharma, Sharma and Chaudhary (2020) who found that most of the travel agents that participated in their research use IM apps to communicate with their customers with WhatsApp being the most effective method of communication. The study recommended that future research should consider WhatsApp because it is a widely used

communication method between consumers and businesses. Similarly, Jiang *et al.* (2020) found that WeChat was the leading platform for E-Word of Mouth among tourists from China. Several other emerging social media applications have not been studied by previous research. However, to date, no research has been produced on the use of IM apps among Saudi, Arab or Middle Eastern tourists, which leaves a gap in knowledge related to how social networking apps influence holiday choices among Saudis. By exploring the use of WhatsApp and Telegram among a sample of tourists from Saudi Arabia, the current research will contribute to knowledge and practice by explaining how such technological developments shape tourists holiday choices.

3.5.2 Photo and Video Sharing Apps

Photos and videos are acknowledged for their powerful influence on tourists' destination choices. According to Kim and Stepchenkova (2015) "destination photography communicates images that shape and reshape tourists' destination perception and, consequently, influence their decision-making process". The old practice of photo taking during travel was mostly for the purpose to record memories. However, with the emergence of social media sites and applications, the motivation for photo takers, in addition to recording memories, is to express themselves (Boley, Magnini and Tuten, 2013). As a result, Lo *et al.* (2011) found that 89% of tourists take photos of their holidays' experiences and 41% post them in their social media accounts.

Today, social media is key to the success of business and marketing with most marketers acknowledging this importance (Stelzner, 2011). Therefore, social networking applications focused on photos and videos have gained popularity in tourism research in the past ten years. Among the most discussed application in these studies were Flickr (Donaire, Camprubí and Galí, 2014) and Instagram (Parsons, 2017). However, the continuous development in the field of social media requires up-to-date research. One of the most widely spread social networking

apps today is Snapchat, which provides a completely different product and experience than Instagram and Flickr.

Snapchat is an image and video sharing mobile application that allows users to share short-lived images and videos. It was first released in 2011 and, in its first year, users shared over one billion photos. The application allows users to share images and 10-second videos, collectively known as (snaps), in a chronological storyline. The 'snaps' are shared either in private messaging that will disappear as soon as viewed or in a story that is shared on two levels, i.e. 'my story' which is viewed by anyone who is added as a friend and "our story" which can be viewed by any Snapchat user. All snaps will disappear 24 hours after publication.

Statistics from Business Insider (2017) stated that every day, over 173 million people used Snapchat creating nearly circa 3 billion snaps. Piwek and Joinson (2016) argued that the number of daily snaps sent on Snapchat surpasses the total number of photos shared on Facebook and Instagram combined. The application promotes itself as the fastest way to share a moment (Snapchat.com). Because of its features, Snapchat has become a popular platform for travellers and travel enthusiasts. Utz, Muscanell and Khalid (2015) asserted that it was more popular among young social media users, mostly between 18-34 years old. While users of Instagram and Twitter normally select photos and videos which they feel suitable to post, Snapchat allows more spontaneous live photo and video sharing. In another word, it allows sharing 'more real' experiences.

However, despite its widespread use among tourists, research on Snapchat use among tourists is scarce. The only studies that referenced the role of Snapchat in tourism are of Gretzel (2017) and Jeffrey, Ashraf and Paris (2019). However, these studies did not explore the role of Snapchat in tourist decision-making behaviour. The current research explored how Snapchat influenced the holiday choices of Saudi tourists. The participants were asked questions related to their use of social networking apps as sources of information as well as platforms that they used to share their experiences. This provided further understanding of the information search behaviour and holiday decision-making processes of Saudi tourists.

3.6 The Role of Women in Holiday Decisions

Tourism research has explored the roles of family members in holiday decision-making and identified the role of each member, including partners and children. Researchers asserted that when a decision is made for the household, e.g. family holiday, it is rare to be taken individually in isolation from other members (Koc, 2004). According to Barlés-Arizón, Fraj-Andrés and Martínez-Salinas (2013), the change in the economic status of women and their financial independence has resulted in a greater family role for them. These changes in the role of women have been documented in several studies, most notably the works of Pennington-Gray and Kerstetter (2001) and Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006). In these studies, the focus was on solo women travelling for leisure. This is the result of the financial independence women achieved because of their contribution to the labour market. However, despite these studies on solo female travel, limited research has explored their role in family holiday decision-making (Barlés-Arizón, Fraj-Andrés and Martínez-Salinas, 2013).

Zalatan (1998) breaks the holiday decision-making process into four distinguished categories; initial tasks of the trip which include decisions related to the destination, accommodation, route of the trip and places to visit; financial decisions which include who contribute to the financial cost of the holiday and what the holiday expenses include; pre-departure decisions which include what things to be taken to the holiday destination; and the decision at the destination which include the activities, and places to eat. Previous research has noted that most decisions in family holidays are made jointly by husbands and wives, yet their influences varied (Rojas-de-Gracia, Alarcón-Urbistondo and Robles, 2018).

Jenkins (1979) and Ritchie and Filiatrault (1980) found husbands to lead the process in information search, routes of holidays, car servicing and financial matters, e.g. duration of the holiday, dates and expenses. However, other research conducted in different context found women to share most of these decisions (Zalatan, 1998; Mottiar and Quinn, 2004; Decrop, 2005). It is important to acknowledge that the role of women in the family holiday decision-

making process differs depending on their characteristics, e.g. socio-demographics and cultural backgrounds (Barlés-Arizón, Fraj-Andrés and Matute-Vallejo, 2010).

For example, in western contexts, older studies, e.g. (Jenkins, 1979; Ritchie and Filiatrault, 1980), suggested that men mostly led holiday decision-making for families. However, more recent studies suggested the opposite (Mottiar and Quinn, 2004; Rojas-de-Gracia and Alarcón-Urbistondo, 2019). This change in the role of western women may be related to the change in their economic and social roles.

In an Arabic context, although women have gained more power in recent years, and their roles have expanded, there remain some cultural constraints that may limit the extent to which they influence economic decisions. For example, some religious clerics forbid women from travelling on their own except when necessary and if it is considered safe, while others allow them to travel on their own if it is safe. In Saudi Arabia, the government followed its people's culture in many of its legislations, especially those related to family. Among these legislations was that women were not allowed passports or to travel outside the country without permission from the head of the family. However, in 2019, a royal decree ended these restrictions on women's travel stating that any person above the age of 21, regardless of their gender, can obtain a passport and travel without a permission (Arab News, 2019). Nevertheless, despite these changes, Arab culture continues to restrict un-necessary women travel when they are unaccompanied by their family.

Although these constraints do not influence women to travel with their family and may not directly limit their roles in their family holiday decisions, they restrict their options to only travel with their families and constrain their knowledge about destinations and holiday-related decisions. Moreover, the Arab culture makes men responsible for most family financial matters, including providing accommodation, food, clothes, medications and other necessities. As a result, in many Muslim communities, although women today contribute to family well-being, it remains largely a man's responsibility (husband/father). However, as research is

scarce on Arab and Saudi women's contribution to holiday decisions, it is not possible to tell at this stage how and to what extent they are involved in their families' holiday decisions.

This research will explore how Saudi women contribute and influence holiday choices and decisions. It will also explain their role within the decision-making process. This will provide a foundation for future research that aims to understand how women in Saudi Arabia contribute to their family holiday decisions. This is particularly important as the general view is that women have a limited role in family decisions because of the family structure in the Arab and Saudi culture.

4. RESEARCH METHODS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the philosophical positions and assumptions underpinning the study. It begins by describing the philosophy of the current research and the methodology adopted in its design. Then, it describes the methods used to collect data and the process of their analysis. The chapter will also explain the recruitment process and techniques adopted through which participants were reached and interviewed. Moreover, the chapter will give a special focus to gender-specific challenges that the research encountered during female participants recruitment and techniques adopted to overcome such challenges. This is important as previous research has mostly excluded Saudi women due to cultural limitations (see 2.4.1). In the current research, the aim is to explore the role of culture in the holiday choices of Saudi tourists and understand why they choose to take their holidays in outbound destinations. To achieve this aim, a qualitative research approach was followed.

4.2 Qualitative Research

Despite the dominance of quantitative research, in recent years, the use of qualitative research has gained acceptance among tourism researchers (Wilson and Hollinshead, 2015). The purpose of qualitative research is to understand how a single phenomenon is viewed differently by different participants in the same context. This can be achieved through both contributions of participants and the interpretation of researchers with in-depth questioning and analysis (Radnor, 2002). The data collection techniques used in qualitative research are often exploratory and give both participants and researchers more flexibility. On the one hand, this allows participants to express themselves, their experiences, feelings and thoughts broadly, and on the other hand, they allow researchers to further explore participants' responses with subsequent queries.

Generally, there is limited research focused on tourists from non-western cultures and especially on cultures where religion plays a key role in daily life. In line with existing studies (predominantly from the western world), the current research utilises an exploratory qualitative approach that consists of semi-structured interviews as the main means of data collection. This is to allow an in-depth investigation of the research problem on a society and context that limited previous research has investigated. Moreover, the nature of the research presented in this thesis is exploratory, building on existing knowledge and theories. It seeks to generate theory to explain what motivates Saudi tourists for outbound travel and how their culture shapes their holiday choices.

4.3 Research Philosophy

According to Carson *et al.* (2001) explaining the research, philosophy helps underpin the choices made within the study and explain their rationale. In other words, understanding the philosophy of the research will help explain why certain methodological and analytical decisions are made. Creswell (2009) believed that this was particularly important because it supports the impact a study is likely to make and explain its findings. Normally, the choice of research philosophy and methodology reflects the aim of the study and its discipline.

The current research follows an interpretive paradigm. Interpretivism was referred to in the work of Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf (1988) as naturalism while Guba and Lincoln (1994) described it as constructivism. Creswell (1998) used the term 'qualitative paradigm' to describe the same theory. However, recent research in social science has accepted the terms interpretivism and positivism to describe the two most used theories in the discipline (Bryman, 2008).

4.3.1 Interpretivism

Each methodology has its strengths and weaknesses (Bowen, 2001). Therefore, research in social science has accepted a number of alternative paradigms to overcome the limitations of the positivist approach. A key paradigm that emerged in rejection of the positivistic philosophy

and assumptions was interpretivism. Schwandt (2007) defined interpretivism as “an approach that assumes that the meaning of human action is inherent in that action, and the task of the inquirer is to unearth that meaning” p. 106. Interpretivism stems from the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed. Based on this assumption, reality is not separate from its observer but instead they are mutually dependant on each other.

According to Alsubaie (2014), people’s perception of the world and meanings of life is the result of their experiences which they accumulated throughout their lives. Hence, in the interpretive approach, human behaviour cannot be understood without deep investigation. Such an investigation cannot be done without considering the socio-cultural elements that influence people’s behaviour. Hence, a deep exploration of behaviour cannot be achieved with quantitative methods and statistical operations. Therefore, in the interpretive approach, qualitative methods are used. According to Jennings (2001), the interpretive paradigm is based on the belief that different individuals, societies and cultures view the world differently. Hence, the social world is understood differently by researchers from different value systems. Therefore, the relationship between researchers and respondents are subjective rather than objective.

The use of qualitative methods allows an in-depth investigation of the phenomenon as it generates rich data. Also, the subjective nature of qualitative research allows the research to include feelings, emotions, backgrounds and experiences of individuals. Moreover, in the interpretive paradigm, the context and settings in which the study is conducted form a vital part in the interpretation and analysis of the data. The nature of the current research, i.e. focusing on a society and a research problem that only limited research has considered leads to acknowledge the superiority of the interpretive approach over other paradigms used in social science.

4.3.2 Ontology

Ontology is defined as “the study of being” and “answering the questions; what is there that can be known?” and “what is the nature of the reality?” (Guba and Lincoln, 1989 p. 83; Crotty, 2003 p. 10). The current research is based on the ontological assumption that reality is of multiple meanings where Individuals accumulate different experiences throughout their lives and hence perceive the world differently. Meaning in the current research is viewed to be subjective and “does not come out of the interplay between subject and object but is imposed on the object by the subject. Here the object as such makes no contribution to the generation of meaning” (Crotty, 1998 p. 9). Therefore, interpretivists view the relationship between reality and the researcher to be based on mutual dependence.

In the interpretive paradigm, the lifeworld of individuals has both subjective and objective characteristics. Weber (2004) explains that “the subjective characteristics reflect our perceptions about the meaning of some world. The objective characteristics reflect that we constantly negotiate this meaning with others with whom we interact. In other words, it is objective in the sense that it reflects an intersubjective reality” p. V. Interpretivists believe that knowledge is built through the social construction of meaning and lifeworld. Alsubaie (2014) notes that interpretivists recognise that sense-making activities take place within the framework of the researcher’s lifeworld and the goal of the research. Therefore, in the interpretive paradigm, subjectivity is given precedence as researchers are principally interested in the collection of narrative data and qualitative analysis.

4.3.3 Epistemology

Carson *et al.* (2001) describe ontology as the reality and epistemology as the relationship between reality and the researcher. Therefore, epistemological assumptions emerge from ontological assumptions (Crotty, 1998). Epistemology is a philosophical approach concerned with the nature of knowledge and answering the questions ‘what is the nature of the relationship between the knower and the known? and what is the acceptable knowledge in a

given context? It is defined as a “way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know” (Crotty, 2003 p. 3).

According to Crotty (2003), the epistemology in the interpretive paradigm is based on the view that “all knowledge, and therefore meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interactions between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context” (p. 42). Based on this view, individuals constantly attribute meaning to their experiences, and their understanding of the world is based on their interaction with it, together with subsequent reflection on experience. Moreover, the interpretive paradigm views knowledge to be socially constructed where people influence each other through their beliefs, feelings, emotions and the context in which they live.

The current research is based on the assumption that reality is socially constructed. Therefore, for a deep understanding of a society and a social phenomenon such as this study's problem, an interpretive process needs to be followed. Moreover, because “different humans make sense differently” (Erickson, 1985 p. 127), the study needs to adopt methods that can include experiences, feelings and perceptions of the research subjects. Also, the complex type of data needed in this study requires the contribution of both the participants and the researcher. This has influenced the research design throughout.

On the one hand, participants will be able to give long and detailed answers to questions. On the other hand, the researcher will be able to provide interpretations to participants' answers based on the context and setting of their participation, reaction to sensitive questions etc. Moreover, such methods allow more flexibility in the data collection process as the researcher can alter some questions and ask further follow-up questions based on the given answer.

4.4 Research Methodology

The methodology of any research stems from its ontological and epistemological considerations. In the current research, the methodology is driven by the interpretive

paradigm. It has been noted that some researchers use the terms methodology and methods interchangeably. However, Collis and Hussey (2014) viewed methodology to be the overall theoretical approach taken by the researcher while methods are the means through which data is collected. Similarly, Mason (2017) considers methodology as the strategy of research while methods are the tools used to conduct the research. In line with this, the current research employs the term methodology as an umbrella for all facets of the research process, which includes research design, methods of data collection and analysis.

4.4.1 Research Design

Within the research design, it was considered important to understand both male and female perspectives on holiday decision-making because previous studies have demonstrated that gender can be an important consideration. There are, however, cultural restrictions in Saudi Arabia on cross-gender communication. This means that a male researcher cannot always freely conduct interviews with unrelated females. As a result, specific adaptations had to be made to the research design, especially in regard to the way that female participants were recruited and interviewed.

As a result, the study was split into two phases: the first focused entirely on gathering data from female participants about their role in holiday choices and decision-making process (primarily using Skype interviews) and the second focused on male participants (primarily using face-to-face interviews). As the research was focused on explaining and understanding a phenomenon and that generalisation was not an aim, this research used semi-structured interviews as its only means of data collection.

4.4.2 Research Methods

Wellington (2015) believed that the research method is determined by the research question. The method used to collect data for this study was semi-structured interviews. As a qualitative and exploratory research, the use of semi-structured interviews was found to be the most suitable method for this study. Interviews provide rich and deep data and allow the researcher

to gain significant insight into the issue being explored (Creswell, 2009). Semi-structured interviews allow the collection of rich data and in-depth investigation of the research problem but with more control over the duration and responses of the interview as compared to unstructured interviews. In semi-structured interviews, the researcher can alter questions based on the given answers and ask follow-up ones which cannot be performed using structured interviews (Silverman, 2016).

4.5 Interviews

Interviews are data collection methods that are widely used in qualitative research. King (2004) believes that interviews allow the researcher to see the research topic from the interviewee's perspective. Moreover, interviews allow participants to discuss their interpretations of the contexts in which they live and express how they perceive the topic under discussion. Therefore, interviews are viewed to be a flexible tool for data collection that allows deep investigation and generate detailed answers. A key feature of interviews is its ability to employ "multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, seen, spoken and heard" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, p. 409). This rich data that could be obtained through semi-structured interviews gave the chosen method of data collection a superiority over other means and made it suitable for this study.

4.5.1 The Interview Design

Semi-structured interviews conjoin the characteristics of both structured and unstructured interviews. For example, they allow detailed answers for participants yet with control over time and direction of the conversation. According to Keats (1999), interviews are a particularly efficient method of data collection when the research design involves an analysis of people's motivations and perceptions. There are no rules to the ideal number of interviews a researcher should conduct. On the one hand, some qualitative researchers follow the positivist approach that the more interviews, the more the research is scientific (Kvale, 1996). On the other hand, Travers (2001) left it to researchers to consider the number of interviews needed for a study,

as long as they achieve “enough data to explore and document a range of themes” p. 37. In semi-structured interviews, the researcher can tailor follow up questions based on the given answers to the main questions.

4.5.2 The Interview Questions

The interview questions for this study were prepared based on the literature, the research questions and areas of enquiries the study addresses. The culture of the population of the study was taken into consideration in the interview design as well as the interviewing process. The initial interview included ten questions with each question has the possibility to expand with follow-up questions based on participants’ responses. The first question is introductory to the interview and will normally direct the following questions.

No	Question
1.	Which countries have you visited for leisure purpose? And why?
2.	When you travel with family, would you choose the same destinations as when you travel on your own or with friends? Give reasons
3.	If you travel with friends and family, what is the average number of people involved in the trip? Why?
4.	What type of accommodations do you normally stay at when you travel? Why do you choose this type of accommodation? Explain
5.	What makes you want to travel on holiday? Give details
6.	Do you normally travel to destinations that have been recommended to you? Explain
7.	Do you prefer to travel to Muslim countries for your holiday? Give reasons
8.	Does religion influence your decision in any way? Explain
9.	What type of food do you consume when you are on holiday? And what type of restaurant do you go to?
10.	When you travel on holiday, do you or your family prefer to stay in halal hotels? (Follow up: Please give details)

4.5.3 Pilot Study

To ensure the credibility of the interview questions and their suitability for the population of the study, pilot interviews were conducted. Although the first phase of the interview focuses on women only, the pilot interview included two participants, a male and a female. Both the male

and female participants were recruited using a recruitment form distributed via the social networking platform: Telegram Messenger. The recruitment exercise, however, failed to return enough female participants (with only one woman was recruited).

As a result, the snowballing technique was adopted as an alternative method of recruitment. This resulted in two more women willing to participate in the research. It is anticipated that a key reason that led to the failure of female recruitment over social media platforms was the absence of trust in cross-gender communication. Therefore, it was found that there was a need to establish trust with female participants during the interviewing process, so they help recruit more women.

The pilot interviews provided assurance that the interview design, questions and recruitment technique of female participants were suitable for the study. For example, participants understood the questions, and the interviews generated a large amount of high-quality data that covered the scope of the research. Moreover, the 'trust transfer' technique with female participants helped recruit more women. However, the pilot study also suggested some changes to the interview questions were needed, e.g. amending some questions and adding new ones (see table below).

For example, during the pilot interviews participants showed preference for nature-based activities, familiar cultures, and referred to the important role of social networking applications in their holiday choices. These aspects were not included in the initial interview questions. Therefore, changes to the interview questions included amending the wording of some questions to allow better understanding from the perspective of participants. Moreover, it was necessary to add more questions to explore the decision-making process, the activities of participants at their holiday destinations, the use of social media platforms among tourists and the implication they have on holiday choices. The tables below show changes made to the interview questions.

- Amended questions:

Old	What makes you want to travel on holiday? Give details
New	What is your primary motive for the holidays? Explain.
Old	Do you normally travel to destinations that have been recommended to you? Explain
New	What role do recommendations play in your choice of destinations?

- Added questions:

11.	Why did you choose to spend your holiday in an outbound destination? (Follow up: Will you consider visiting domestic destinations in your next holiday?)
12.	Do you prefer to travel to countries that have similar cultures to yours, e.g. Arabic or Islamic? (Follow up: How do you communicate when you travel?).
13.	What kind of activities do you get involved in when you travel to your holiday destination? Explain.
14.	Explain your use of social media during your holiday? (Follow up: What app do you use most, and do you share your experiences during your holiday?)
15.	How does this social media app/site influence your holiday choices? e.g. destination products and services and activities.

4.6 Recruitment

The current research takes into consideration the gender element, hence in a total of 40 interviews, 20 for each gender was considered the right number of interviews. Researchers contend that in qualitative research, there is no rule for the number of interviews needed in research except that the research should reach a saturation point. However, Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) argued that a saturation point is normally reached around 12 participants when research is conducted on a homogenous group.

The current research set the proposed number of interviews for a number of reasons: first, to exceed the number suggested by Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) and ensure saturation is reached; second, to ensure diversity of participants is reached in the research by allowing a space to include participants from across Saudi Arabia; third, the number of interviews was found to ensure the depth needed for the research; fourth, the number was chosen to be possible to achieve within the timeframe available for the research.

To reach participants, the study followed two different techniques. Initially, an online recruitment form was distributed using social media platforms. This was followed by a snowballing technique to enhance recruitment results. The recruitment target for the first phase of data collection was 20 female participants from across Saudi Arabia. The main social media platforms used to distribute the recruitment form were Twitter and Telegram groups. On the one hand, Twitter is a social media platform and a mobile application where people communicate using short messages called tweets. It is popular for being a quick message spreading platform thanks to its retweeting function and open content (Halavais, 2014).

On the other hand, Telegram is an instant messaging and a social networking mobile app which people use for private messaging as well as group communication. It is similar to other instant messaging apps, but its groups are more diverse. A key feature of Telegram groups is its privacy function: contact details of group members are not visible to other members (see image below). Moreover, a Telegram group can accommodate up to 100,000 members, unlike WhatsApp groups, for example, which is limited to 256 members and is mostly used by people that know each other. Hence, people of common interest use Telegram groups to communicate ideas and experiences.

Social media sites and apps, such as Facebook and WhatsApp, were found to generate more biased results than Twitter and Telegram because relationships among users of Facebook and WhatsApp are based on friendships. Normally, people accept friend requests and are added to groups from other users that they are familiar with (friends, relatives, colleagues), hence these were not initially used to recruit participants. In contrast, Twitter accounts and Telegram groups are normally open and can be followed by anyone. Therefore, the initial recruitment was performed using Twitter and Telegram groups that included many travel enthusiasts (see figure, 8).

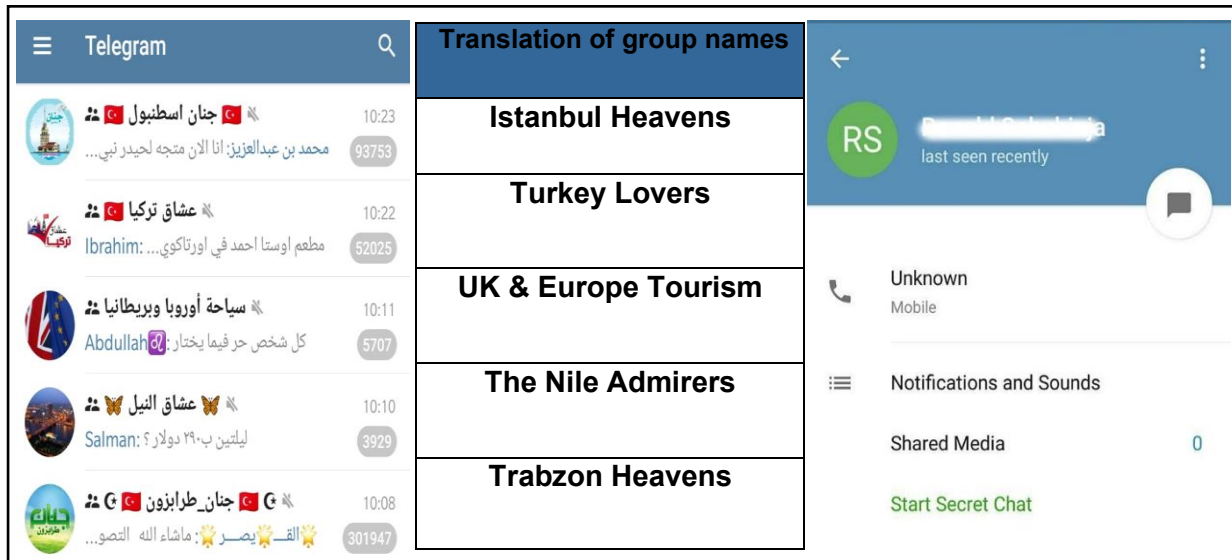


Figure 8. A screenshot of the Telegram app and its privacy functions

Despite the apparent benefits of the selected social media platforms, the results returned were not what had been expected. First, the number of people who filled in the recruitment form was small and second, the diversity of respondents required for the study was not achieved. Most replies received to the message that included the link to the recruitment form were requesting further clarifications. Also, despite gaining approval from the moderators of some Telegram groups and Twitter accounts, they later refused to share the link. A key reason for them was the type of information that the recruitment form collected (contact number, email, place of residence). Most users of these social platforms were reluctant to share their contact details online, and women were found to be more cautious than men.

Although Facebook was not used at the beginning of the recruitment process, its use at a later stage returned more results. Relationships among users on Facebook are based on friendship and acquaintanceship. As a result, the trust established among users may be of a higher level than it is among users of other social media platforms. Metzger (2004) found trust to be strongly related to information disclosure. Dwyer, Hiltz and Passerini (2007) found Facebook users to be more trusting of the site and its members.

In line with this, most people who received the link to the recruitment form over Facebook provided their contact details and agreed to participate. Facebook “friends” were also keen to

help share the link to the recruitment form with their friends. Therefore, recruitment over Facebook returned better results. The online recruitment form received a total of 155 responses; the vast majority of them came through Facebook and WhatsApp. Nevertheless, not all responses were valid, e.g. missing contact details and responses with irrelevant information.



Figure 9. Participant Recruitment Process

Participants of the research were selected based on their potential to provide diversity. This was ensured based on participants places of residency in Saudi Arabia and their demographic features, e.g. gender, age and marital status. Moreover, to ensure more diversity, when possible, participants were also considered based on their holiday destinations. The recruitment results disclosed a number of destinations that were popular among Saudi tourists, e.g. Dubai (UAE), Turkey, Schengen Zone, Indonesia and Malaysia. The recruitment form was designed and distributed online.

4.6.1 The Recruitment Form

The recruitment form for this study was a simple one. It begins with information about the study and its purpose. It also included information about the researcher, and his contact details had potential participants wanted to ask questions before filling the form (see appendix, 2). The form requires personal information and contact details of potential participants. To allow participants to understand the context of their participation, the recruitment form was translated into Arabic based on the researcher's knowledge of both languages. The translation of the recruitment form allowed potential participants to provide the information required and understand the purpose of their participation. The Arabic version of the recruitment form was also converted into an online form which can be accessed through the following link:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ygiYd3rPPEOn2MbSQZqv4GLREEFfa7tMuzUWfdEG6_JUNUwyQ1NXVINLNEhaRFJXUuc3WU9VQ0pWSy4u

4.6.2 Female Recruitment

Gender-segregation and social norms in Saudi Arabia limit the scope of opportunity for women and men to interact (Baki, 2004). Therefore, recruiting women for a study being conducted by a male researcher was a challenging task. As a result, previous research on Saudi tourists has generally excluded female participation. Tuncalp (1988) summarised that the unapproachability of Saudi women was a problem for researchers studying the Saudi market. Although this is an old study, these problems still exist. In general, research excluded women for four inter-related reasons: 1) the structure of a typical Saudi family where a man is normally the head of the family has resulted in most decisions to be made by men; 2) the majority of research on Saudi tourists has been conducted by male researchers who anticipate less important role by women in holiday decisions; 3) it is culturally inappropriate for non-related men and women to communicate with each other; and, 4) the unavailability of distance communication means for previous researchers, e.g. social media and online communication methods. Therefore, Alghamdi (2007) noted that "it is difficult to interview women by men in Saudi Arabia for cultural reasons" (p 285).

The absence of women in previous research on Saudi tourists has left a major gap in knowledge related to the role of women in holiday decisions. Moreover, as noted by Tuncalp (1988), the absence of female participation resulted in biased and unrepresentative data. Therefore, the current research aims to explore how women are involved in holiday decision-making and what influence they make on choices. However, as there are cultural restrictions, and communication between non-related men and women is limited, specific adaptations had to be made to reach women.

Although the recruitment exercise targeted both genders, only 2 out of 155 responses to the recruitment form were from women. Therefore, the research adopted a snowball technique to recruit more women. Snowball sampling is “a chain referral sampling method that relies on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects” (Johnston and Sabin, 2010, p. 38). The technique is based on finding individuals to recruit (referred to as seeds or sources) and requesting them to nominate other people from their social network to participate in the study.

In this study, the two women who filled the online recruitment form functioned as the initial (seed/source) through which more women were recruited. A snowball technique inevitably introduces an element of bias into the sampling process (Johnston and Sabin, 2010). However, given the challenges of working in Saudi context and the relatively limited number of women who were prepared to speak with a male researcher (something that biases the results towards those with a feminist perspective and those whose families were happy for them to participate in the study), this bias was accepted and is acknowledged throughout the analysis of the data.

4.6.3 Social Challenges

There are a number of challenges that researchers encounter when studying the Saudi society. One of the best documented is that of male researchers seeking to study women. Socially, it is generally considered unacceptable for non-related men and women to speak

with each other, except in specific circumstances, e.g. medical reasons; and all communications must be kept within strict religious and social limits.

For example, in the presence of the opposite gender or during interactions, both men and women must preserve modesty in their appearance, tone of verbal communication and avoiding any physical contact including handshakes (Padela and del Pozo, 2011). While the media have documented that these traditions have been lessening recently in some communities within Saudi Arabia, especially in cities that are known for more liberal values, e.g. Jeddah (Albugmi, 2013), the majority of the country remains conservative.

The researcher had to develop a number of strategies to accommodate these cultural and conservative views. Among these was an agreement that interviews (and especially interviews with women) were arranged for the late hours in Saudi Arabian time. Participants were not expressly asked to specify reasons for choosing such time. However, based on the researcher's knowledge and understanding of society, it can be explained from a social perspective.

Saudi women, in the presence of other family members (especially, parents and brothers), normally avoid cross-gender communication with non-related men. Therefore, by choosing late hours to participate in the study, female participants may have felt more freedom to express their views without being overheard by other family members. This was demonstrated by the fourth participant, whose husband refused her permission to participate and hence, the interview was cancelled. Although the Government of Saudi Arabia imposes no restrictions on male and female communications, social norms strictly reject any "unnecessary" communication.

4.6.4 Practical Solutions

The society of Saudi Arabia takes social and religious rules seriously. Among these rules is the male consent for female matters. Until recently, Women needed male consent in several matters, which include marriage, higher education, work, travel outside the country and issuing

official citizen documents such as national IDs and passports. Male consent is normally obtained through the head of the family (father/husband). A recent royal decree by King Salman of Saudi Arabia limited matters in which male consent is required to the cases where it is religiously required, e.g. marriage, (Shalhoub, 2017). Although the royal decree gives women more freedom, male consent from the head of the family remains a strong principle of the Arabic and Saudi culture. Therefore, although obtaining male consent from a father, older brother or a husband is not officially required to interview women, it may be necessary to avoid possible clashes.

However, some women may find it offensive if the researcher asks them whether they need male consent before the interview. In this study, an indirect question was used to assess possible negative outcomes that may arise because of female participants speaking to a male researcher. Thus, women who agreed to participate in the study were asked whether they might need to consult any members of their family before pursuing the interview. The term “consult” was suitable, and the participants’ reaction to it was positive. The question was meant to understand whether the woman participating in the study needs male consent.

Three women cancelled their participation based on the consultations they received (Two women consulted their fathers and one with her husband). The researcher did consider alternative approaches in advance of inserting this additional question. One of these was arranging to conduct interviews with women from Saudi Arabia with the presence of a male member of their family. However, it was thought that this approach might lead to limited and biased answers. Other solutions considered include the use of a female proxy to conduct the interviews on behalf of the researcher. Social norms make no limits on female-female communication. However, the use of proxies may generate less dependable and credible data in qualitative studies (Clarridge and Massagli, 1989).

4.6.5 Trust Transfer

As noted earlier, the researcher has faced difficulty in recruiting and interviewing women, and hence, a snowballing technique was adopted. In the snowballing technique, participants play as recruiters for the researcher through the names they nominate. In this study, due to gender segregation lifestyle in Saudi, women avoid unnecessary communication with non-relatives. Therefore, it was felt necessary to establish a level of trust between the researcher and women participating in the research in order to persuade them to act as recruiters for the study. It is understood that in the snowballing technique, participants pass their experience of participation to their nominees. To achieve this, the following steps were taken:

- The researcher has ensured that participants received all information before the interview. For example, ensuring that they have read the participant information sheet and understand its content.
- Participants were contacted via the method they specified in the recruitment form (mostly WhatsApp) and asked whether they have any further questions to ask. Moreover, they were also asked if there were reasons that they decided to participate in the study. The majority of participants specified four main reasons for their participation. First, to help the knowledge seeker (religiously motivated based on the prophet Mohammed's saying: "Whoever travels a path in search of knowledge, Allah will make easy for him a path to Paradise" (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2699). Therefore, many people like to help knowledge seekers as a good deed, so they get godly rewards. Second, they felt that the researcher needs help (no religious motivation felt here), and therefore, they wanted to help the researcher achieve his goal as a favour to him. Third, some participants said they were curious as this was the first time for them to participate in a research interview. Fourth, two participants wanted to have the opportunity to ask about studying in the UK, which the researcher fulfilled post the interviews.

- The researcher has provided full information about himself, affiliations in the UK and Saudi Arabia, which added a higher level of trust to the researcher.
- During the first two interviews, which were the main seeds that generated latter participants, the researcher avoided asking deeply sensitive questions, e.g. on outfit and Hijab; this has helped establish a transferrable trust with first two participants who passed such trust to their networks of friends and relatives. After one interview, a participant wrote: "I sent your link in my WhatsApp groups, and I defended you". This participant was able to recruit two other participants. Similarly, several other participants were also eager to help the researcher.
- The researcher used a highly respectful language that is suitable for the Saudi society, e.g. participants were addressed with Miss, Mr and Ustad or Ustadah (an honorific title that literally means teacher but used in addressing highly respectful people) which helped the conversation to remain formal and straightforward.

These taken steps resulted in positive experiences throughout the interviewing process with women, which was passed by earlier participants to future participants. It helped the researcher maintain a positive image with participants, which allowed a deep investigation of sensitive topics with future participants. Therefore, 'trust transfer' was an essential part of the study progress.

4.6.6 Ethical Considerations

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2010) outlined a number of questions researchers should ask when considering the ethical dimensions of their research, most critically: 1) What moral principles guide the research?; 2) How do ethical issues affect the design of the study and its sampling procedure?; 3) Has informed consent been obtained from participants of the research?; 4) How published findings may affect research participants?

Following the guidelines provided by these four questions, the current research considered the ethical issues that may arise from its investigation. It was understood that ethical issues could arise not only during data collection but in all stages of the research, i.e. in the design and conduct of the research, and in reporting and publishing of results (Veal, 2006; Semley, 2012). Knowledge of ethical codes of practice in research has been acquired through multiple sources, e.g. online materials provided by research institutions around the world, Oxford Brookes University's research ethics for research involving human participants, as well as discussions with supervisory team, senior researchers at Oxford Brookes Business School and elsewhere. This helped to appreciate and understand the ethical issues that can arise from conducting the current research.

The current research was designed to meet social norms and requirements of the Saudi society and avoid any possible issues that may arise from it. This was ensured through the design of the interviews, means and style of communication, techniques of recruitment and interviewing settings that takes into consideration the gender-segregation element of the Saudi culture. For example, in the interviews, any socially unacceptable questions, e.g. questions on sex behaviour or alcohol consumptions, were eliminated because these are considered very sensitive topics that people do not like to discuss.

Alghamdi (2007) noted in his study that reaction of Saudi participants to questions on sex, alcohol or drugs were aggressive "some participants did not want to participate in the research, some destroyed their questionnaires, gave abusive responses instead of answering the questions, wrote private messages to the researcher that he was impolite to be asking some of the very sensitive questions, and so on. In the researcher's opinion, this may have been because this study is very sensitive and addresses issues that are unacceptable in Islamic and Saudi culture" *p. 151*. Therefore, besides the fact that it was not a core issue to discuss for the current research, it was also necessary to avoid.

All participants were provided with an information sheet about the study and the researcher based on the format provided by Oxford Brookes Business School. Hence, all participants in

the study provided written consent before their participation. Furthermore, although the findings of the study were not expected to have any harmful impact on participants, all interviews were anonymised, and names used to label the interviews are not real.

4.6.7 Consent

The current research was conducted under the supervision of Professor Peter Lugosi and Dr Rebecca Hawkins from Oxford Brookes Business School and was unconditionally approved by Oxford Brookes University's Research Ethics Committee (UREC). Following this, I contacted the Department of Tourism and Archaeology at Jazan University to obtain approval to conduct my research under the supervision of the department. This was a requirement of my scholarship that the 'scientific trip to collect data' must be approved first by the researcher's supervisory team; second, the institution in which the researcher intends to reside during their scientific trip; and third by the Saudi Cultural Bureau in London (SACB) three months before starting.

On the 22nd of September 2017, I composed an email with the supporting letter from my supervisory team and a letter from me (in Arabic) explaining the request, its purpose and the data collection process. On the 27th of September 2017, I received unconditional approval from the head of the department. The primary plan was to begin the data collection process in January 2018. The 'scientific trip' was initially planned for data collection from both male and female participants. Yet, due to cultural reasons, this was changed later to focus on male participants only while women were interviewed over online platforms, e.g. Skype and FaceTime. Therefore, the scientific trip was rescheduled to take place once female interviews were completed. However, due to the major challenges were faced during the recruitment and interviewing of women together with other commitments, the scientific trip to collect data from male participants was delayed to November 2018.

All participants were sent an information sheet before their participation. Once, an agreement has been reached, and an interview has been scheduled, participants were asked to sign an

informed consent form to participate in the study. This was met with some hesitance from some participants because it is culturally suspicious to request people's signature. However, upon explaining the reason for the consent form and obligations of the researcher, all participants provided their consent. Nevertheless, some participants refused the recording of their interviews. The consent form provided to participants meets with the standards of Oxford Brookes University but was translated into Arabic for participants to understand its content.

4.7 Data Collection

Following the recruitment of potential participants, data collection began. The process was divided into two phases, one that focused on female and the other on male participants. All data of the current study were collected using semi-structured interviews, and all interviews were conducted in the Arabic language. The process began with contacting potential participants who filled the recruitment form. They were asked whether they were still interested in taking part in the study. Those, who said they were no longer interested or provided invalid information, i.e. wrong contact details, were immediately eliminated, while those who agreed to participate in the study were asked to specify a time that was suitable for the interview to take place.

To ensure the data collected in this research was of the highest possible standard, Arabic was chosen to be the language of communication with participants, interviewing and data analysis. This was necessary as not all participants spoke English. The interview questions were translated by the researcher using "back translation" as recommended by Brislin (1970), and interviews were fully conducted in Arabic. The pilot study showed that participants understood the questions with no need for further explanation. The following sections will describe the data collection process and its analysis.

4.7.1 Female Interviews

As explained earlier (4.6.3 Social Challenges), the recruitment of female participants encountered major challenges. Therefore, dividing the process into two phases was a suitable

practice for the current research. Moreover, the initial plan was to interview 20 women, yet this was not possible because of the challenges explained above, and hence only 15 female interviews were conducted. Also, it was felt that the research had reached a saturation point of female data. Thus, it was felt that no further data collection from women was needed.

Women who showed interest in participating in the study were contacted using the contact details they provided. Most participants preferred WhatsApp - a widely used instant messaging app in Saudi Arabia and across the globe. It is an alternative messaging app for smartphones that allows users to communicate in texts, audio messages, audio and video calls using their mobile numbers. Potential participants were contacted in WhatsApp text messages as a convenient way of communication. Participants who agreed to continue with their participation were asked to specify a date and time of their preference for the interview to take place. Before the interview, all participants were emailed a participant information sheet and a consent form, which they signed and returned.

Despite the difficulties faced in the initial recruitment of female participants, the snowballing technique was effective. Each interviewee was asked to circulate the online recruitment form with their groups of friends and relatives. This technique was effective and returned positive results. The trust built between the researcher and participants was passed through these participants to their nominees. Some participants informed the researcher that they defended the trustworthiness of the researcher when their nominees asked about the behaviour of the researcher.

Not all participants recruited using the snowballing technique were suitable for the study. For example, some women who filled the form did not have previous travel experience but wanted to participate by helping the researcher. Others had relationships and travel experiences that were too similar to their nominators, e.g. sisters of unmarried participants. Normally unmarried sisters within Saudi families have similar travel experiences as they both play a similar role within the decision process, and they mostly travel with their families. This was clear from the list of visited countries stated in the recruitment form by sisters. Moreover, within the interview,

single female participants were asked whether their level of involvement in the decision-making process applies to their brothers and sisters, which most of them answered with “Yes”.

Once the time and date were agreed, participants were contacted for interviews. The population of the study was diverse in terms of geographic location and demographics, and this was expected to generate rich data. In the first phase of data collection, 15 interviews were undertaken with female participants of which were three from Riyadh, five from Jeddah, three from Jazan, one from Abha, two from Taif and one from Tabuk. In terms of age, eight female participants were aged 21-30, and seven were 31-40 years old. However, none of the participants was above 40 or below 21 years old. As it is culturally unacceptable for unrelated men and women to sit together in public or private places, all interviews were conducted using Audio calls over Skype and FaceTime.

The duration of interviews varied depending on the circumstances of each interview. Interviews with participants whose consent to record was obtained lasted 50 to 60 minutes. However, five out of 15 interviewees refused the recording, which resulted in longer durations. During the interviews, the researcher noted the participants’ reactions to some questions. Generally, all questions of the interview were answered; however, some participants seemed uncomfortable towards specific questions.

For example, during participant Sahar’s interview (F), the following note was taken “interviewee took some time before answering the question, it seems that questions on Hijab, clothes and religious aspects are not easy to answer for women”. Moreover, participant Nisreen (F) stated that “we do not normally answer this question because you know, it is a big topic, but I trust you as a researcher”. Such hesitance from some female participants to answer this question has influenced the design of the second phase of data collection.

Therefore, it was felt that asking such a direct question to men about female relative’s Hijab may not be appropriate as it may be considered disrespectful. Therefore, the question was rephrased to “Do you think Saudi women may prefer to spend their holidays in outbound

destinations because they want to have more freedom on their appearance, e.g. Hijab and type of clothes?”.

Table 3, below contains details of female participants of the study. As stated in the ethical approval request, the names used in the table below and across the study referring to participants are pseudonyms. The table also includes countries/cities participants mentioned as destinations they have visited for leisure purpose. It is important to note that most participants who travelled to Europe (including men and women), visited multiple destinations in a single trip. For example, participants who travelled to Germany and Austria; France, Netherlands and Germany; France, Switzerland and Germany; Paris and Amsterdam; Poland, Czech Republic and Austria; Italy and Switzerland; France and Italy, and other Schengen countries, they travelled to these destinations in a single trip.

Table 3. Female Participants' Details

	Name	Age	Marital status	Destinations visited for Leisure Purpose
1.	Faridah	21-30	Single	Dubai, Qatar, Austria and Germany.
2.	Sahar	21-30	Single	Dubai, France, Netherlands and Germany
3.	Hessa	31-40	Single	Dubai Germany, Austria
4.	Nouf	21-30	Single	Dubai, Egypt, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, London, France, Switzerland and Germany.
5.	Nisreen	21-30	Single	Dubai, Kuwait, Egypt, London, Paris and Amsterdam.
6.	Sondos	31-40	Single	Dubai, Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkey
7.	Noha	31-40	Single	Dubai, Turkey, Malaysia, Germany and Austria
8.	Ameena	31-40	Divorced	Dubai, Spain, Italy, France, Switzerland, London
9.	Ola	21-30	Married	Dubai Turkey and Malaysia
10.	Sumaya	31-40	Married	Indonesia, Malaysia and Mauritius
11.	Asala	31-40	Married	America, Canada, UK, Italy. France, Turkey, Singapore and Australia
12.	Halima	21-30	Married	Dubai, Kuwait, Bahrain, Turkey, Malaysia, London and Switzerland.
13.	Abeer	21-30	Married	Dubai and America
14.	Fatima	31-40	Married	Turkey, Malaysia, Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Poland Slovakia
15.	Israa	21-30	Married	UK, Germany, Netherlands, France, Switzerland

4.7.2 Male Interviews

The second phase of the interviews included male participants from several cities across Saudi Arabia, e.g. five from Jazan, three from Jeddah, two from Makkah, four from Riyadh, two from Dammam, three from Abha, one from Madina. The sample size in the second phase was 20 participants, and the majority of them were married and had children. All participants in the second phase were interviewed in face-to-face sessions, with 11 of interviews taking place in Jazan, five interviews in Jeddah and four interviews in Riyadh. In terms of age, nine men participating in the study were aged 31-40, six participants aged 41-50 and five participants aged 21-30.

Table 4. Male Participants' Details

	Name	Age	Marital status	Destinations visited for Leisure Purpose
1.	Khalid	21-30	Single	Dubai, Turkey, Malaysia, Georgia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia
2.	Hazem	21-30	Single	Dubai, Turkey, Italy, Austria, Indonesia.
3.	Omar	21-30	Single	Dubai, Turkey, Malaysia, Austria and Germany
4.	Faisal	31-40	Single	Dubai, Turkey, Indonesia, Bosnia, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria
5.	Basim	21-30	Single	Indonesia, Turkey
6.	Abdullah	31-40	Divorced	Dubai, Morocco, Egypt, America, Indonesia, Amsterdam and Paris
7.	Osama	31-40	Divorced	Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Turkey.
8.	Hussein	31-40	Married	Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Turkey and Indonesia.
9.	Fahad	31-40	Married	France, Italy, Switzerland, UK, Bosnia.
10.	Samer	21-30	Married	Dubai, Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey, Sri Lanka
11.	Othman	41-50	Married	Yemen, Egypt, Dubai, Indonesia, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Poland, Czech, Slovakia, Austria.
12.	Salem	31-40	Married	Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Austria and Germany
13.	Hafid	41-50	Married	Dubai, Indonesia, Turkey
14.	Ibrahim	41-50	Married	Indonesia and Sri Lanka.
15.	Mohsen	31-40	Married	Dubai, Morocco, Egypt, Spain, Italy.
16.	Homood	41-50	Married	Dubai, Bosnia, Turkey, Germany, Austria.
17.	Hassan	41-50	Married	Dubai, London, Turkey, France, Switzerland, Italy.
18.	Ahmed	31-40	Married	Egypt, Dubai, Morocco, Bosnia, Croatia, Austria.
19.	Mansour	41-50	Married	Dubai, Indonesia, Turkey, Egypt.
20.	Metab	31-40	Married	Egypt, UAE (Dubai & Abu Dhabi), Yemen, Oman, Turkey, Morocco, Austria, Azerbaijan, Indonesia.

Male interviews did not encounter difficulties except that many participants were more reluctant to answer some questions compared to female participants, even though interview questions did not include too sensitive topics. Participant in many cases used third-person language to avoid talking directly about themselves. Such reluctance might have been the result of the face-to-face interviews that were used for men as participants felt that their identities were exposed to the researcher compared to the Audio calls interviews used with female participants, which provides a higher level of privacy to participants. However, despite their reluctance in some questions, all participants said they were comfortable with the questions and the interviewing experience.

4.7.3 Explanation of Participants' Details

The participants' details tables include participants' names, ages, marital status, social/religious views and destinations each participant has visited. This section will define the variables the tables included, justify their use and outline their importance for the research:

- **Names**

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the names of participants in the tables above are pseudonyms that do not represent the real names participants provided. Even though it was not anticipated that the study would cause any harms to participants, this practice was followed to provide complete privacy to participants. The practice included swapping participants names and using completely new names.

- **Age**

Some participants were happy to provide their ages. However, it was found that the use of age groups was more convenient for most participants. The study completely avoided people who are under 21 because according to the Saudi law, any person under 21 years of age will require parental consent to travel outside the country including those between 18 and 21 years old. Other age groups such as above 40 for female participants and above 50 for male participants were not achieved during the recruitment stage.

- **Marital Status**

Marital status was an important variable for the current research as it influenced destination choice and involvement in the decision-making process. There are only four legal marital statuses in Saudi Arabia, i.e. single, married, divorced and widow. Any relationship outside marriage is considered illegal, and hence no children can be born legally outside marriage. Moreover, although divorce is legal and common in Saudi Arabia, it is generally viewed as a negative matter for both men and women. Therefore, many divorced people may not tell that they are divorced. For example, participant Aameena (F) was hesitant to mention the word divorced or separated. In the recruitment form, she labelled herself as single but also mentioned that she has two children. When she was asked whether she has previously been married, she answered with 'yes' and continued that she was separated. Similarly, Abdullah (M) was not comfortable to mention that he was divorced.

Participants were also asked to describe themselves and their social/religious views. However, as the term liberal normally holds negative interpretation in the Saudi culture, other terms such as (open-minded) were used in the question. Based on their own understandings and definitions of the terms, participants were happy to describe themselves either conservative, less conservative or open-minded. In general, female participants scored a higher level of open-mindedness (as socially defined by Saudis) compared to male participants.

A key reason for the absence of conservative female participants in the study was that communication with a non-related man is considered against the norms, and hence only those women with less conservative views were happy to participate in the research. Nonetheless, male participants of different views were included in the study with only five participants described themselves as open-minded, two as less-conservative and the remaining were conservatives. Although the majority of male participants described themselves as conservatives, it is expected that some of them chose the conservative label to avoid the

negative interpretations associated with the liberal/open-minded labels as they feel their identities were exposed to the researcher.

4.7.4 Data Translation

The data were transcribed in the original language of the interviews. However, quotes were translated into English by the researcher. To ensure that the translation process does not compromise the quality of the data, e.g. misinterpretations or loss of meanings, the use of “back translation” as recommended by Brislin (1970) was adopted. Moreover, the translation process did not focus on providing literal translation but on translating the meanings due to the absence of equivalent terms. Quotes were translated first by the researcher into English, and then the translated texts were translated again into Arabic. This was done in two separate sessions and was found to provide accurate results. Reading the two texts (the original and the translation) provided the same meaning and hence was accepted as an accurate translation of quotes.

Table 5. Example of Translated Quotes

"الإناس جيل طين كلفني حالك فإ... بنال الشيء الذي يعبرون ها عجب. فأمرد لأناسي حليب بك غنى كل شيء، لي فمطيسين للعيلة، وال حملك، ولي شتس هين، الوضع عقد ومارقد رينس ط زيبرى"
"People do not let you enjoy yourself... like the taboo things here. I mean people judge on everything, the way you ware Abaya, and the Hijab, what you do in the outside, it is just difficult, and you cannot have fun like in other countries."
"لو مأسفل برى، فمضي م عظم لعل يفيا الاستراحة م شباب. ل عبلوت والي ييشن وال رش وفقلام وشيش. صح حاجة ملة ل كن بلنهب ذي أحسن من ذي فمضي طي ل هالت وال ال عراس"
"If I do not travel, I will spend most nights in our 'Esteraha', playing cards and PlayStation, watching TV and smoking Shisha. I know it is boring but better than going to the malls or attending social events."
"كل الناس حولن لتقريباً زاروا النمسا وسويسرا، ولم تشوفل صورا لوفيو هاتال وحتتجن زبصراحة من هذال جمال مافي مكان على وجه الأرض ممكن يكون أجمل من سويسرا والنمسا، أحسن ل هاقطعة من الجنة"
"Everyone around us has been to Austria and Switzerland, and when you see the photos and videos, honestly you get shocked by how beautiful they are, no place on earth can be more beautiful than Switzerland and Austria, I feel like it is a piece of heaven."
لي أخى كل شيء فإغال يلى كن أسوأ شيء هلى فن ادق متفع علي هاكل كفتف عي أوروبا، وعلى طيش؟ ال إطللة وال طيعة وال جو وال خدمات سرياحية. صقني بين صال س عرت حصل فمضل لس كرفي التشيك مولندا مع إطللة على بحيرة وال جبل الحضر وال سوق شيعي وتشوف الناس تروح وتجي، حاجات فتحت الفس"
"Everything here is expensive, but the worst thing is the hotels you spend as you do in Europe. And for what? No good view, no good nature or weather, and no good tourism services. Believe

me for half the price you can get the best accommodation in Czech and Poland with a view over a lake or a green mountain or a market where you see people going around. Things make you happy”.

السويسر اكلت غالي قهر راح قبل تهب قلن قوفن أسعال فن ادق وأل كل بي أن الناس شوفن ا ل ه ما دي فاسبقت سفن أل طي والنجس
ولكن تبصر راحة جمل في الأرض"

No, Switzerland was very expensive for us, we checked hotels and food prices and asked other people and found it unsuitable, so we decided to go to Germany and Austria, and they were like godly heaven on the earth.”

4.8 Data Analysis

Data of the current research were analysed manually following the framework method of Ritchie and Spencer (1994). According to Brunt (1997), the framework method provides a good tool for qualitative data analysis. Semley (2012) reported that the strength of the framework method is in its structure, which allows the researcher to reconsider and rework ideas. It provides a systematic process that involves sifting, charting and sorting data materials based on the key themes and issues that arise from the transcribed data (Srivastava and Thomson, 2009; Semley, 2012).

The framework method is similar to thematic analysis, particularly in its initial stages when recurring and key themes are identified. However, what distinguishes the framework method from the thematic analysis is its ability to provide a greater emphasis on making the data analysis a more transparent process by illustrating the linkage between its five stages (Smith and Firth, 2011). The framework method consists of five interconnected stages, i.e. familiarisation, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting and mapping and interpretation. These interconnected stages enable the researcher to move back and forth across the data until a coherence account emerges (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

Brunt (1997) finds these stages of analysis to help researchers ensure richness of data in scope and nature. Semley (2012) suggests that the richness of data can be achieved through the “process of immersion, conceptualisation and judgement before data were lifted from their initial context and interpreted and defined” p. 230. Hence, this method is reliable most with the

creative and conceptual ability of the researcher “to determine meaning, salience and connections” p.231.

The framework method was chosen for the analysis of the data in the current research for three reasons (Roberts *et al.*, 2010, p. 23): 1. It provides coherence and structure to otherwise cumbersome, qualitative data (i.e. interview transcripts); 2. It facilitates systematic analysis, thus allowing the research process to be explicit and replicable; 3. Despite the inherent structure, the process of abstraction and conceptualisation allowed the researcher to be creative with the data.

While it is a common practice for researchers to use electronic software to enhance their data analysis, e.g. NVivo, researchers have acknowledged that these software applications have their drawbacks. Dollah, Abduh and Rosmaladewi (2017) noted that these applications are: time-consuming, expensive and limited in their ability to interpret data (the latter remains the responsibility of the researcher). Welsh (2002) suggests that researchers make a trade-off when choosing between software-assisted and manual analysis. The former allows a more standardisation, while the latter allows for deeper exploration of latent and implicit meanings. Manual techniques analysis was selected for this research because the type of data collected requires the researcher to engage with them in ways that software-assisted analysis does not allow. For example, the issues related to social norms and how participants answered specific questions, their tones, vocal and facial expressions all required the researcher to engage in interpreting them.

The key characteristic of the framework method of analysis is the reduction of data, i.e. during charting, participants answers are summarised and moved into a matrix chart that allows a more focused analysis process. These charts are also flexible enough to include field notes taken during the data collection process. Gale *et al.* (2013) believed that a framework method is an excellent tool for qualitative data analysis especially interview data, because 1) it provides a systematic model for managing and mapping the data; 2) it is desirable to generate

themes by making comparison within and between cases, and 3) it provides a powerful tool to manage large data through its matrix form and summaries of data content.

4.8.1 The Analysis Process

As noted earlier, the analysis framework involves five stages which are: familiarisation, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting, and mapping and interpretation. In the current research, the familiarisation stage involved reading the interview transcripts multiple times, listening to audiotapes in an attempt to identify key ideas and recurrent themes. This was followed by identifying a thematic framework, which involved the use of notes taken during the familiarisation stage (see appendix, 10). In this stage, some themes were identified while other themes emerged from prior-identified issues in the research.

The analysis process began before data collection was completed. This allowed the interview questions to evolve and allowed the researcher to focus on issues that were not expected when the interview questions were designed. For example, the use of Ezba among some outbound tourists and the role of instant messaging applications on the decision-making process were among the topics that arose during this process of ongoing analysis. The key themes identified in the analysis of the current research include both prior-identified themes arising from the research questions and others noted during the familiarisation stage of the analysis process.

For example, during the familiarisation stage, the links between outbound travel and the perception of domestic destinations among Saudi tourists were noted. Therefore, this emerged as one of the themes the current research aims to explore. The themes identified in the analysis of the research are as follows: 1) The perception of domestic tourism; 2) Motives for outbound travel (escaping and seeking motives); 3) the role of culture in Saudi tourists' holiday choices; 4) Factors influencing the holiday choices of Saudi tourists.

This was followed by coding the data or what is referred to in the framework analysis as indexing, followed by charting which involves the use of a matrix to arrange the indexed

portions of the data of the previous stage into charts that include the identified themes. Table (6) below shows an example of the four early stages of the analysis process. This was followed by mapping and interpretation, where results of the former steps were described, interpreted and discussed.

Table 6. Research Themes and Codes

Theme 1	The Perception of Domestic Tourism			
Categories	Codes			
• Perception of the natural environment:	Perception of Weather		Perception of Natural Environment	
• Perception of Tourism Services and Products	Expensive Accommodation		Poor leisure Services	
• Perception of Social Culture	Socio-Cultural Constraints			
Theme 2	Motives for Outbound Travel			
Categories	Codes			
• Escaping Natural Environment	Escaping Hot Weather		Escaping Unattractive Nature	
• Seeking Novel Natural Environment	Seeking Cool Weather		Seeking Green Nature	
• Escaping Society	Escaping Social Commitments		Escaping Social Norms	
• Seeking Personal Freedom and Space	Freedom of Outfit	Freedom of Practices	Privacy with Family	
Theme 3	The Role of Culture in the Holiday Choices			
Categories	Codes			
• Cultural Novelty Seeking	Seeking different People		Seeking different culture	
• Cultural Familiarity Seeking	Seeking culturally Suitable Places		Seeking familiar Food	
Theme 4	Factors Influencing Outbound Holiday Choices			
Categories	Codes			
• Social Media Influence on Decision-Making	WhatsApp	Telegram	Snapchat	
• Influencers Role on Saudi Outbound Travel	Learn about new places	Save time and effort	Follow step-by-step	
• Saudi Women Role in Holiday Decisions	Pressure on decision-maker	Contribution to decision	Financial contribution	

5. MOTIVES FOR OUTBOUND TOURISTS FROM SAUDI ARABIA

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the motives for outbound travel among a sample of tourists from Saudi Arabia. It begins by discussing the perception of domestic tourism shared among the participants of the research and how this influences their holiday choices. Moreover, the chapter discusses their key escaping and seeking motives the research found. However, before discussing the identified themes of the research, it is important first to know what destinations are popular among outbound Saudi tourists.

5.2 Participant Choices

Table (7) below illustrates the destination choices of the sample. The list of destinations in the table is in line with several statistical reports on outbound Saudi tourists (Alfakki, 2016; Alsayah, 2017; Khalil, 2018; Abdullah and Sameeh, 2019). The most notable was the popularity of the city of Dubai. When asked about why they chose Dubai, most participants stated that this was because of its close proximity to Saudi Arabia, ease of access as Saudis can visit it without passports (using their Saudi national ID) and lower cost of travel as there are several low-cost flights from many Saudi cities to Dubai and its nearby airports. These factors make it a popular destination for short breaks.

Turkey was the second most mentioned country with Istanbul and Trabzon being the only two cities named by participants. In fact, it was found that all participants who said they visited Turkey have been to both cities. Indonesia was the third most popular destination among the participants of the research. Moreover, they also mentioned several European countries with their focus on Schengen member countries. It was found that it is a common practice among Saudi tourists to visit several Schengen countries on one trip.

A point of interest is that the majority of these destinations have been described by participants to have green nature. Based on participants' comments, green nature refers to the availability of green landscapes, rivers, lakes and natural features that are not normally available in Saudi

Arabia. This is in line with previous research on tourists from Arab and GCC countries that green nature is a key factor that influences destination choices (Allan, 2014; Moufakkir and AlSaleh, 2017). However, although the table below is dominated by destinations characterised by their green nature, it also includes destinations such as Egypt, Morocco and GCC countries that participants did not choose for their nature but other reasons. Table (7) below shows the most mentioned destinations by participants (numbered by highest to lowest).

Table 7. Popular Destinations among Saudi Tourists

Destination	Destination
1. Dubai	2. Turkey
3. Indonesia	4. Austria
5. Malaysia	6. Germany
7. Egypt	8. France
9. Italy	10. Switzerland
11. Sri Lanka	12. London
13. Morocco	14. Czech Republic
15. Netherlands	16. Bosnia
17. UK	18. USA
19. Spain	20. Poland

The purpose of the table above is to show the destinations participants of the study mentioned and understand the type of destinations that are popular among Saudi tourists. In the table above, it can be noted that London and the UK were both included. Although London is located in the UK which falls under the green nature category that participants described, its visitors did not mention its nature but its activities, parks, shopping, cafes, restaurant and lifestyle. However, those who visited London and the north of England or Scotland referred to the UK's green nature. Therefore, it was found suitable to include London as a destination on its own as it was mentioned by 5 participants (only visited London in the UK).

The average duration of holidays among participants varied depending on the destination. Participants who sought green nature (especially in Europe) were found to spend between 10 to 14 nights, normally spent in more than one country. Similarly, participants who visited Indonesia and Turkey were also found to spend an average of 10-14 nights. Nevertheless, city destinations like London, Dubai, Paris, Amsterdam were characterised by a relatively shorter duration of visit, i.e. 5-7 nights.

Although each visitor to Schengen countries is free to travel throughout the area, it was found that there are popular routes among the participants of the research. For example, Germany and Austria are among the most popular routes participants who visited Austria followed. Similarly, Switzerland and France were also found to be a popular route for travel. Other routes were also present in several interviews, e.g. Italy, Switzerland and France; Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Austria. Most visitors to Schengen countries said that they enjoyed driving through the borders.

The findings related to destination choices are in line with the earlier point that Arab tourists, especially from GCC countries, prefer green-nature destinations (Moufakkir and AlSaleh, 2017; Salman and Hasim, 2012). Therefore, they spent longer times when visiting green-nature destinations. The destinations that participants chose and variation of holiday duration based on the destination type (green-nature or city destination) mirror the patterns identified in the statistics of the Saudi Ministry of Tourism (SMT) on outbound tourists (MAS, 2019). This suggests that the sample profile of the research bears similarities to the characteristics of the wider population that SMT's statistics included. However, as statistics-based research (e.g. SMT's statistics) normally lacks depth investigation of phenomena, the current research contributes to them by providing explanations.

For example, although the United States is positively perceived among the majority of participants, statistics from SMT show that it is among the least popular destinations for Saudi tourists. A key reason for such unpopularity is the distance of travel from Saudi Arabia to the U.S. which the current and previous research found to have a major impact on tourist arrivals (McKercher, Chan and Lam, 2008). However, participants who said they had visited the U.S. for leisure, said they spent between 20-30 nights. Therefore, the findings showed a strong correlation between distance to destination and the duration for the research participants.

The findings are also in line with previous research that suggested a strong relationship between the cost of travel (in money and time) and the number of tourist arrivals as well as

their duration of the visit (Murphy, Benckendorff and Moscardo, 2007). In other words, the higher the cost of the holiday and the longer the distance to the destination affects the number of visits negatively but the duration of holiday positively (Murphy, Benckendorff and Moscardo, 2007). Others researchers also noted similar points in Silberman (1985), Nicolau and Más (2009) and Amoako-Tuffour and Martínez-Espiñeira (2012) suggesting that the relationship between financial and temporal costs, and the number and duration of visits is evident.

5.3 Perception of Domestic Tourism

The data analysis suggested that there is a relationship between the perception of domestic tourism shared among the participants of the research and their desire to spend holidays in outbound destinations. Statistics from the Saudi Tourism Ministry (MAS, 2019) demonstrate that Saudi tourists prefer to spend their holidays in outbound destinations, which is also reflected in this study's findings. However, while this is not unique to Saudi tourists, the unique aspect is that participants of the research mostly had a negative perception of domestic tourism. This perception appears to be mostly driven by socio-cultural constraints, quality and cost of services and lack of green natural environment. This section will present the perception of domestic tourism shared between the participants of the research and investigate how their perception influenced their motivation for outbound holidays.

General marketing studies have acknowledged that a poor brand image influence consumers' purchase intention negatively (Wu, Yeh and Hsiao, 2011; Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012; Wang and Tsai, 2014). Moreover, a negative brand image conveys negative messages about its products, services and prices (Erdil, 2015). This can be applied to the perception of domestic tourism shared among the research participants. However, this negative perception was not only a result of poor development and management by the NTO in Saudi Arabia, but also because many of the attributes that Saudis consider important to a holiday are limited in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, despite the several initiatives made by the NTO, the participants of the research continued to hold a negative perception about domestic tourism and hence preferred

to spend their holidays in outbound destinations. Table (8) below shows a summary of data related to the perception of domestic tourism among participants of the research.

In tourism, destination image, in general, has been linked with tourist destination choice and intention of visit (Chen and Tsai, 2007). The current research highlights four main issues that participants associated with their perception of domestic tourism of Saudi Arabia. These issues are 1) the natural environment, 2) poor tourism services, 3) cost of domestic holidays and 4) the socio-cultural constraints. These issues were found to dominate the participants' perception of domestic tourism. Next, these issues will be explored thoroughly.

5.3.1 Perception of the Natural Environment

The natural environment was one of the key issues that the participants associated with Saudi domestic tourism. Almost all participants perceived the natural environment of Saudi Arabia negatively, and most of their comments focused on the weather and the terrains of the country. Therefore, although Saudi Arabia has a diverse natural environment, participants used expressions such as “unattractive” and “we have no nature” to describe it because the majority of the country consists of deserts and is less green than the destinations that the participants of the research visited. “For me, I do not enjoy the nature of Saudi Arabia” (Mohsen - M). Although ‘nature’ is a broad term that includes all elements of the natural environment, participants of the research used it in a limited way. In almost all interviews, participants used the term ‘nature’ as a synonym of green nature and included elements that are mostly present in countries with “green natural environment, rivers and lakes”.

Another concept within the term ‘green nature’ was the weather aligned with a perception that ‘hot’ in the context of Saudi Arabia was an undesirable characteristic (as indicated by facial expressions and vocal tones that suggest they dislike it). The comment provided by Ahmed (M) and others in table 8, clearly suggests that the weather was a key issue of domestic tourism for many participants.

Table 8. Sample Comments on Domestic Tourism Perception

Theme	Perception of Domestic Tourism among Saudi Tourists	
Category	Code	Quotes
Perception of Natural Environment	Weather	"I do not enjoy it here. It is very hot, and the Abaya makes it even worse" (Ola - F). "Everyone I know does not like the weather here. It is very hot in the summer" (Fatima - F) "For me, the weather is the biggest problem. Domestic tourism is not for me" (Ahmed - M)
	Nature	"Last year I could not travel, so I tried to do something here (participant giggles) but how can you enjoy it without nature. I was all the time looking at my photos in Indonesia and Turkey... Huge difference" (Osama - M).
Perception of Tourism Services	Poor Services	"There is nothing you can do to enjoy it here. Sometimes I try to take my children out, the day finish while we are still stuck in congestion" (Homood - M). "We do not have many parks here, no good activities except going shopping and restaurants" (Halima-F).
Perception of Holiday Cost	Cost of Accommodation	"Everything here is expensive, but the worst thing is the hotels, you spend as you do in Europe... believe me for half the price you can get the best accommodation in Czech and Poland with a view over a lake or a green mountain" (Othman - M). "You know, now I am in a visit to Jazan and the hotels cost double the cost in Bosnia... I know you spend more on the flights, but it is worth the money not like here" (Fahad - M)
Perception of social Culture	Socio-cultural constraints	"People do not let you enjoy yourself... like the taboo things here. I mean people judge on everything, the way you ware Abaya, and the Hijab, what you do in the outside, it is just difficult, and you cannot have fun like in other countries" (Abeer - F).

Similarly, Fatima (F) was asked why she would not spend her holiday domestically, and she confirmed that everyone she knew disliked the weather of Saudi Arabia. Her use of generalised language indicates that the weather was a key issue for her. Ola (F) added another issue related to the hot weather in her comment “the Abaya makes it even worse”. This indicates that for some Saudi women, the Abaya (mostly black) makes domestic tourism even more unattractive as it absorbs more heat (Kittmer, 2018). Previous research has acknowledged the important role of weather in tourist destination choices and experiences (Jacobsen *et al.*, 2011; Jeuring and Peters, 2013; Becken and Wilson, 2013a) and this study adds to this body of knowledge by demonstrating how negative perceptions of weather can adversely undermine the image of domestic destinations. This research, therefore, asserts that the weather of Saudi is largely perceived negatively by Saudi people and, together with the perception of other elements of the natural environment, plays a key motive for their outbound travel.

5.3.2 Perception of Tourism Services

Similarly, participants of the research were found to hold a negative perception about the tourism products and services available in Saudi Arabia. Poor public transports and the urban infrastructure in Saudi cities limit the extent to which residents can explore the country without using personal cars. However, poor urban infrastructure means that roads are congested (see the comment of Homood (M) in Table, 8). Other elements of poor service and product development were related to the limited number of outdoor activities with most entertainment being offered indoor. While this was mostly an issue related to the natural environment of Saudi Arabia as the weather drives most activities indoor, the limited number of outdoor activities is one of the issues participants associated with domestic tourism.

For example, participant Halima (F) said that the limited number of parks is her issue with domestic tourism as she likes to spend her time in parks, relaxing and enjoying the weather. In her response, she also mentioned the names of parks she visited abroad in comparison with what was available in Saudi Arabia. The parks she mentioned included Hyde Park, Jardin

Anglais, and other parks she visited in Turkey and Malaysia “we do not have something like this here in Jeddah”. However, the participants also said on another occasion that she also did not like the weather in Saudi Arabia. Several other participants also mentioned the issue of the limited outdoor activities, the limited number of parks in Saudi cities and their poor conditions.

5.3.3 Perception of Holiday Cost

Many participants referred to the cost of the holiday in Saudi Arabia as expensive. In addition to their dissatisfaction with leisure services provided domestically, most of the respondents indicated that spending a holiday in Saudi Arabia cost more than in their preferred destinations. The most popular type of tourist accommodation in Saudi Arabia is apartments with 185,000 rooms and hotels with 420,000 rooms (MAS, 2019). According to the same source, the average price for accommodation per night is US\$ 96 for hotels and US\$ 79 for apartments. Although the average price is similar to countries that Saudi tourists visit, these prices increase dramatically during holidays. Participants suggested that these prices were high compared to what they spend on accommodations in outbound destinations.

Othman (M) thought that accommodation prices in Saudi Arabia were double what he pays in destinations that offer a better natural environment, e.g. the Czech Republic and Poland. Similarly, Fahad (M) believed that when staying in a hotel domestically, the price was double what he paid in Bosnia (his last holiday destination). According to Ali *et al.* (2018), a fair price as perceived by visitors can increase tourists satisfaction. Participants such as Hussein (M) and Hafid (M), however, agreed that the total holiday cost they paid in outbound destinations (including flights) made their outbound holidays more expensive than a domestic holiday, but they felt they were worth it. In contrast, they believed that domestic tourism was not worth the money they normally spent. This suggests that a holiday cost is not the key issue for these tourists but their overall perception of value regarding the holiday destination.

5.3.4 Perception of Social Culture

The social culture of Saudi Arabia was found to be a major factor in the current research, with most participants referring to its negative influence on their domestic holiday choices. The research found that the socio-cultural constraints were the most significant factor that contributes to a poor perception of Saudi tourism among residents. Samer (M) described himself as conservative, yet he did not find domestic tourism an attractive option "...when outside the country, I feel I have fewer restrictions and more privacy with the family... I mean no one looks at you or care about what you do". The examples he provided include playing with his wife in amusement parks, going to cafes and restaurants (in Saudi Arabia until December 2019, family dining was only possible in closed cabinets inside family sections, see images 1,2,3 and 4 below). Similarly, Salem (M) said that in Saudi Arabia, his wife had to cover all the time (a personal choice influenced by the culture), which did not suit them on holiday. This has implications for the current research that families, and especially women, preferred outbound holidays as they provided freedom from culturally driven constraints and restrictions.

Abeer (F) said that people's judgement of others' choices of appearance, activities and behaviour is what made domestic tourism less appealing. "I do not know, I feel like it (travelling domestically) is not suitable for us, even my father does not like it... sometimes we go to amusement parks, but we just let the children play, we cannot enjoy it with people watching us... yes, I think all my family feel the same". These comments show that although both men and women said the socio-cultural constraints reduce their interest in domestic tourism, the issue is largely related to women wanting to enjoy more freedom and husbands wanting to enjoy a better personal experience with their wives and families. The findings indicate that the socio-cultural constraints are rooted in culture and religious teachings practised in Saudi Arabia while the society applies them through its strong social connectivity (see, 2.5.7). The following sections will elaborate further on these issues.

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Image 1. A segregation board separates women and families from men at a McDonald's restaurant in a Riyadh shopping mall (BBC, 2019).

Image 2. A McDonald's restaurant in Saudi Arabia applying gender-segregated entrances (the national, 2019).

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Image 3. A Saudi restaurant brand is applying family dining cabinets in its branch in Bahrain (Mubasher News, 2018).

Image 4. Family dining cabinets in Altazaj restaurant in Saudi Arabia (Altazaj Facebook page, 2018)

5.4 Motives for Outbound Travel

The findings of the current research showed that leisure tourists from Saudi Arabia travelled to outbound destinations for several reasons which are mostly related to the nature, society and culture of Saudi Arabia. Like most tourists, Saudis are motivated to travel by both escape/push and seeking/pull motives that Iso-Ahola (1980); (1982) and Dann (1981) outlined, and later research has clarified. However, the motivations of Saudis to travel differs from those associated with other cultures, as observed by researchers.

This section will present and discuss the findings related to the travel motives of outbound Saudi tourists. The interviews included a number of questions dedicated to exploring the travel motives of outbound Saudi tourists and understand why they do not prefer to spend their holidays domestically and why they seek to travel to outbound destinations for their holidays. Some of the questions were answered in section 5.3 that presented and discussed findings related to the perception of domestic tourism among Saudis.

The findings discussed in 5.3 showed that participants of the research perceived the natural environment of Saudi Arabia negatively describing it to be hot and unattractive. Moreover, the findings showed that the socio-cultural constraints in Saudi Arabia are a leading cause of Saudi outbound tourists finding domestic tourism less appealing. In this section, the focus will be on elaborating on these findings and discussing their role in motivating Saudi tourists for outbound travel. The factors that motivated the research participants for outbound travel can be grouped into four key motives: escaping routine and natural environment, escaping social norms and commitments, seeking novel natural environment, and seeking personal freedom and space.

5.4.1 Escaping Routine and Natural Environment

Almost all research conducted on leisure travel motivations has concluded that tourists travel to change their routine. Hence, escaping routine is one of the most commonly shared travel motives among tourists, regardless of their gender, interests, nationality or cultural background (Van der Merwe, Slabbert and Saayman, 2011; Correia, Silva and Moço, 2008; Chang, 2007; Mehmetoglu, 2004). Routine escape includes escaping daily life elements, e.g. work, environment, activities and social commitments. Although participants' answers to the interview questions of the current research mostly focused on escaping social commitments and natural environment, participants also mentioned other elements of routine such as work, daily activities and the natural environment.

Daily routine in Saudi Arabia has been described as boring by participants of the study. For example, Ibrahim (M) referred to his daily activities as tedious but preferred them over spending his time going to shopping malls or attending social events. Also, Faisal (M) described attending weddings as an uninteresting activity. Other participants such as Omar (M) began his answer with "What should I do" indicating that he was not satisfied with his routine activities especially in the summertime, where most activities take place in closed places due to the hot weather. Hassan (M) stated that "the routine is killing in the summer". Also, the desire to escape work routine was mentioned by several participants.

The limited availability of entertainment in Saudi Arabia is a potential reason why participants presented critical comments on their routine life. For example, cinemas were banned in Saudi Arabia until 2018. Moreover, for over ten years, musical events and concerts were not authorised to perform publicly in Saudi Arabia until 2017 when they returned with the launch of the General Entertainment Authority (GEA) (Paul, 2017). Therefore, although Saudis shared routine escape motives with other tourists, they considered travel more as a need because of the limited level of entertainment available domestically. While this is projected to change as a result of the movement towards establishing an entertainment industry to support tourism, current statistics from the Tourism Information and Research Centre (MAS) show no

major changes in domestic or outbound travel numbers between 2016 and 2019 (MAS, 2020). Moreover, as the data were collected before these changes, it was not possible to ask participants whether their perception of domestic tourism changed.

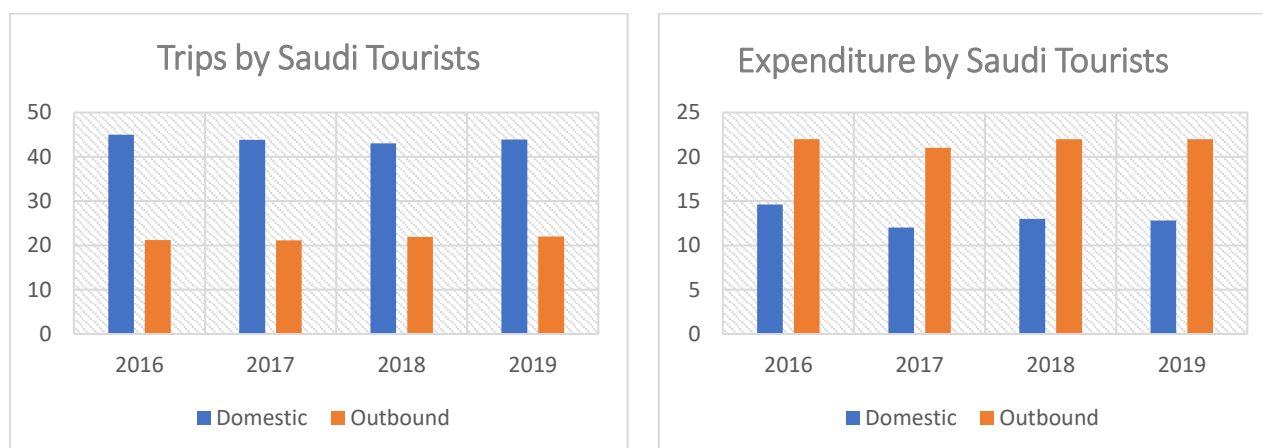


Figure 10. Domestic and Outbound Trips and Expenditure by Saudi Tourists

Since the launch of GEA, a large number of entertainment events have taken place in Saudi Arabia. These are, however, mostly focused on major cities, e.g. Riyadh and Jeddah. Other regions continue to have only limited levels of entertainment. Similarly, although cinemas have been officially authorised, provision is limited in numbers and locations (most are in major cities). Other forms of entertainment are also still limited in the country because of the absence of organisations operating in the entertainment sector.

Therefore, despite the current efforts by the GEA towards developing an entertainment sector to support the tourism industry, the most common form of activities in Saudi Arabia remain social events and gatherings, e.g. attending weddings, visiting friends and relatives, spending time in places like Esteraha (*a small bungalow or farmhouse owned or rented on an annual contract for friends and relatives to gather regularly*) or Shisha cafes. This makes travelling to an outbound destination to change the routine a key travel motive for Saudi tourists. For example:

“If I do not travel, I will spend most nights in our Esteraha, playing cards and PlayStation, watching TV and smoking Shisha. I know it is boring but better than going to the malls or attending social events” (Ibrahim - M).

This indicates that the limited level of entertainment that has been associated with Saudi Arabia plays a key role in Saudi tourists' demand for travel to outbound destinations to escape their routine lifestyle. However, with the current changes that the country is experiencing, it is anticipated that more domestic options to escape routine life will become available. Nevertheless, it is too soon to tell whether such movements towards entertainment will influence the routine escape motive among Saudi tourists because Saudi leisure tourists do not only travel to escape their routine lifestyle but also their routine environment in which they live: "to change the nature and people" (Ibrahim - M). As noted earlier, most participants described the natural environment of the country as unattractive, and hence they travelled to seek novel nature.

5.4.2 Seeking Novel Natural Environment

The environment that the participants of the research said they escaped included all routine elements in which they lived, including the environment created by people and the natural environment. Nature is defined by Oxford Dictionary as "the phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations" (online). According to this and other definitions, every component of the world that is not made or caused to be made by humans is considered part of nature regardless of its location, colour or features. Therefore, the use of the term 'nature' in the current research refers to the natural environment.

As noted earlier, almost all participants found that the natural environment of Saudi Arabia unappealing. "Nature in Saudi Arabia is unattractive, I love the nature in Europe, Turkey and East Asia, and there are many activities suitable for families. We spend most of our time around lakes" (Khalid - M). Previous researchers studying Saudi tourists have noted that one of the key motives for Saudi tourists to travel is to enjoy nature (Seddon and Khoja, 2003; Mumuni and Mansour, 2014; Alghamdi, 2007). However, while these studies were able to identify some of the travel motives, they failed to explain why tourists choose to travel in the first place.

The western dominance of tourism research ignored the different attitudes and motivations that exist in non-western cultures, which play a role in nurturing the desire to travel. In the current research, the natural environment is viewed to play the leading escape motive for those who travelled to enjoy a novel natural environment that was outside of their day-to-day experiences. Nature-seekers were found to be solely motivated by their desire to enjoy the natural resources of the destinations they visited.

For example, the main activities of Saudi nature-seekers interviewed in this research focused on outdoor recreation, relaxation and the enjoyment of natural resources such as green landscapes, rivers and lakes in an attempt to experience their novelty. This is in line with the findings of previous research conducted by Mumuni and Mansour (2014) who found that among the main activities of outbound Saudi tourists are relaxation and lazing around.

The type of destinations popular among Saudi tourists implies that they preferred outbound destinations that have green nature (a form of nature that is not available in Saudi Arabia). Key destinations that participants stated that they visited for nature included Switzerland, Austria, France, Italy, Croatia, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Malaysia. Although each of these destinations has distinct natural and cultural characteristics, green nature is common to all. Hafid (M) said that with his friends, they spent most of their time in the mountain of Puncak, where nature is green, and activities are suitable for adults and families. Ibrahim (M) also goes to Puncak, Indonesia regularly, mostly with friends. He said, “a lot of Saudis come to Puncak every year... we spend our time enjoying the nature”.

The use of expressions that described Saudi Arabia as having “no nature” or “unattractive nature” by participants reinforces what has been noted earlier that Saudi tourists who travel to seek nature, are motivated by their perception of the domestic natural environment. This also points to the inseparable relationship between the push and pull motives, i.e. when the push motive is the lack of favourable natural environment, tourists seek to visit destinations that provide such elements (Prayag and Ryan, 2011).

Table 9. Sample Comments on Natural Environment

Theme	Escaping and Seeking Natural Environment	
Category	Code	Quotes
Weather	Escaping Hot Weather	"The reason I travel to other countries is to avoid the bad weather in the summer. Sometimes the temperature gets close to 50°s, and it is dusty, you know how bad it is in the summer" (Faisal - M).
		"What should I do? in summer the weather is bad and not suitable to go out" (Omar - M)
		"The hot weather here makes us sleep during the day and wake up all night, and this is tiring" (Abeer - F)
	Seeking Cool Weather	"Trabzon is good, but Austria is better especially Zell am See, the weather is nicer in the summer, and it is more beautiful" (Hussein - M).
		"We went to the Alps region, it was like heaven, the nature and the weather wow, honestly unbelievable and was sometimes raining... the morning is like Heidi life ... it was the most beautiful place I have ever been to, I will always try to go back" (Faridah - F).
Nature	Escaping the Unattractive Nature	"The only place that is suitable for a domestic holiday in the summertime is Abha because it has a cooler weather, but it has become boring, and children do not enjoy it anymore" (Othman - M)
		"Nature in Saudi Arabia is unattractive" (Khalid - M)
		"The weather is bad, and the nature is not attractive" (Halima - F)
	Seeking Green Nature	"All I look for is the green nature. It is enough to spend the whole year in the heat. One month in the nature (Green nature) clears the mind, pleases the soul and charges it until the next summer" (Mohsen - M).
		"I mostly travel to enjoy the nature..." (Samer - M).
		"You know we live in a country that has no nature and the thing we need to see is the nature" (Hafid - M)

However, the research found that although Saudi tourists escaped their routine nature, they were also motivated to travel by their desire to escape the hot weather. In fact, in several interviews, their desire to escape the hot weather was vocalised as a stronger driver than that to experience nature. Therefore, tourists tended to travel to countries that provided what was not available in Saudi Arabia, i.e. known for their cool climate and green nature, e.g. European countries, Turkey and East Asian countries. Nisreen (F) said, "I only go to Europe in the summer...mostly the weather. No, Dubai only in the winter".

Several studies discussed the relationship between weather and tourism. According to Smith (1993), tourism and its activities are largely dependent on weather and climate. Thus, Becken and Wilson (2013b) and Machete *et al.* (2014) argued that because weather is crucial to the tourism industry, it plays an important role in tourists decision-making. Scott and Lemieux (2010) noted that the weather in the tourists' place of origin could determine their travel motivation, the timing of travel and destinations they choose. For example, Wall (2007) found a statistical relationship between British tourists' arrival in Portugal and the amount of rain in the previous summer in Britain.

In the current research, almost all participants agreed that they do not like the weather of Saudi Arabia during summertime where the average temperature in most of the country ranges from 37° to 45° depending on the region. Asala (F) believed that the weather in Saudi Arabia is not good for holidays. Therefore, the visit to mountainous areas of Saudi Arabia, which enjoy cooler weather during summer, was a popular practice among Saudis. They are referred to as 'Masayef' (summer destinations) such as Abha, Albaha and Altaif, where the average temperature during summer is between 17° to 22°. Nevertheless, the options these summer destinations provided were limited. "Honestly, we do not have tourism here... where do you want me to go? Abha! (giggles) It is boring" (Basim - M). Hence, recent years have seen a major shift in holiday choices among Saudi tourists, from domestic to outbound destinations (see figure, 3).

Therefore, it can be concluded that nature-seeking Saudi tourists tend to travel to destinations that provide both green nature and cool climate. For example, although Sri Lanka and Indonesia are known for their humid tropical climate, Saudi tourists travel to them because there are places that provide both characteristics that Saudi tourists seek, e.g. the mountains of Puncak in Indonesia and Noura Eliya in Sri Lanka were the two most popular places of visit in these two countries among the research participants. This is clear as all participants who said to have been to Indonesia and Sri Lanka have visited these two destinations and referred to their nature and weather.

*What should I do? in summer the weather is bad and not suitable to go out
... I prefer to travel to outbound destinations to enjoy my time, the nature
and the beautiful weather (Omar - M).*

Most research on tourist push and pull factors documented that weather plays a critical role as a travel motive. However, these studies, e.g. Kassean and Gassita (2013); Mohammad and Som (2010); Yiamjanya and Wongleedee (2014) have mostly been conducted from the perspectives of tourists seeking warm and dry weather. The only research that is found to project a different perspective was conducted by Allan (2014), who also found that Jordanian tourists travel to seek 'nice weather'. However, the research does not explain the meaning of 'nice weather' from the Jordanian tourists' perspective.

In the current research, it was found that Saudis used the expression 'nice weather' in contrast to the uses that most tourism research has documented. With most nature-seeking tourists escaping the intense heat of Saudi Arabia in the summer, they sought places where they could have a novel form of weather, i.e. cool with some amount of rain, which they miss in Saudi Arabia most times of the year. Denstadli, Jacobsen and Lohmann (2011) suggested that inter-cultural differences of tourists result in different perception with respect to the weather. Othman (M) said, "For me, options in outbound destinations are better, and the weather is better, especially in Europe, Turkey... and Indonesia (Puncak)".

In contrast, during Winter and Spring, the amount of rainfall increases, and temperatures decrease in most regions of Saudi Arabia. The average temperature during cool season varies depending on the month and region. For example, in the northmost part of the country near the borders of Jordan and Iraq, the temperature can be freezing in December and January. However, in the west (Jeddah) and far south-west (Jazan and Abha) near the border of Yemen average temperature during daytime ranges from 15° on the mountains to 30° in the coastal regions.

As a result, during winter and spring, Saudis engage in several outdoor recreational activities, e.g. desert camping, boat trips, fishing, picnicking and barbequing in Saudi Arabia. However, because school holidays are in the summertime, people mostly do not have the time to travel to domestic destinations during cool seasons. Instead, most people spend their time enjoying the weather and outdoor activities locally. "I do not plan to visit domestic destinations because the best time for domestic tourism is from November to March and normally, we do not have holidays during these months" (Faisal - M).

This has implications for researchers on the Saudi tourism industry that the natural environment of the country plays the leading role in motivating Saudis for outbound travel. It also suggests that the current school holidays in Saudi Arabia contribute to outbound travel as people consider the weather in the summer unsuitable to enjoy domestically. This is particularly important for policymakers and future planning to increase the number of domestic holidaymakers. The findings also important for researchers as the 'nice weather' perception in the case of the research participants was different from its perception among tourists from other backgrounds, as discussed in previous studies. This has implications for researchers that similar motives among tourists from different cultures may not necessarily have similar meanings, and that although Saudi tourists shared these broad categories, their motives differ. These differences suggest that research conducted on tourists from different cultures and geographic locations is not always applicable to other settings, e.g. the case in the current research.

To conclude, The data showed that Saudi tourists escaped routine and natural environment to seek green nature in other destinations that gives them a feeling of novelty. However, although most participants comment negatively on the natural environment of Saudi Arabia, their comments were mostly centred on the weather of the country during summer. Therefore, several of them said they would travel to domestic destinations during winter, but they did not have the time. Hence, it can be concluded that Saudi tourists mostly travel to escape the weather. Nevertheless, the research also showed that participants travelled to escape other elements of the routine life, e.g. social commitments and norms. These motives were also found to have a major influence on many participants.

5.4.3 Escaping Social Commitments

As noted earlier, motives for outbound holidays amongst Saudi tourists are either related to the natural environment or society and culture. Having discussed the escape and seeking elements related to the natural environment, in this section, the escape and seeking elements related to the society and culture will be discussed.

Saudi Arabia is characterised by strong connectivity (Van Tubergen *et al.*, 2016) that results in extended social commitments and limited personal space (Flache and Macy, 1996). Therefore, participants were found to be motivated to escape socio-cultural boundaries, especially social commitments (e.g. attending weddings) and social norms (e.g. restrictions on activities for women). Previous research had a limited focus on non-western societies because most research was conducted on western societies. However, with the rising number of non-western tourists, and especially Muslim tourists, it is important to document their perspectives and understand what influences their travel choices (Henderson, 2016).

Social commitment as perceived and understood in the Saudi culture where people mostly live in tribes differs entirely from its forms in other societies where most tourism research is focused (Mellahi and Wood, 2001b). It is important to note that participants were not asked to talk about this issue specifically but only answer why they chose to spend their holiday in an

outbound destination. For example, Khalid (M) noted: “to be honest, I do not enjoy my time in Saudi Arabia because the weather is hot during the summer and there are many social commitments like attending weddings. I escape these commitments by travelling outside the country”.

Like many male participants, Faisal (M), Salem (M) and Hassan (M) also said they escaped social commitments, referring to weddings as part of the boring routine in the summer which they try to escape and change. In contrast, no female participant said they escaped weddings by travelling or considered them a boring activity. A possible explanation for such difference between the perception of men and women in this point is that women in Saudi Arabia have a relatively smaller social network compared to men, and hence have fewer social commitments (Van Tubergen *et al.*, 2016). This suggests that while a larger social network can be beneficial to individuals in societies like Saudi Arabia as it provides connections and nepotism (Kropf and Newbury-Smith, 2016), it also adds pressure on individuals through increased social commitments.

Weddings in Saudi Arabia are open ceremonies where all relatives, extended family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances are invited. In several regions, male attendees (especially close ones) provide financial support to the groom while female friends and relatives provide gold gifts to the bride. It is a long-standing Arab tradition meant to support newly married couples and their families (see 2.4 social structure) (Bristol-Rhys, 2007). Although this is considered a form of social solidarity, it adds financial and social pressure on attendees. Therefore, some male participants said they try to avoid staying in the country where possible to avoid such social commitments.

Moufakkir and AlSaleh (2017) found a similar theme when studying travel motivations among Kuwaiti tourists and found social commitments also play a role in driving outbound tourism among Kuwaiti tourists. The current research is in line with their finding, as there are major cultural similarities between the two nations. However, the significance of the current research in this point comes from its explanation of why social commitments such as weddings and

social gatherings play such a role, linking this to the social structure of the society. Moreover, the current research also takes social norms into consideration as they were found to play an important role in motivating the participants of the research for outbound travel.

5.4.4 Escaping Social Norms

Social norms and restrictions in the Saudi culture are largely derived from Islamic teachings. However, although previous research has discussed the influence of Islamic religion on tourist behaviour and choices, there are differences between the Saudi Arab culture and other Islamic cultures that previous research has considered. Therefore, previous studies on Muslim tourists from other Islamic cultures, e.g. (Adnan, 2011; Khan, Haque and Rahman, 2013; Rahman, 2014; Ghani, 2016) can be of limited applicability to Saudi Tourists.

Moreover, to date, no research has discussed the role of social norms and restrictions on tourists' choices from the perspectives of Saudi tourists. In the current research, several participants referred to social norms as a problem they try to escape by travelling to outbound destinations. These social norms were found to restrict people's freedom to enjoy themselves and privacy to practice things of their choice. Key social norms that participants of the current research said to have restricted their freedom and privacy are those related to outfit and appearance, practices and behaviour. Also, leisure activities for tourists have been described by participants to be limited for women.

Generally, in Saudi Arabia, women face more restrictions than men. These restrictions are of both a religious and social nature. For example, they are expected to wear an Abaya that covers their dresses and entire body, and a Hijab in public places (see 2.3.5) Some female participants noted that the Hijab and Abaya limited their leisure experience because they restricted their activities.

Table 10. Sample Comments on Escaping Social Norms and Commitments

Theme	Escaping Social Norms and Commitments	
Category	Code	Quotes
Escaping Social Commitments	Social Events	"It is boring. There is nothing to do in the summer except going to shopping centres, restaurants, sleeping the day and waking the nights and attending weddings and social gatherings" (Faisal - M)
		"The routine is killing in the summer. We attend weddings, go to family meetings, seeing the same people every day" (Hassan - M)
Escaping Social Norms	Social restrictions	"Most girls I know are not happy with the restrictions on our clothes" (Sahar - F)
		Escaping restrictions on romantic practices or showing affection, e.g. couple holding hands. (Sumaya - F)
		"If I decide to remove Hijab while playing in the water parks etc, people will look at me, and that will cause troubles" (Asala - F)
		"I like water activities, but inside Saudi Arabia, it is not possible for me because If I get wet, my body gets exposed and people here look at you. Outside the country, all people are alike, so nobody looks at you because it is not something weird" (Ameena - F).
		"In our society, I feel people watch each other" (Hazem (M)

It is important to note that some women participating in the study used the term Hijab, referring to Niqab (which is the most common form of Hijab in Saudi Arabia). Other forms of restrictions included the rejection of romantic practices in public, such as couples holding hands or showing affection, were mentioned by both male and female participants. Thus, although men seem to enjoy more freedom when it comes to outfit and appearance, the social restrictions on women activities affect them at the family level.

Therefore, participants said that they travelled to outbound destinations in order to escape religious and social restrictions that they face in Saudi Arabia. "...there are a lot of restrictions, and I will not enjoy my time with full freedom like I do when I am in outside the country... most girls I know are not happy with the restrictions on our clothes... most of us prefer to travel to outbound destinations to enjoy something different" (Sahar - F). Moreover, the restrictions on clothes limited women's leisure activities.

Ameena (F) noted that inside the Kingdom, it is difficult for women to participate in water activities because she must not get wet, or otherwise, her body may get exposed. She also mentioned that wearing an Abaya and playing in the water is not possible and can be dangerous. Participant Asala (F) noted that "if I decide to remove Hijab while playing in the water parks etc, people will look at me and that will cause troubles... my husband may get annoyed and start a fight or so)". These statements show that restrictions on appearance and outfit in Saudi Arabia played a key role to motivate some women to escape such restrictions by travelling to outbound destinations.

Therefore, many leisure parks in Saudi Arabia have designated specific days of the week as "ladies-only" days in order to give women the freedom to remove their Abaya and Hijab and enjoy their time away from men. Leisure and Water Parks in the GCC region (e.g. UAE 'Dubai and Abu Dhabi', Kuwait, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia) also designate 'ladies only' days in order to give Arab and Muslim women the space they require, e.g. Yas Water world ladies' night in Abu Dhabi, Wild Wadi ladies' night in Dubai. These ladies-only days are an outcome of the gender segregation rule that the Arab culture requires.

However, although ladies-only days and nights in leisure parks may be a suitable solution for many women and families in Saudi Arabia and GCC region to enjoy themselves away from men, they are unable to enjoy their time with the presence of their husbands and other male members of the family. Therefore, most female participants expressed that women's activities are limited in the Saudi tourism industry, and hence they preferred to spend their holidays in outbound destinations so they could enjoy the freedom they lacked at home. Nevertheless, it is worthy to note that many participants engaged in mixed-gender leisure activities in outbound destinations. This indicates that, although this issue has its roots in the religious teachings, it is now more related to culture than religion. Therefore, men also seek outbound travel to escape these restrictions.

Men's preference for outbound holidays was not only the result of restrictions on family activities but also on the activities of men. Hazem (M) said "one of the most important reasons for me to travel is to get away from the society and its restrictions, no one is watching me when I am outside the country, I do what I want without having people watching me. In our society, I feel people watch each other". Hazem (M) also noted that there were things that they could not do because members of the society would criticise them, e.g. dancing. Therefore, travelling to outbound destinations provided him and other tourists with the space they need to enjoy themselves away from social or religious norms.

Homood (M) believed that people fear criticisms more than anything else, noting that many men would tolerate the idea of their female relatives not wearing a Hijab or Niqab outside Saudi Arabia but not inside. This is in line with the assumption presented earlier that although religious teachings view the Niqab as a religious issue, many people view it as a socio-cultural issue and hence accept removing it outside the country or in places they find suitable where others do not know them.

However, although men take their families to outbound destination for reasons related to restrictions on their activities, many of them were found to choose different destinations when they travel on their own or with their friends. "I travel for different reasons, sometimes to enjoy

my time away from family and social restrictions and sometimes I travel to enjoy the nature. I travel mostly with my friends, but sometimes I take my family” (Ahmed - M). When the participant was asked whether he would take his family to the same places that he travels to with his friends, he said no. He thinks that Dubai can be suitable but not Morocco and Egypt, especially Sharm-Elsheikh, Marrakesh and Agadir.

Other male participants also said that when they travelled with their families, they would not go to the same places that they normally went to when they were alone or with friends. This indicates that some Saudi men (especially when travelling solo or with friends) choose destinations where they can enjoy doing things that are considered against norms. Although participants were not asked to specify which norm-breaking practices they pursued when travelling alone or with friends (as this is a sensitive topic), other researchers have reported that these included enjoying mixed-gender environments, the presence of women, sex outside marriage and consumption of alcohol (Alghamdi, 2007).

5.4.5 Seeking Personal Space and Freedom

The tribal system in the Arab culture means that a large number of people have common ancestry and share the same last name (Aloshban, 1988). This makes it easy to identify people’s origins, relatives and geographic location. Hussein (M) noted that when they travelled to a Western or East Asian destination, they chose to visit places that are less popular among other Saudi tourists. This practice is common as they fear social criticisms from people of a similar culture. This is explained by the female participant Sahar who stated that when she was in the south of Saudi Arabia, she covered her face, but in Jeddah and Riyadh which are cosmopolitan cities, she would normally not cover her face. Hence, it is a common practice among many Saudi tourists to seek out destinations, times, or places at the tourist destination that are less popular among other Saudi tourists.

Sumaya and her husband chose to spend their honeymoon in Bali (a less popular honeymoon destination among Saudis) she stated that *as a newly married couple, I think we need to go*

somewhere romantic, somewhere we can celebrate without being afraid of people talk. We walk on the beach holding each other's hands, we can run, play in the water, and enjoy a larger space of privacy. I also can wear what I like to wear, I think my husband would like to see me all the time, in Saudi Arabia, I am covered, but during my honeymoon in Bali, I did not cover and was all free to enjoy myself. Therefore, it can be said that travelling to an outbound destination allow Saudi women to participate in activities and wear the outfits they prefer without being afraid of the people around them. Some female participants said they preferred to keep their Hijab on when they travelled outside the country. However, the majority of them preferred not to wear a Hijab, as a personal choice or for security reasons. "...in Austria, it (Hijab) was not a big problem, sometimes I felt not good but, in most times, it was O.K, but in Germany, it was not easy at all" (Faridah - F).

Therefore, many women decided not to wear a Hijab during their travel to non-Muslim countries "I took Hijab off in Italy because I was alone and did not want to face any difficulties or discriminations" (Asala - F). Similarly, Nisreen (F) said that she avoided wearing a Hijab to avoid attention while Hessa (F) avoided looking different from people around her by wearing clothes that fitted the environment she travelled to whilst remaining modest. Other participants, who felt they must keep their Hijab, but did not want to look different, wore alternative Hijab styles, "I wear turban... Non-Muslim people do not know this is a type of Hijab, they think it is fashionable, and sometimes they ask me where I got it from! So, it does not have any negative influence on me" (Nouf - F). This suggests that Saudi women feel less restrictive towards social customs and religious commitments during their holidays in outbound destinations and consequently enjoy a better experience.

One of the few studies that previously discussed the influence of personal freedom on outbound travel is by Gholipour, Tajaddini and Al-mulali (2014). In their research, they used data from 80 countries around the world to test the relationship between the limitations to personal freedom in the tourist country of origin and the rise of outbound tourism. Their study suggested that a lower level of personal freedom in a country increased outbound tourism.

Table 11. Sample Comments on Personal Freedom and Space

Theme	Seeking Personal Freedom and Space	
Category	Code	Quotes
Seeking Freedom	Freedom of Outfit	“In Saudi Arabia, I am covered, but during my honeymoon in Bali, I did not cover and was all free to enjoy myself” (Sumaya - F).
		“No, I do not wear Hijab when I am outside the country, I like to enjoy myself, and people there do not know me, so what is the point of wearing it, it is meant for protection, and for me, it is safer without it outside the country” (Ameena - F).
	Freedom of Practices	“There are a lot of social restrictions, and I will not enjoy my time with full freedom like I do when I am in outside the country” (Sahar - F)
		“If I decide to remove Hijab while playing in the water parks etc, people will look at me, and that will cause troubles” (Asala - F)
		“When I am outside the country, I do what I want without having people watching me. In our society, I feel people watch each other” (Hazem - M)
Seeking Personal Space	Privacy with Family	“The problem with Turkey and Indonesia that it is full of Saudis during Summer...there is no privacy, and my wife does not feel comfortable” (Salem - M)
		It was beautiful. We spent a very nice time there... no, I did not see any Saudis there, which was good for me” (Israa - F).

However, although their study included Saudi Arabia in the sample, their perspective of personal freedom was not the same as in the current research. In their study, personal freedom was linked to the level of democracy, and government legislations limiting people's freedom, and enjoyment. In the current research, the focus was more on the role of social norms and commitments limiting personal freedom.

For example, although the government implemented the Hijab for Saudi women based on religious principles, most female participants said it did not limit their freedom. For the participants of the current research, the level of freedom is reduced by the society. Therefore, one of the key motives for travel to outbound destinations among Saudi tourists was found to be their desire to escape the society.

The data presented in the sections above clearly show that Saudi tourists seek outbound destinations where they can be free from social and religious restrictions. This applies to men and women as well as families. It has implications that in societies similar to Saudi Arabia where personal space and freedom are limited, escaping society can be a major travel motive. Perhaps, in major cities such as Jeddah and Riyadh, people can feel less restrictive about breaking norms because they are cosmopolitan cities where people live more individually. However, participants did not show differences based on their geographic locations.

Tourism literature has noted in several occasions that tourists may travel to practice illegal things in outbound destinations, where they feel free from home restrictions and less obliged to comply with the law (Mura and Khoo-Lattimore, 2011). Uriely and Belhassen (2006) assert that these tourists shared the belief that their status as tourists legitimise their behaviour and protects them from being labelled socially deviant because of their economic value to their tourist destination. However, the issues included in these studies in what has been labelled as 'deviant tourist behaviour' focused on practices such as drug-taking, illegal sex, excessive alcohol consumption, vandalism, violence and graffiti (Li and Chen, 2017; Uriely, Ram and Malach-Pines, 2011). A desire to seek freedom from social norms that limit personal space can clearly be added to this list.

The current research filled this gap in knowledge by addressing such issues from the perspective of Saudi tourists who felt restricted by religious teachings (or interpretations), social norms and the tribal structure of the society. Therefore, many tourists from Saudi Arabia choose to travel to outbound destinations to experience a wider sense of personal space and be able to enjoy themselves away from social and religious restrictions.

This desire shared among the research participants to escape the society also has practical implications for policymakers and travel agencies that target Saudi tourists. On the one hand, the findings can be of use to policymakers working on domestic tourism to understand the motives Saudi tourists and develop tourism that meets their needs. On the other hand, travel agencies and marketers focusing on Saudi tourists can use this research to improve their outbound tour packages based on these empirical findings.

To conclude, the interviews showed that for many participants, outbound travel is more of a necessity than a leisure activity. People choose to travel in order to regain personal needs, such as freedom and privacy, that the structure of society and its norms limit. Hence, they travel to seek these needs in outbound destinations. Therefore, escaping society, its commitments and norms (both social and religious) was one of the major travel motives in this research.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the perception of domestic tourism and the motives for outbound travel among the research participants. The chapter identified a number of issues associated with domestic tourism that motivated the participants to spend their holiday in outbound destinations. These issues were mostly related to the natural environment and the culture of Saudi Arabia. Generally, the participants held a negative perception of domestic tourism. The extremely hot summer in most of Saudi Arabia, together with the absence of green nature in most of the country was a key issue that the research participants associated with domestic tourism. Moreover, the tourism infrastructure in Saudi Arabia was viewed to be poorly developed, with key issues centred the poor public transport system and the limited number of outdoor activities and parks. Beside these poorly developed services, participants felt that domestic holidays are expensive compared to outbound holidays.

The research also found that the culture of Saudi Arabia played a critical role in motivating participants for outbound tourism. Issues such as social commitments and norms were the main problems raised by the participants. While social commitments added pressure on individuals to attend social gatherings and events and contributed to the tedious routine of lifestyle, social norms limited their personal space and freedom and restricted their leisure activities. Therefore, the research participants viewed outbound travel more as a need than a leisure activity.

The influence of culture, however, was not limited to motivating the participants for outbound travel but also influence their choices of destinations, services and activities at the destinations. The next chapter will discuss this influence with its focus placed on religion and language.

6. THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN SAUDI TOURISTS' HOLIDAY CHOICES

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss how culture and its various elements influence choices among Saudi tourists. The chapter will also discuss the choice behaviour of Saudi tourists related to destination, accommodation, activities and food consumption. Moreover, the chapter will discuss the role of Saudi women in their family holiday decision-making process.

6.2 Influence of Religion

This section examines the role of religion on tourists' choices and use of Islamic compliant services among Saudi tourists. Although the culture of Saudi tourists is mostly derived from Islamic traditions and Islam influences every aspect of daily life in Saudi Arabia, a limited number of participants describe themselves as religiously conservative. In principle, nearly two-thirds of participants in the current research described themselves as less conservative or open-minded. While this implies bias in the data, the day-to-day decisions of most participants were still influenced by religion. To explore how the Islamic religion influenced tourists' choice behaviour, participants were asked whether their religion influenced their decisions.

6.2.1 Destination Selection

Participants were asked how they viewed the influence of religion on their destination selection. They provided similar answers regardless of their religious views or gender. Some participants seemed to find the question surprising, asking questions such as 'what do you mean?', giving answers, then changing them. Perhaps the question was not typical to most participants, as religion is sensitive to many of them. The general perspective among people in Saudi Arabia is that their lifestyle is inherently influenced by religion, hence saying religion does not influence their choices may be felt unreligious. This suggests that religion is embedded in everyday life of Saudis, and thus its influence on their choices is natural.

Ahmed (M) (although he described himself as open-minded) reacted to the question with a surprised tone “of course religion influences me. I am Muslim!”. However, when participants were prompted with follow up questions and more explanations, they seemed to understand the question and their answers in many cases changed. For example, Asala (F) in the beginning said religion does not influence her destination selection, but when the question was explained further, her answer changed. She felt that the influence of religion depends on the destination. She noted that she has been to many countries but had never thought about her religion in this way. This is in line with the earlier point that religion’s influence is natural, hence some participants may have found it difficult to answer the question.

Women who said they kept their Hijab when travelling also said religion did not influence them. “I do not think so. I can travel anywhere, how can religion influence my destination choices?” (Fatima - F). This indicates that although some religious scholars advise against travel to non-Muslim countries, people do not consider such advice as they travel for purposes other than what religious scholars fear (influence from non-Muslim cultures on Muslim travellers).

In a religious lecture, Sheikh Othman Alkhamees (a prominent religious scholar popular in the GCC region) said that he used to adopt the opinion that travelling to non-Muslim countries is forbidden except when necessary. However, he found that many people travel to explore the natural environments of those countries rather than engage with people and culture. Alkamees (2018) said that he understood that nature-seekers normally have limited contact with people and culture and that their focus is on enjoying the natural environment. Hence, he believed that the cultural influence was limited on Muslim tourists to these places, and therefore he changed his opinion. Moreover, several Islamic scholars in Saudi Arabia nowadays do not forbid leisure travel to non-Muslim countries.

To understand this further, participants were asked whether they preferred to travel to Muslim countries for their holidays. The responses to this question reflected what the previous question found. It was clear from the analysis and list of popular destinations among Saudi

tourists that religion played a minimum role in their destination selection process. Most male participants said their preference is not based on religious reasons. "I do not care about this (religion of the destination) all I care about is to travel to a place that is beautiful and worth the money and time I spend" (Faisal - M).

The following is an extract from the interview with participant Abdullah (M):

- Researcher Does religion influence your destination selection in any way?
- Abdullah Maybe, honestly, I am not sure... For me, I can travel to any country I want.
- Researcher Do you not find some countries unsuitable for Muslims?
- Abdullah No, if you want to pray you can pray anywhere and also food is always available and if you cannot find it, you can eat vegetarian food or fish.
- Researcher But in some countries, there are things or places that are not suitable for Muslims?
- Abdullah I do not go to them; I normally choose places suitable for us... I know sometimes you see things, but this is part of the experience.

Similarly, some female participants also said that they did not look at the religion of the destination but what it offered. Nevertheless, some women showed a preference for non-Muslim destinations not for religious reasons but to enjoy a larger space and privacy, away from social surveillance. Sahar (F) noted that she only wore the Hijab in Saudi Arabia, but when she travelled, she liked to enjoy herself. Therefore, she preferred to travel to non-Muslim countries. She also stated that when she was in the south of Saudi Arabia (her home region), she covered her face, but when she was in Jeddah or Riyadh normally did not cover her face.

Several other female participants also noted that they travelled to western countries because they could experience more freedom. This indicates that, for some female tourists, religion (or the religious lifestyle in Saudi Arabia) functions as an escape motive, where they seek outbound travel to avoid religious restrictions and specifically choose non-Muslim destinations for the same reason. In other words, for many participants, religious norms operated 'indirectly' through cultural norms, which was what people related to more explicitly.

In contrast, some men said they preferred Muslim destinations when they travelled with their families because it was perceived to be safer for their women (who mostly wore a Hijab or

Niqab). "...in Germany and Austria, it was a bit difficult for my wife because people keep looking at her...she wears Niqab, it was not comfortable. Istanbul was similar, and the people there are even worse, they were rude to us, but in Trabzon, it was ok, but still, some people looked at us. Indonesia and Dubai were the best" (Hussein - M). Several other male participants said they chose different destinations when they travelled with their family because they preferred to keep them within an Islamic environment.

However, when travelling solo or with friends (which was found to be a popular practice among married male participants) the majority of men had no religious restrictions on destination choice, but some influence remained on some of the activities in which they engaged. Therefore, the data suggest that leisure tourists from Saudi Arabia in this study mostly travelled to the destination that served their purpose of travel and provided a safe environment for them and their family, regardless of its religion. The only influence of religion noted here was related to family travel as some men (especially participants who described themselves as conservative) preferred their wives and children to remain in a religiously and culturally safer environment and hence preferred Muslim destinations when they travelled with their family.

It is important to note that the majority of women in Saudi Arabia only travel with their families. Islamic teachings followed in most of Saudi Arabia advises that women must only travel when a male relative accompanies them. Hence, until recently, Saudi Arabia imposed restrictions on women's travel except when the head of the family grants consent. While this has changed recently, the vast majority of women continue to travel for leisure only with their families. Therefore, it can be argued that the presence of men in women's travel decision-making may reduce women's role in the process.

These findings suggest that, although religion has a role in people's lifestyles, the majority of the respondents did not necessarily consider this when they selected their holiday destination. This has implications for tourism research focusing on Saudi Arabia and similarly religious

nations that although religion may dominate people's lifestyles, it does not necessarily have a direct influence on their destination selection.

6.2.2 Religiously Compliant Services

To understand the role of religion on tourist choices, participants were asked whether they used religiously compliant services and hotel amenities. Tourism research has seen a rise in studies focused around the use of religiously compliant hotels among Muslim tourists (Stephenson, 2014; Salleh *et al.*, 2014; Saad and Ali, 2014; El-Gohary, 2016). These studies have found that there is an increasing demand from Muslim tourists for religiously compliant services and consumer experiences. However, their scope is limited in two aspects: first, most studies focused on tourists' use of religiously compliant hotels and amenities have followed quantitative approaches where their study population is a mixture of both Muslim and non-Muslim tourists. Their studies have largely examined the attractiveness of Halal/Sharia certified hotels to tourists in general. Second, the few studies that adopted qualitative approaches have mostly focused on the perspectives of hotel owners and managers and their implementation of halal facilities (Sahida *et al.*, 2011; Karim, Ahmad and Zainol, 2017; El-Gohary, 2016).

To date, studies focused on Saudi tourists' use of halal/Sharia-compliant hotels and amenities are scarce. Therefore, there is a continuing need for studies that focus on the perspectives of Saudi tourists and their use of religiously compliant hotels and amenities at destinations. In general, as Saudi Arabia is the first home of Islam and its culture is largely derived from Islamic heritage, tourism research conducted on this issue assumes that the demand from Saudi tourists for halal facilities is high. However, the findings of the current research suggest that this assumption is debatable.

Although the term halal tourism was found to be common among most participants (albeit with different understandings), participants did not understand the meanings of Halal resorts and hotels, as described in (Battour and Ismail, 2016), mainly because the term halal is mostly

used in reference to food. Therefore, it was necessary to explain to them what it meant. The findings, in general, showed that most participants said they spent most of their time outside the hotel, exploring nature, shopping and sightseeing. In other words, most participants were not interested in the use of amenities that hotels provided but on what the destination offered. These participants also stated that the hotel for them was mostly a place to sleep.

For me, I go to the hotel only to sleep. I do not like to spend time in the hotel.

I do not eat there; I do not use the swimming pool or any of its services. I just sleep and go...because I am fed up of closed places, the whole year I am in a closed place, I want to go out and see people and nature, not stay in the hotel (Omar - M).

Similarly, although more women stated their interest in hotel amenities, few of the female participants said they used them. The purpose of travel was found to some extent dictates whether or not tourists use these facilities. For example, those who travelled to destinations with a cool climate and green nature (mainly to explore nature) frequently stated that they preferred to spend their time outside the hotel, while those who travelled for short breaks, e.g. to Dubai, said they sometimes used hotel amenities. This is the same for both men and women. However, while some men showed more openness towards mixed-gender amenities, women's use of hotel amenities was found to be limited to women-only amenities (swimming pools and Sauna).

Sondos (F) said that she normally did not use these services but once tried a Sauna and Swimming pool in Dubai. When she was asked whether it was only for women, she replied with a surprised tone "of course". She explained her choice to be of both religious and personal motives "I am Muslim, and this is Haram (forbidden), and I do not like men to see me, our morals like this!". She also said that she did not use these services in Turkey because she preferred to spend her time outside, sightseeing and gazing at nature.

The data showed that although the purpose of travel influences the decision to use hotel amenities and that although few women use gender-segregated amenities, the majority of women did not use them at all. One possible explanation for the low demand for such services can be linked to religious reasons. For example, although gender-segregated swimming pools and Spas normally allow women to enjoy such services away from men, there are still religious and cultural restrictions on women seeing each other, especially when wearing immodest clothes. Normally swimming suites reveal parts of the body that are considered religiously part of the Awra (areas of the body others must not see) which includes other women and female relatives. Nevertheless, although suitable clothing options are available for Muslim women, e.g. burkini, the female participants of the research generally showed a lack of interest in amenities like swimming pools.

Therefore, it appears that a lack of interest in religiously compliant amenities among Saudi women may be shaped by religious factors and a misunderstanding among those creating religiously compliant services that even within female-only facilities there are some religious boundaries that some women prefer to observe. However, a lack of interest in hotel amenities among men may have different motivations and result from a desire to explore rather than engage in activities that have the same or similar restrictions to those in Saudi Arabia.

6.3 Novelty and Familiarity Seeking Behaviour

This section discusses the novelty and familiarity seeking behaviour among Saudi tourists. Key elements that have been explored among participants are language, food and activities and how they influence tourists' choices. Previous research noted that culture functions as both push and pull factors (Correia, Kozak and Ferradeira, 2013; Michael, Wien and Reisinger, 2017). Tourists travel to explore novel cultures where they can leave their usual cultures behind and enjoy the cultures of destinations they visit. However, their home culture continues to influence their behaviour and choices at their chosen destinations.

6.3.1 Seeking Cultural Novelty

Novelty seeking refers to tourists' desire to seek out what is different and new compared to the usual environments in which they live (Hirschman, 1980). Early tourism research asserted that novelty seeking is a key travel motive that plays a critical role in tourists purchase behaviour and destination selection (Cohen, 1972; Yuan and McDonald, 1990; Crompton and McKay, 1997). Drawing on psychological traditions, Lee *et al.* (2009) argued that people seek to achieve satisfaction in their lives by engaging in novelty-seeking behaviour because it gives them a sense of excitement and encourages them to explore new things, such as places and products. Hence, the tendency of novelty-seeking plays an important role in the tourists' decision-making process (Hirschman, 1980).

The current research showed that many tourists from Saudi Arabia chose to travel to outbound destinations seeking novelty too. Among the elements that Saudi tourists sought to explore, and experience is the novelty of culture. For example, participants stated that they enjoyed learning social customs and traditions, visiting historic sites, arts and street music and also learning languages or listening to people. Halima (F) noted that when she travelled to a GCC country, she enjoyed listening to people talk in their accents and feeling that she was in a Khaleeji (GCC) TV series. Participants of the study were asked some questions to understand their novelty-seeking behaviour, including the kind of activities they get involved in when they travel to the holiday destination.

Aside from the factors already mentioned, many respondents stated that they enjoyed visiting cultural heritage attractions, old towns, and historic sites. The majority of participants who talked about culture-related activities focused on visiting public places, e.g. souks (old markets) and mosques. Some of them also mentioned the architecture, especially in European countries, Egypt and Morocco. Hassan (M) said: "... in Turkey, I enjoy Istanbul a lot and the planning of streets on the European style and its old markets and bazaars... in London and Paris, I enjoy the historic places and the European lifestyle...". Similarly, Nouf (F) said that

she liked Egypt and Morocco because of their cultural heritage places, Souks and historic sites like old mosques.

Although photos shared in social media show that many Saudi tourists visit religious sites of non-Islamic origin, e.g. temples, churches and cathedral, only one participant said he visited a religious site, i.e. Buddhist temple. It is not possible to generalise from a small, qualitative study whether Saudi tourists are open to visiting non-Islamic religious sites. Hence, Saudi tourists' interest in churches and non-Muslim religious places is worth exploring in future research. Nevertheless, a lack of interest in non-Muslim religious sites among the research participants may have religious roots as some Saudi Islamic scholars used to prohibit Muslims from visiting non-Islamic places of worship, which include churches and temples of different religions. Other religious scholars say it is permissible but not recommended except in necessary cases (Ifta, 2006).

Therefore, it may be hypothesised that although Saudi tourists do enjoy novel cultures of the destinations they visit, they rarely visit places of religious nature. This is important for DMOs and marketers targeting Saudi tourists, because non-Islamic religious sites may hold limited appeal for these segments. Moreover, cultural activities appealing to Saudi tourists may be limited to such public places like markets, public activities and monuments. Therefore, Saudi tourists' novelty-seeking behaviour may be selective towards some cultural elements rather than others.

6.3.2 Seeking Cultural Familiarity

Religion, education, lifestyle and personality traits were all found to shape tourists' novelty-seeking behaviour (Jackson, Schmierer and White, 1999; Jackson, White and White, 2001; Plog, 2002). Lee and Crompton (1992) studied the role of novelty-seeking behaviour in relation to destination selection. They found that many variables influenced tourists' decision-making processes, the degree of novelty associated with some tourist destinations had a greater influence on selection. This is in line with what has been proposed by Plog (1974); (2001)

whose model categorised destinations into psychocentric/dependable and allocentric/venturer based on their degree of novelty for tourists.

Lepp and Gibson (2008) found that tourists preferred places they perceived to be safe and comfortable. In their study, they investigated perceptions of risk among tourists from the U.S. in destination choice. Their study showed that there is a relationship between the perception of safety and comfort and the degree of similarity between the destination and the tourists' country of origin. Similar traits include culture, language, customs, political structure, and food. For their participants, regions such as Australia, New Zealand and Western Europe were perceived safe travel destinations. In contrast, regions with major cultural differences such as Africa and the Middle East were seen as highly risky.

In the current research, interviews showed similar findings regarding the relationship between perception of risk and destination selection. For example, when participants were asked if China could be among destinations they may visit, the vast majority rejected the idea. The key reasons participants stated for their rejection of China mostly related to the absence of cultural communications between China and Saudi Arabia. Hence, participants perceived China to be an unsafe place to visit. Participants also mentioned that it is not possible to communicate with Chinese people as they do not speak English, which many outbound Saudi tourists used for communication. Researchers have repeatedly pointed out the role that language plays in tourists' decision-making process and purchase behaviour (Cohen and Cooper, 1986; Ng, Lee and Soutar, 2007; Lee and Tussyadiah, 2012; Reisinger, Kozak and Visser, 2013).

For example, although Dubai is viewed as an international place by many Saudi tourists, participants perceived it safe to visit because of the similarities in several socio-cultural elements, e.g. religion, language, norms, values, traditions, food, families and politics. Ahmed (M) said that he found Egypt and Morocco different but Dubai more comfortable to him as it was easier to understand and enjoy compared to the others. In this regard, the analysis of interviews showed that although the respondents in this study sought novelty of culture, they

only sought it in places they trusted, e.g. Arab countries and the Middle East, Muslim majority countries and western Europe, which they considered safe.

This is not unique to Saudi tourists as previous research has documented the issue (Sheller and Urry, 2006). Larsen (2008) argued that “Tourists never just travel to places: their mindsets, routines and social relations travel with them” p 27. Similarly, Urry (2001) proposed that objects, cultures and images also travel. Therefore, according to Duncan and Lambert (2004) and Pons (2003), tourists take many of their everyday practices and routines along when travelling to other countries. These studies, collectively, suggest that because of tourism mobility, immigration and globalisation, the cultural distance between home and away has generally been reduced.

Taking the perspectives of Saudi tourists, the behaviour of seeking familiarity is very much the result of a number of factors. For example, because China is generally viewed to have a closed culture and that not many Arabs and Middle Easterners live there, participants viewed it as an unsafe place to travel. Similarly, not many of the respondents travelled to countries like Russia and East European countries because Arab and Islamic cultures generally have limited presence there.

In contrast, the majority of participants perceived Western Europe to be safe to visit because Arab and Muslim immigrants have established communities, which gave them a higher perception of safety. It is important to note that the term ‘safety’ does not necessarily refer to security, but an overall feeling of safety resulting from the presence of familiar cultural elements and ability to communicate in both, Arabic and English. One of the key cultural elements that the Saudi tourists in this study sought when they travelled was food that they were familiar with, e.g. Arabic and Turkish food, and international fast-food chains.

The research also investigated the role of food novelty in local food consumption by outbound Saudi tourists. Participants demonstrated preferences for food that was available in their home country (Saudi Arabia). For example, in Indonesia, tourists to Puncak mostly rented

villas and hired housemaids that had previously worked in a GCC country so that they could prepare food in an Arabic style. Most participants who visited Indonesia described its food as 'not good'. Therefore, it was a common practice among participants taking holidays in an outbound destination other than Arab countries to prepare suitcases full of canned food, herbs and spices, and equipment they find necessary to cook Saudi and Arabic food (commonly known as Ezba). "As I said, in Indonesia, we had a maid who cooks for us at our villa... she cooks the breakfast and the dinner, and we eat fast food for lunch... yes KFC and McDonald's and others" (Mansour - M).

Ezba preparation was found common among the participants of the research, whether they were travelling as adult male groups or with their families, yet it was more common among male participants when travelling with friends. Basim (M) said that he used Ezba when he went to Indonesia with his friends, but he did not think it was suitable for families because it is meant to serve large groups. The use of Ezba was also common among participants visiting countries perceived to have food options that are known in Saudi Arabia, e.g. Turkey, and countries that are perceived to have a variety of food options, e.g. European countries.

This avoidance of local food consumption was discussed by Chang (2011); Cohen and Avieli (2004) who related such behaviour to language barriers, e.g. being unable to read food menus or ingredients. Nevertheless, although this may be the case with Saudi tourists too, participants stated other reasons. "When I travel, especially to places that have beautiful nature, I always take Ezba with me because I like to cook in the outside, near a river or on a hill, where I enjoy the nature, cook the food I like and make Arabic coffee and tea, it is very nice" (Hafid - M). Participants also stated that when they ate in restaurants, they sought Halal venues that cooked food with which they were familiar.

Most participants, however, noted that they sought Halal food, not because of religious reasons but because they felt Halal restaurants were cleaner and more trusted. For example, Salem (M) said, "I like to try local food sometimes, but you know their food sometimes is not

good, and I do not know what they cook, so I mostly eat in Turkish and Arabic restaurants". This was common among both men and women. "I like to try different food and at home [when in Saudi Arabia] every week we go to a different place but when in other countries you do not know how they cook it... no I only go to eat in Arabic and Turkish restaurants [when in other countries]" (Noha - F). This is in line with the assumption presented earlier that perception of safety plays the leading role in Saudi tourists' food choice behaviour.

In terms of variations in food consumption between men and women, more women said they ate in non-Arabic restaurants, while men showed preference to use their own supply (Ezba), consume food in Arabic and Turkish restaurants, or fast food chains (mostly KFC). However, the majority of women who said they ate in restaurants available at tourist destinations were found to choose internationally recognised restaurants. Key examples provided by participants include TGI Fridays, Pizza Hut and restaurants available at recognised hotel chains.

Osman, Johns and Lugosi (2014) noted that tourists go to restaurants they know because it allows them to escape the destination environment and enjoy recognisable food in a familiar environment. In the current research, this is clear among the participants. However, both men and women also related their choices to their perception of trust and cleanliness in these restaurants. Nevertheless, several female participants said they chose these restaurants because they considered Arabic restaurants too traditional and less 'classy'. In other words, female participants' preference for internationally recognised restaurants over Arabic ones was motivated by the prestige associated with eating at these restaurants.

Sometimes my husband says he wants Arabic restaurants, so we go, but I do not prefer them... I do not know; they are noisy and too traditional... I mean I like the restaurant to be classy with nice decoration, something romantic and nice... It depends but we normally go to hotels to eat (Israa. - F).

Table 12. Sample Comments on Novelty and Familiarity Seeking Behaviour

Theme	Novelty and Familiarity Seeking Behaviour of Outbound Saudi Tourists	
Category	Code	Quotes
Novelty Seeking	Different Culture	"I love the architecture of historic buildings in Cairo, going to local places, cafes and restaurants. Every time I go to Egypt, I must go to these places especially, Alfishawi café at night and Khan El-Khalili (a historic bazaar in old Cairo)" (Metab - M).
		"Travelling for me is an opportunity to learn about new cultures and meet new people... the thing I love the most when I go to Paris is its cafes in the Champs-Elysees. I just sit there and watch people... I do not speak French" (Fahad - M)
		"Dubai is beautiful, there are people from everywhere, I like to see that, and sometimes I make friends...we met a couple from America and went together for Shisha, it was nice" (Ola - F).
Familiarity Seeking	Suitable Places	"When I see a photo or a video from a place that catches me, I start looking for information about it, and if it is suitable and comments about are positive, I tell my husband about it, and we put it in our plan" (Fatima - F)
		"it is a good idea to follow advice from experts on social media. They save your time and effort... Yes, they only advise us on places suitable for us" (Osama - M).
	Familiar Food	"I like to try different food, and at home every week we go to a different place but when in other countries you do not know how they cook it... no I only go eat in Arabic and Turkish restaurants (she means when she is in other countries) (Noha - F).
		"We do not eat local food. We take Ezba with us and our maid cooks for us" (Mansour-M)

6.4 Language Role in Tourist Choices

Tourism research has documented the role of language in various studies (Cohen and Cooper, 1986; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998; Basala and Klenosky, 2001; Lee and Tussyadiah, 2012). These studies have found language to play a critical role in tourists' destination selection, purchase of services and products, and revisit intention. In principle, these studies supported the notion that tourists are more likely to choose destinations which involve familiar languages. In the current research, the role of language as a factor influencing choices among Saudi tourists was explored.

The findings supported the notion that tourists are more likely to seek destinations where they can communicate. The majority of participants said they used English to communicate in non-Arabic speaking countries. Hassan (M) said that he knew little English but found it enough for him to travel. Basic knowledge of English as perceived among most participants refers to their ability to understand flight details and information about airports, hotels and the ability to order food and drinks. "I do not speak English very well, but I know enough words which I use when I travel" (Metab - M). Similarly, female participants said they used English when they travelled. However, Noha (F) noted that unlike European destinations, in countries such as Indonesia and Turkey, people mostly do not understand English and hence other means of communications was necessary.

Therefore, several participants, especially those who travelled to Indonesia, Turkey and other countries where the English language was not commonly practised, said they used interpreters and private drivers to help them communicate. "I always use drivers. In Sri Lanka, the driver picked us from the airport and stayed with us all the five days we spent there" (Osama - M). The participant explained that these drivers normally have a knowledge of Arabic and function as interpreters and tour guides as well. Major hotels in Sri Lanka were found to provide accommodation for drivers as they bring tourists. Similarly, several other participants who visited Indonesia and Sri Lanka said they used private drivers. This indicates that the use

of cultural intermediaries is a common practice among tourists to Sri Lanka, Indonesia and other Asian countries.

Previous research has noted the importance of language and explained that in many cases, it could limit choices. The findings of the research correspond with previous research on the influence of language on tourists' choices of destinations and products (Correia, Kozak and Ferradeira, 2011; Chang, 2011; Cohen and Avieli, 2004). However, although this is clear in the current research among some participants, the list of destinations that were popular among the research suggests otherwise. The majority of participants did not necessarily find language to limit their choices for a number of reasons.

First, the widespread of the English language among Saudi people, especially those with interest in outbound travel. All students in Saudi Arabia begin learning English in their primary school and continue throughout their higher education. Moreover, many jobs in Saudi Arabia require knowledge of English (Alsubaie, 2014). Therefore, the majority of Saudis have a basic knowledge of English, which allows them to communicate in destinations where English is widely present.

Second, the widespread use of the Arabic language in East and South Asian countries. Many Countries where the majority of people are Muslim, e.g. Indonesia and Malaysia, or where a large percentage of the population is Muslim, e.g. Sri Lanka and India, Arabic is common in their religious education (Mat, Zakaria and Jusoff, 2009). Moreover, countries such as Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and India, form a major source of foreign labour in the GCC region. Hence, upon returning to their home countries, many of these former expatriates work in tourism services targeting Arab tourists.

Third, as noted in the previous section, participants of the research prefer to consume food which they are familiar with, e.g. cooking for themselves when seeking nature, hiring housemaids who have previously worked in the GCC region and eating in halal restaurants or in places which provide familiar foods (fast-food chains like KFC and McDonalds). This limits

their needs to read menus and understand ingredients, which previous research suggested because they are familiar with the food they consume.

Fourth, most participants in the research were found to seek nature and cool weather. Therefore, they may only require a minimum level of communication with local cultures and people. Mansour (M) was asked how he communicated with people when he travelled to Turkey, and his reply was “I do not need to communicate with them, I travelled to enjoy the nature, not the people but when I need to ask a question, I find my way to do that... e.g. I ask the driver or find someone who speaks Arabic, and sometimes I use Google Translate”. Hence, in destinations where Arabic or English are common, or in places where tourists travel to seek nature, the language may not be a major factor influencing destination selection among Saudi tourists.

Nevertheless, despite the findings that showed participants to make limited communication with local people and culture, and that language was not found to limit their travel choices substantially, language remains a major influence on tourist behaviour and decisions. The need for interpreting drivers who speak Arabic and the use of English to communicate when necessary points to the central role of language in tourism. To expand on this, participants were given a number of destinations (of the same category participants are interested in) and were asked if they would travel to them. Most destinations participants chose as suitable for them were those where Arabic or English was widely spoken.

However, as noted earlier, when participants were asked about China, the vast majority of them rejected it. Participants stated several reasons for their rejection of China and among the main reasons they stated was their belief that most people in China did not speak or understand English. “No, I do not think I will go to China... because I think they are very closed people, they do not speak English, and I think their food is not good” (Mohsen - M). This suggests that, despite participants’ claim that they do not think language influenced their choice of destinations, language remained a critical factor and that its influence mostly occurs in a latent way.

6.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the role of some cultural elements in the holiday choices of Saudi tourists. The findings showed that although religion influences all aspects of daily life in Saudi Arabia, its influence on destination choice was limited for most participants. The majority of participants said they did not care about the religion of the destination they visited as their focus is mostly on the natural environment. Some female participants preferred non-Islamic destinations in order to enjoy a higher level of privacy and travel with less religious norms influencing them, while men generally had fewer restrictions on destination choice. However, this was different for families as more men preferred to take their families to Islamic countries so they could stay in an Islamic environment and wear their Hijabs safely. Similarly, religion was found to have a limited influence on the choice of services at the destination, e.g. Islamic compliant hotels, as their focus was mostly on outdoor activities.

The research also found that non-Islamic religious attractions, e.g. temples and churches, were less appealing to the research participants. While this was projected to be influenced by religion, the participants generally showed a preference for non-religious cultural sites. In general, the research participants were more interested in familiar choices, especially in food consumption. The perception of cultural safety had the biggest influence on holiday choices. For example, the participants said language difference was not a big issue for them. Nevertheless, they still chose destinations where they could communicate using Arabic or English and felt culturally safe.

The research, however, found other factors that influence the holiday choices of the participants. These factors are a mixture of social influence and the use of information technology in tourism. The research also explored the role of Saudi women and their contribution to the decision-making process. The next chapter will discuss these findings in detail, outlining some of the unique aspects that the current research found.

7. FACTORS INFLUENCING HOLIDAY CHOICES OF SAUDI TOURISTS

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, the role of the society in motivating Saudi tourists for outbound tourism was discussed. It was noted that the social environment of Saudi Arabia motivated tourists to spend their holidays in outbound destinations because of the strict religious and cultural norms that limited personal freedom and space, and added commitments on individuals. Nonetheless, another form of social influence found in the current research was related to their use of social networking applications. As a society that is strongly socially connected through its social structure, people influence each other's decisions tremendously.

7.2 Social Influence

The findings showed that social networks played a leading role in influencing holiday choices of the research participants. This was noticed in several interviews, e.g. Othman (M) Mansour (M) and Salem (M) and several others. Previously, this influence occurred through everyday communication. Yet, with the spread of social networking mobile applications, social influence has become stronger. However, although influence continues to take place both online and offline, the research found that participants were mostly influenced by content shared online. Specifically, the findings showed that the research participants followed the trends in most travel-related decisions, e.g. choice of destination, itinerary, accommodation, activities and things to avoid.

Everyone around us has been to Austria and Switzerland, and when you see the photos and videos, honestly you get shocked by how beautiful they are... everywhere, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat... Switzerland was very expensive for us... so we decided to go to Germany and Austria, and they were like godly heaven on the earth (Hessa - F).

An explanation for such behaviour can be related to the characteristics of the holidays, e.g. being intangible, costly and mostly purchased with long time savings, and the high risks associated with it. Therefore, the participants of the research tended to follow others' experiences to avoid any potential disappointment. Another explanation can be related to the culture of Saudi tourists as a tribal society where people live in a strong social bond. Hence people are likely to show off what they have 'or show others that they can be like them'.

Among the most popular apps that the participants mentioned were Snapchat, Twitter and Instagram. Nonetheless, the analysis of the research showed that Instant Messaging Apps played a leading influence among Saudi tourists, both at the early and later stages of the decision-making process. In some cases, the decision to travel was motivated by a photo or a video viewed over one of the social networking apps. "...my brother visited Turkey and sent us photos (on WhatsApp) from Uzungol (Trabzon). Honestly, I never thought Turkey is that beautiful" (Ola - F). In the later stages of the decision-making process (the stage in which potential tourists are ready to make choices), these apps also functioned as a medium through which potential travellers obtained information, sought recommendations and purchased some services.

...I suggested Indonesia to my friends because we see many people go there and recommend it...so we started collecting information from people we know and also from the internet, and it was a very beautiful holiday... you know I got the idea of Ezba from the internet... yes I mean social media (Basim - F).

Previous research acknowledged the important role of society in shaping individuals' decisions and behaviours (Li, 2013). According to Bearden *et al.* (1986), there are two types of social influence. The first is normative influence, which creates social pressure on individuals to adopt products or services because other people in their societies have adopted them. Kim and Srivastava (2007) believed that if an individual does not follow the trend in their society, they are normally labelled as 'old fashioned' regardless of their own personal preferences.

The second is informational influence where individuals accept information obtained from others in their society as evidence about reality. For example, Sinha and Swearingen (2001) found that consumers tended to trust recommendations when they were obtained from their friends and relatives. In the current research, most participants said they were motivated to visit specific destinations and engage in specific activities because they saw others around them visit and recommend these destinations and activities. Participants were found to follow the steps of others from their social circles, e.g. family, friends, colleagues and neighbours.

Both informational and normative social influences existed in the case of the research participants. The normative influence was clear as almost all participants of the research sought to spend their holidays in outbound destinations as a form of prestige enhancement and showing others that they could travel too. The informational influence was also clear as participants followed the trends in the society in terms of destination choices, activities and accommodation.

An example of this was the widespread idea of Ezba preparation among participants who travelled to enjoy the green nature of their chosen destinations. Another example was the common idea of staying in villas, hiring housemaids and several other common choices among participants who visited Puncak, Indonesia. This may also explain why certain destinations, e.g. Turkey, Austria, Indonesia, were popular among the research participants.

Although this was not unique to the research participants, as tourists from other cultures also have shared travel norms, it pointed to the critical role that social networking applications played in creating norms among tourists. The features of these apps contributed to increasing both normative and informational social influences and led to creating trends among Saudi tourists. "... some experts share travel plans. I like to follow them because they save us time...I do not want to make mistakes" (Omar - M).

This is significant because tourists from societies with strong social bonds like Saudi Arabia may prefer to visit destinations that other tourists have recommended and deemed suitable to

visit, partly because they are more risk-averse travellers who prefer certainty and familiarity. As a result, among the key platforms that the research participants used to seek information and recommendations were instant messaging apps.

7.2.1 Instant Messaging Apps

It was not the intention of the current research to explore the use of social networking applications among the participants, but the early interviews showed that instant messaging played an important role in shaping holiday choices of the sample. Therefore, the interviews were expanded to explore how these apps influenced participants' choices and how they used them to influence others. Unlike the role of traditional social media which researchers and marketers have acknowledged, e.g. (Hays, Page and Buhalis, 2013; Popescu, 2014; Taneja and Toombs, 2014), to date, very limited research has considered the use of instant messaging (IM) apps among tourists.

The current research found that instant messaging apps were among the leading social networking platforms that influenced the holiday choices of the research participants. For example, Faridah (F) noted that WhatsApp was the platform where the idea to visit Austria originated: "we were planning to go to Turkey like everyone else but then I received photos of my friends holiday in Austria, and I shared them in my family's WhatsApp group..." Also, Nouf (F) said, "there are many groups in Telegram where you can ask about everything you need... yes, I use them most of the time, they are useful."

Instant Messaging (IM) refers to a form of communication that takes place through smartphone chat applications, e.g. WhatsApp, WeChat, Telegram. These Apps allow people to communicate with each other, individually or in groups and share media content, documents and news. Among the main features of these Apps is the 'groups' that allow people of common interests, e.g. family, friends, colleagues, to make a platform for communication and discussion.

As a result of their features, IM apps sparked travel thoughts for many people as they saw content shared by others, especially people whom they knew personally and trusted. In addition to the quotes presented earlier, Osama (M) also provided a similar answer regarding their source of information, indicating the vital role that IM apps play on Saudi tourists choices. For example: "...I saw photos from Sri Lanka in our work WhatsApp group, and I started looking for information about it. I asked in the group for recommendations... I visited it the following year with my friend" (Osama - M).

In the case of this participant, he did not think about Sri Lanka before. The content shared in their WhatsApp group sparked his thoughts about it, and the recommendations he received motivated his decision to visit. The participant also stated that for all the places he visited, the decisions were mostly motivated by some media content (mostly photos and videos) shared via WhatsApp or other platforms. This was found common among the participants of the research, as these IM apps provided them with trustworthy content. In most interviews, content that participants said to have sparked their travel thoughts was received in groups that were not designed for travel enthusiasts but rather for work or family.

"Sometimes my friends send photos of places they visited in our WhatsApp group, and if I like it, I ask them about it... many places in Dubai I visited them because my friends recommend it, and in Turkey too" (Sondos - F). The findings presented earlier in chapter 6 that Saudi tourists preferred familiarity can explain why IM apps were important in the decision-making process of the research participants.

It can be argued that because IM apps are normally used for communication between people that know and trust each other, they provided a trustworthy source of information for the research participants. This was more obvious in WhatsApp, but also participants said they trusted information obtained through Telegram groups as trusted people, known as experts, normally moderated them. In the current research, the influence of both platforms was evident.

Analysing the functions of IM groups showed that their power came from a number of features: 1) their ability to send texts, voice notes, photos and videos; 2) its snowballing feature (sharing function) which allows content to get continuously circulated to other users and groups; 3) its high level of trust as its groups normally consist of members that know each other personally, e.g. (family, friends, colleagues) thus its content is expected to be trustworthy by group members (Hernández-Méndez, Muñoz-Leiva and Sánchez-Fernández, 2015).

IM Groups create platforms for members to use their features to disseminate messages to friends, relatives and other members of their social network. For example, WhatsApp and Telegram were used to deliver direct communication between friends, relatives, colleagues at work and groups of mutual interests, e.g. fans of a specific sports team and enthusiasts of a specific destination. These apps allowed users to send photos and videos to each other and in-group messages, and hence influenced an extended number of people. Moreover, they allowed re-circulating texts, photos and videos through their (Share) features. Therefore, Mannaa (2019) noted that IM apps today provide an important source of information for tourists. Zhang, Sun and Wagner (2019) also believed that groups on WhatsApp and similar IM apps allowed members to discuss ideas and transfer experiences to each other.

However, for Zhang, Sun and Wagner (2019) the focus was on the use of IM apps for group travel decision-making where a group of friends or relatives decided to create a WhatsApp or WeChat group or begin a group discussion in a pre-existed group to plan their travel. While it is relevant, in the current research, the findings showed that the use of WhatsApp and other apps might be different among Saudi tourists. IM groups, in the case of the research participants, existed prior to the initial planning of the holiday either for family, friends and work communication, or a group that was created for enthusiasts for a certain destination (see figure, 11). All participants of the research noted the influence of IM apps on their holiday decisions.

In family, friends and work WhatsApp groups, the influence normally occurs when members post photos/videos of places they have visited or would like to visit. As a result, other members

may also begin to think about the places in these photos and videos. For example: "...in the beginning, I used to travel to Arab countries but then started to see people around me travel to Turkey and Europe... In a WhatsApp group, someone sent photos from his holiday in Turkey, I asked him about it, and he persuaded me to visit it, so I visited it... yes, Austria and Azerbaijan too" (Metab - M).

In groups that were designed for enthusiasts of a specific destination, participants used these platforms to learn about destinations and get support from previous travellers. These groups influenced the decision-making stage where potential tourists began the selection of their holiday destination, activities and services. Nevertheless, although IM apps played a critical role in the initial planning stage as well as the decision-making stage, there were several other platforms that participants said they used, e.g. Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. These platforms share similar features, especially in allowing the "integration of personal communication, image and sound capture and data distribution through mobile devices" (Lugosi, 2016, p. 103). In most cases, participants were found to use these different platforms at the same time they used IM apps. While this was anticipated to be a common practice among tourists from other cultures, too, previous research on the use of IM apps among tourists is scarce.

The agreement among the research participants on the influence of IM apps on their holiday choices indicated that future research should explore their role in holiday choices further, both in the context of Saudi tourists as well as tourists from other cultures. The current research suggests that both WhatsApp and Telegram influenced tourists' choices. Ibrahim (M) said that they had groups on WhatsApp and Telegram, which were designed for those who loved to travel to Indonesia. Telegram allows a larger group size, higher privacy and its group members are more diverse, compared to WhatsApp. As a result, his Telegram group also included service providers in Indonesia, e.g. drivers, accommodation agents, and destination experts who provided offers, information about activities, and places to visit.

To understand this further, the researcher joined a number of Telegram groups and found them as described by many participants, especially as they were segmented by destination, which allowed more concentrated content. For example, in a group designed for Trabzon's enthusiasts, the size of the group exceeded 17,000 members – the majority of them from Saudi Arabia and GCC countries (see figure, 11). Several other groups were found for different destinations. Many participants said that when they identified a destination they wanted to visit, they started looking for 'groups' mostly in Telegram to learn more about the destination. Therefore, Telegram formed an important platform for the research's participants. An associated factor the current research found to influence the research participants' decisions was travel influencers. These influencers were active in IM apps such as in Telegram as well as in Snapchat and Twitter.

A gap in knowledge found in literature was related to the continuous changes in social networking apps and the need for updated research to understand how such changes affected tourists. The current research fulfilled this need by placing its focus on IM apps explaining how they have become vital for tourists' decision-making processes and how they influenced choices. This can be useful for both, research that is focused on tourists decision-making and practice, especially for marketers who seek to disseminate marketing messages to tourists through social networking apps.

7.2.2 Travel Influencers

Researchers and marketers have recognised travel the vital role that travel influencers play in shaping consumers decisions (Ki and Kim, 2019). An influencer is “a person, who at a relevant market place, has a reach greater than average or impact through word of mouth” (Gupta and Mahajan, 2019). Influencer marketing can be defined as “an exchange between a brand and a well-followed content creator who endorse products or services by interweaving these promotions with their personal life narrations” (Femenia-Serra and Gretzel, 2020, p. 66).

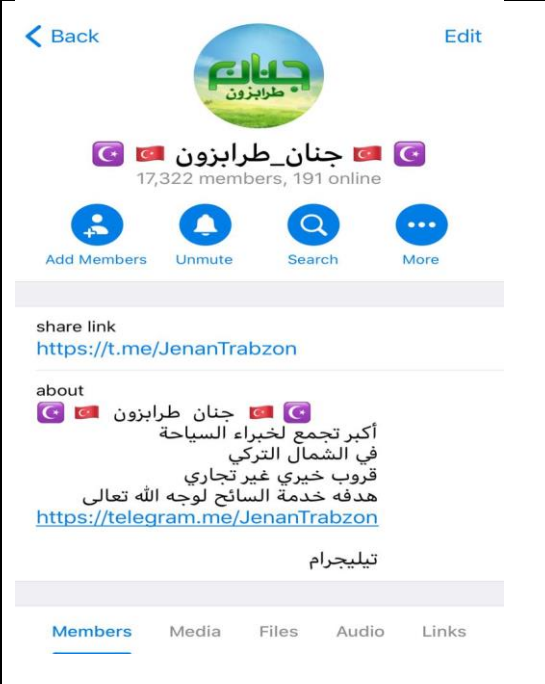
	Translation Trabzon Heavens 17,322 members About: the largest gathering of tourism experts in North Turkey; a non-for-profit group its purpose to serve the tourist for the sake of Allah Link Telegram
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Figure 11. A screenshot of a Telegram group popular among Saudi tourists to Turkey

Marketing research highlighted three types of influencers: micro, macro and mega, with all three using social media and networking platforms to reach their audience. According to Adweek (2020), the difference between these three types of influencers is mainly their number and type of followers, and eventually their reach and influence. It is important to note that social media influencers are relatively a recent phenomena which marketing research has not investigated thoroughly.

There are no agreed definitions for mega, macro and micro-influencers. However, Influecity.com (2018) one of the most cited sources, suggests that a mega influencer is normally a celebrity with over 1 million followers in real life and social media; a macro influencer is content creators with a strong passion for a particular subject and a number of followers between 10,000 and 1 million; and a micro-influencer is a person with under 10,000 social media followers who are mainly active in social networking applications, e.g. Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram and IM apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram.

In the mega and macro categories of influencers, the interaction between the influencer and the audience is limited. The more the audience an influencer has, the less the interaction occurs between them. In contrast, micro-influencers normally interact with their audience and hence have more influence on them (Main, 2017). Audiences perceive that the content generated by micro-influencers to be more trustworthy compared to macro and mega influencers. According to Fäs and Zumstein (2019), micro-influencers provide an important marketing tool in tourism and hospitality, and their audience can also become influencers themselves. However, Gretzel (2018) believed that influencer marketing in tourism and hospitality remains mostly used by hotels and the hospitality sectors, while destinations are still lagging behind.

In the current research, the role of influencers on tourist choices of destinations, activities and travel-related decisions was explored. The findings showed an increasing influence of influencers on tourists. Gretzel (2019) argued that influencers could drive behavioural change and redirect tourist flows to new destinations. The majority of research produced on the role of influencers is focused on celebrities and macro-influencers. However, for the participants of the research, micro-influencers were the ones who had the most influence.

This was evident in most holiday choices, including destination, activities, route and itinerary of travel as well as accommodation. The influence normally took place on Snapchat, Twitter, and Telegram as they were the main channels through which these influencers reached their audience. The participants of the research were found to follow these influencers in many travel-related decisions, e.g. choice of destinations, accommodation and activities. Perhaps, this was because micro-influencers made up for their smaller audience through higher relevance and resonance, resulting in much higher engagement (Gretzel, 2018).

The findings of the research show that participants considered the micro-influencers that they followed to be experts. Osama (M) said, “it is a good idea to follow advice from experts on social media; they save your time and effort”. Ibrahim (M) was found to manage a WhatsApp group dedicated to those who like to visit Indonesia. He said: “People know me as an expert

in Indonesia because I almost travel there every year". Based on the findings of the current research, in addition to the characteristics of the holiday suggested earlier, it can be argued that the participants of the research felt that destination experts were important to them because of two main reasons:

First, the language barrier: although many Saudis can use basic English for communication, their level of English may not have been enough to search for information about their chosen destination. Therefore, following other people's experiences and advice allowed them to avoid unnecessary mistakes. Moreover, many destinations that Saudi tourists visited used other languages that Saudi tourists did not understand. For example, the language was present in the participants' perception of China, which led most of them to reject it as a possible destination for them.

Second, cultural and religious restrictions: Saudis sought advice from destination experts on the suitability of places and activities, especially when they travelled with their wives. Sumaya (F) noted that during their preparation for their honeymoon in Indonesia, they read in a Telegram group that Bali was not suitable for Saudi families. Therefore, they chose it as their destination to enjoy themselves as a newly married couple, understanding that they did not have to worry about Arabs and Saudis looking at them.

Nonetheless, the choice for Sumaya and her husband (as a newly married couple) was largely different from the choice of most participants who visited Indonesia and mostly believed that Bali as unsuitable for families. This suggested that the destination choice for male Saudi tourists differed when they were travelling with their wives. It also implied that Saudi women have an important role in the decision-making process.

I follow Fawaz Alshlahi on Twitter and Snapchat, and he is the reason I visited Poland and Slovakia... no, I have never thought about it before... everything from him. Honestly, it was the best, much better than Turkey and Indonesia and not expensive (Othman - M).

This role of influencers or as described by participants, the 'experts', resulted in Saudi tourists travelling to similar destinations, following similar travel routes, using similar services and engaging in similar activities. This, perhaps, explains the dramatic increase in the number of Saudis visiting Trabzon in Turkey from 5 tourists in 2012 to over 350,000 in 2017 (Aldujayn, 2018). Another example of the influence of destination experts on the research participants was that one of the common practices found among participants who visited Austria was to land in Germany, drive through the borders to spend the holiday in the Austrian countryside and return through Germany.

Other participants were also found to follow a similar approach, with several participants who visited Austria and Switzerland choosing Germany as their landing destination. This points to the important role of holiday experts in the Saudi tourism industry and suggests that future research should take into account their role in shaping holiday choices.

Moreover, much of the influence of these holiday experts that was noted in the current research occurred in the conversations with female participants. For example, Israa (F) said that she followed many travel accounts on Snapchat through which she learned a lot about places she later visited. Fatima (F) also said she learned about the Czech Republic and Slovakia through a travel influencer on Snapchat and followed the expert in most decisions, including accommodation and activities. However, although this was not limited to female participants, it points to the important role women play in their family holiday choices.

7.3 Role of Women

One of the key areas of enquiry in the current research was to explore Saudi women's participation in travel decisions. The findings showed that Saudi women had different views towards domestic tourism and different reasons for preferring outbound travel compared to men. Therefore, it was important to explore how women participated in holiday decision-making and how this affected travel trends among Saudi tourists. Both men and women were asked questions to understand how women contributed to the decision-making process.

Similar to other cultural contexts, the findings of the current research showed that the role of Saudi women in holidays varied depending on their situation. However, when travelling with their families, the findings showed a clear and important role for Saudi women but not as primary decision-makers.

7.3.1 Family Holiday Decision-Making

As explained earlier in chapters 2 and 3, although there are many modern families in Saudi Arabia, where men and women share financial responsibilities, culturally, men are responsible for the well-being of their families and hence are responsible for financial decisions. Among these decisions which men are responsible for are holiday-related decisions. However, despite this, almost all female participants said they were greatly involved in the decision-making process of their family holidays. For example, Faridah (F) said that she convinced her family to switch their destination choice from Turkey to Germany and Austria. Also, Nouf (F) said, "... I am the one who searches for information and plan the holiday for my family".

Previous tourism research has considered the role of women in family holiday decisions. Van Raaij and Francken (1984) noted that in most family holidays, planning and decisions were joint activities between all members of the family, including husbands, wives and children. Mottiar and Quinn (2004) found that the role of women in holiday decisions was greater than what was generally believed. For example, they found that women led the process of initial planning, collection of information, deciding which travel agent to use as well as booking the majority of the holiday services. Moreover, they also found that women joined their partners in other decisions, e.g. destination choice, time of holiday, choice of services and accommodation, and budget of the holiday. However, these studies were conducted in western societies, and their findings may be of limited applicability to the Saudi society.

The structure of a typical Saudi family normally makes the head of the family responsible for most family decisions. A typical Saudi family is normally headed by a man, mostly a father/husband or an older brother/son when the father is absent. In some families, mothers

may head their family in the absence of a father and acts to fulfil the desires of their family members. For example, Sahar's (F) family was headed by her mother due to the absence of her father. Sahar noted she had a brother, but they all shared the decisions, and their mother paid for the holiday. However, the remainder of the interviews suggested that women played a key role in holiday decisions through the requests and pressure they made and their influence on the head of the family who worked to satisfy their wants.

7.3.2 Views of Female Participants

Female participants shared the view that their role in the holiday decision-making process was vital. However, their role was different based on their marital status. As noted earlier, most Saudi women travel with their families because, for many of them, it is culturally unacceptable for a woman to travel on her own or with friends. Single women were found to have two key roles. First, prior to planning the holiday, they pressured and made requests to the primary decision-maker.

For example, Noha (F) said that her father was only interested in Islamic countries because it was culturally easier for him. "We visited Dubai, Turkey and Malaysia and then my father told us we would next go to Indonesia... I told him I do not want Indonesia, I want Europe". Similar answers were also provided by other female participants that showed the requests that women made to the primary decision-maker to influence their destination choice.

The second role single female participants were found to play was their contribution to the choices of the holidays. For example, they were found to make recommendations to their families as they were younger and more knowledgeable in social media and networking apps which formed important sources of information. They helped their families with passing photos and videos they received from their friends, planning the leisure activities and suggested accommodation for the family. For example, Faridah, Nouf, Sondos and Hessa all said they received information about the destination they wanted to visit through WhatsApp and Telegram, and they shared the information in their families' WhatsApp groups. These

participants also said they helped plan the holiday for their families using their knowledge of the internet and by asking recommendations from experts.

Married female participants had similar roles to those described by unmarried female participants. However, their role in asserting pressure and requests on the primary decision-maker was greater than their role in information search and making recommendations. A possible explanation for such a difference may be related to their age or their parental responsibilities, which may have limited their time using social networking apps to collect information. However, such a hypothesis needs to be explored in future research to assess why married female participants contributed less in information search and recommendations.

Although most women said they were not involved in the financial matters of the holiday when they travelled with their families, some married females did also share the cost of the holiday with their husbands. "...we chose to go to Florida and New York because we want to have fun. My husband chose the itinerary and things that I do not understand... we shared everything... yes, including the money" (Abeer – F). This comment is in line with the statement above that married participants were more involved in making requests, including for a specific destination than in searching for information or making recommendations related to activities or accommodations. Only one female participant said that she made most of the decisions. "My husband let me decide where to go, and I plan everything... he is very busy" (Israa - F). Nevertheless, although most women said that they were largely involved in the decision-making process of the holiday destination selection, most male participants said that women's contribution to decisions was limited, including those who were married.

7.3.3 Views of Males Participants

Most male participants stated that although some of the decisions were made jointly, they led the process. "I think the decisions are mostly made by men... it is our responsibility" (Hazem - M). Similarly, Metab (M) said that because he was responsible for the finance of the holiday, he made most of the decisions. The financial responsibility of men in the Saudi culture gives

them the privilege to make most of the financial decisions. Holidays involve expensive purchases, and thus men automatically became the main decision-makers.

Nonetheless, despite most men stating that the role of women in holiday decisions was limited, they also stated that when they made travel decisions, they considered the requests and desires of their wives. Influence from women, in this case, occurred in the form of requests and pressure they made on the head of the family. For example, Othman (M) noted that he rarely consulted his wife when planning a holiday and liked to use the surprise element in everything because of financial reasons. However, he admitted that he knew what his wife liked and worked to please her desires. Other male participants also stated that they made most of the travel decisions but consulted their wives about destinations and hotels.

Although many modern families in Saudi Arabia share the cost of living, most families remain traditional where the man as the head of the family would take most financial responsibilities. This has roots in the Islamic religion which rules that a wife's money is only for her and that she has no financial responsibility towards her family (unless she wants to) (binBaz - Former Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, No Date). However, while travelling for leisure is not among the financial responsibilities the Islamic religion rules on husbands, most male participants in the current research said they took the entire financial responsibility for their families' holidays.

7.3.4 Saudi Women's Influence

Although the data showed that the main decision-makers for holidays in the Saudi family were the men because they controlled the financial decisions, the research showed that women played an important role in holiday decisions. However, their role varied depending on the family and whether wives worked. Therefore, it can be argued that Saudi women participated in their family holiday in two different ways: 1) as partners when they shared most of the decisions with their husbands; 2) as influencers, where they influenced the primary decision-maker through the requests they made. This is in line with previous research that discussed

women role in family holidays (Rojas-de-Gracia, Alarcón-Urbistondo and Robles, 2018; Rojas-de Gracia and Alarcon-Urbistondo, 2016).

However, as noted earlier, the majority of women in Saudi Arabia do not travel on their own or with their friends, and this is where in this research, the influence of women was noted. It is assumed that as women have limited opportunities to enjoy outbound holidays, they increase their pressure on the head of the family. Moreover, Ahmed (M) who mostly travelled with his friends because it was more fun and less expensive, said his family made pressure on him, but for financial reasons, he could not always take them on holiday. Nevertheless, when women had work and income, they normally shared the cost of the holiday.

We were watching Mr Bean's holiday, and I think he was going to south France, my wife looked at me and told me what do you think of this place? We started reading about it and then decided to visit it. It was very beautiful to drive around... no she only suggested the place, everything else was my job... yes, we shared the cost (Fahad - M).

Other comments by Mohsen (M) and Hassan (M) and Samer (M) also showed female contribution to the cost of the holiday but similarly to most female participants, they performed an influencer role with limited involvement in choices other than destination choice. This arguably reflects the pervasive influence of Saudi Arabian culture, which gives men leadership roles in the family, leading them to dominate the decision-making process even when their wives shared the cost of the holiday. The research concludes that although men continue to lead the decision-making process in the Saudi family due to cultural factors, women have an important role as contributors as well as influencers. This is important for marketers as well as researchers to consider the role of Saudi women in their family decision-making processes in future research as, currently, no research has investigated such roles.

7.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter continued to address the role of culture on holiday choices, focusing on social influence on tourists and the role of women in family holiday choices. The research outlined how participants mostly followed trends in their society, choosing popular destinations among people around them. It was explained that the characteristics of holidays, e.g. their intangibility, high cost and risk, and the strong connectivity between people in the Saudi culture, i.e. their tribal structure, are key reasons that the participants felt the need to follow trends in their society.

The research highlighted that with the rise of social networking applications, most of the social influence occurred online, with Snapchat, WhatsApp, Telegram and Twitter, being the most influential apps, among the research participants. Social Influence, however, was not limited to destination choice but other choices too, including restaurants, attractions and activities. The rise of social networking applications, especially IM apps, also contributed to a wider role of travel influencers on tourists, forming a trusted source of information for many of the research participants. These travel influencers contributed to creating trends among tourists.

The chapter also highlighted the important role of women in their family holidays. It was noted that although there are no longer official restrictions on female travel, culturally, most women only travelled for holidays with their families. This limited their knowledge and experience in travel. However, despite their limited experiences, social networking apps allowed them, especially younger women, to learn about destinations through the experiences of other holidaymakers, ask questions to experts and pass the information they gained to their families. Nevertheless, the greater influence from women was found to be their ability to pressure the main decision-maker in the family and make requests that the head of the family is culturally obliged to fulfil.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 Summary of Thesis

This research aimed to explore the role of culture on the holiday choices of Saudi tourists. Three questions guided it: 1) how do Saudis perceive domestic tourism?; 2) what are the travel motives for outbound Saudi tourists?; 3) how does culture shape holiday choices of outbound Saudi tourists? To achieve the aim of the research and answer its questions, 35 interviews were conducted with tourists from Saudi Arabia who have been to an outbound destination.

In order to gain a heterogeneous set of perspectives about the role of culture and religion across Saudi Arabia as a whole (rather than focusing on the more metropolitan cities alone), interviewees were recruited from across Saudi Arabia, including both males and females. The latter perspective in particular is quite unusual as most previous research focused on a predominantly male perspective, given the dominance of males in Saudi culture and the restrictions on cross-gender communication (Alghamdi, 2007).

The research analysed how culture and religion can influence Saudi tourists' choices across their holiday destination and decision-making process. It contributes to knowledge by providing greater insights into the motives for outbound travel among Saudi tourists, especially by exploring perceptions of the significance and components of nature; the role of social commitments and norms including regular family gatherings, social obligations such as attending weddings (which are normally open ceremonies attended by many people) and the restrictions on women's leisure activities; and the specific influence of culture and religion in the choice of destinations, services, accommodation, activities and food.

Moreover, the research explored the role of social influence on Saudi tourists' choices, explaining how the society pushed people for outbound holidays. The research also helped to explain how Saudi consumers influenced each other through IM apps and how these methods of communication shaped the choices of the research participants, focusing on their role in sparking thoughts and ideas among users and their importance as a source of information in

today's tourism industry. Finally, the research uncovered the role of Saudi women in their families' holidays choices, which previous research failed to achieve. This is particularly important because it provides foundations for future studies on the role of women in holiday decisions in cultures similar to Saudi Arabia.

Methodologically, the current research contributes to knowledge by providing insights specifically for those seeking to engage in cross-gender research in Saudi Arabia or similar societies. The thesis outlined the challenges faced, and the techniques used to recruit and interview female participants by a male researcher, and it provided practical solutions for issues that similar future research may face.

For example, it was ensured that participants were fully aware of the researcher's identity and affiliations, the purpose of the research and their participation. In the first two interviews with female participants, the questions on sensitive topics such as outfit and Hijab were avoided which was an important technique to avoid any possible misunderstandings by the early two female participants who were projected to help recruit further female participants. Moreover, during interviews with female participants, a highly respectful language was used. As snowballing recruitment was used with female participants, the use of this technique (trust transfer) allowed to develop a trust that grew and extended from one participant to another. During the recruitment process, seeds/sources passed their experiences to their nominees and helped future interviews to begin with an established positive perception from participants towards the researcher (see section, 4.6.5).

This research also contributes to knowledge regarding the practice of tourism management in Saudi Arabia by pointing to the factors that motivate Saudi tourists for outbound holidays and providing recommendations that can improve the status of Saudi domestic tourism. This chapter will synthesise the key findings of the current research and highlight their contribution to existing knowledge. The chapter will also conclude by acknowledging the main limitations of the current research and outline its implications for future research.

8.2 Key Findings

The current research has produced five key findings. These findings answered the research questions and helped achieve its aim. The five findings addressed the motives for outbound travel among Saudi tourists, the role of culture on holiday choices, the role of travel influencers and instant messaging apps, and the role of Saudi women in the holiday choices of their families.

8.2.1 Escaping and Seeking Natural Environments

Travelling to escape routines, experience a natural environment and seek novelty are common travel motives for tourists worldwide. However, in the case of the Saudi tourists interviewed for this study, a distinct preference emerged for destination choices that relate to 'nature' or the components of what is considered an attractive natural environment. The discussion highlighted that Saudi tourists' perception of nature was mostly linked with green landscapes, rivers, lakes, and cool weather. Interviews with the participants of the study, regardless of their gender, showed that almost all of them did not regard the natural environment of Saudi Arabia as conforming to their perception of 'attractive nature' with comments such as 'we have no nature' repeated by several participants.

The analysis highlighted the extent to which such perceptions influenced the choice of destination among Saudi tourists with most participants choosing destinations that met with their expectations of an attractive natural environment. It appears that this taxonomic definition of nature actively discouraged the participants of the research from engaging in domestic tourism, with many participants describing the natural environment in which it occurs, negatively. In contrast, participants praised the natural environment of the destinations they visited.

This finding is important on two levels: first, it reveals a close relationship between the perception of nature and the type of destinations that tourists choose. Second, it reveals how perceptions about the natural environment shape the range of activities in which tourists

engage. Tourism research has acknowledged the relationship between the perception of destination and the intention to visit, both on the domestic and internal level (Promsivapallop and Kannaovakun, 2017; Bonn, Joseph and Dai, 2005). Moreover, previous researchers have linked the perception of the natural environment in the origin of tourists to their travel intention to outbound destinations (Smith, 1993) and the activities in which they engage at the destination (Gössling, Abegg and Steiger, 2016). However, these studies mostly documented the perception of western tourists that seek warm and less rainy weather.

In the current research, it was evident that the research participants also sought a novel natural environment. However, the destinations they sought were those with cool weather while rain for many of them was considered an advantage for the destination. This concurs with the outcomes of previous research on the role of the natural environment in influencing tourists' decisions. Nonetheless, as the weather becomes cooler during winter, most participants said they preferred to spend their holidays domestically.

This suggested that the desire to escape the hot weather during summer was stronger than the desire to seek green nature. This was evident because most participants who said they sought 'green nature' also said they preferred to spend their winter holidays domestically as the weather becomes cooler and more enjoyable. Also, their activities during winter holidays which they spent domestically were similar to their activities in their 'cooler summer destinations', which were mostly focused in Turkey, Europe and mountainous regions in Indonesia and Sri Lanka. This has practical implications for policymakers that the current holiday times in Saudi Arabia may contribute to increasing outbound travel.

8.2.2 Escaping Social Norms and Commitments

One of the main findings of the current research is the role of social norms as a driving force for outbound tourism. Participants of the research were found to use outbound holidays to escape for social mores and obligations. The analysis found that the highly interconnected nature of the society limited personal time and space, and hence limited individuals' ability to

enjoy themselves. Holidays overseas provided a welcome opportunity to avoid such obligations, escape social norms and enjoy larger personal freedom. However, this desire to escape society in most instances did not reflect a desire to engage in activities that contradicted the Muslim belief system but more to engage in activities without fear of social judgement.

The influence of social norms was most significant for women. A woman in Saudi Arabia, for example, is expected to wear an Abaya and Hijab in public, and this can limit the type of activities in which they engage. The analysis showed that female participants did not regard the Hijab to limit their activities, but the Abaya and Niqab did. The analysis also outlined that such limitations on women's activities influenced the domestic leisure experience of families.

For instance, practical solutions currently used to provide women with the space they needed, e.g. 'ladies only nights' in theme parks, although it is effective, it limited family activities with adult male relatives not being allowed to enter during female-only events. As a result, participants said they preferred to travel outside Saudi Arabia where they could spend time together with their family without the risk of people looking at them.

The research concluded that for many Saudis, due to restrictions on personal space resulting from the social connectivity and strict norms, outbound holidays were more a necessity than a leisure activity as it provided men and women space and freedom to enjoy themselves, wear the clothes they preferred and engage in activities that they found suitable. This is important because it highlights one of the key issues associated with domestic tourism and has implications for policymakers that efforts are needed to limit the negative influence of social norms on individuals' personal space and freedom.

The current movements in Saudi Arabia towards a more presence of women in public life, lifting restrictions on cross-gender communication, limiting the power of social control while also limiting the roles of religious police was met with positive reactions by the society. Therefore, between 2017 and 2019, the Authority of Entertainment hosted several

international events allowing young men and women to party in a mixed-gender environment. The success of these events together with the findings of the current research have implications for policymakers that promoting domestic tourism for the less conservative members of the society may be a better choice than advertising it for ordinary conservative people.

8.2.3 Preference of Familiar Choices

The research identified a number of destinations that were popular among Saudi outbound tourists and discussed the factors influencing their selection. Participants, in general, showed a preference for countries with cultural elements that were familiar to them, e.g. European countries, Turkey, Arab and Islamic countries. The research found that participants preferred to consume food that was familiar to them (Halal and internationally recognised restaurants), visit places that were popular among other Saudi tourists and follow itineraries provided by travel influencers. These practices allowed the participants of the research to enjoy hazard-free holidays.

While religion may be a key factor for the preference of Halal food, many participants said they chose Halal restaurants because they perceived them to be cleaner and safer to eat. As other participants said they do not only consume halal food but also eat in internationally recognised venues, this suggests that food choice among the research participants is not only influenced by religion but by the perception of cleanliness and safety. This is in line with the findings presented in (Osman, Johns and Lugosi, 2014) that internationally recognised restaurants such as McDonald's provide tourists with a safer option for food because they are familiar to many of them.

Moreover, the widespread use of Ezba among the research participants, especially those seeking nature in their travel suggests that these participants preferred to consume food that was familiar to them. This has implication for the management and marketing organisations of

outbound destinations that, to attract Saudi tourists successfully, it may be necessary first to ensure the availability of suitable food options.

Language was also found to play an important role among the research participants. While participants did not understand many of the languages used in their preferred destinations, most of them used English to communicate. The majority of participants said they knew basic English and found it enough for communication. Other participants who visited countries where English was not common, especially in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and other East and South Asian countries used private drivers that knew Arabic and worked as both tour guides and interpreters. The participants, in some situations, also used technological solutions such as Google Translate.

However, the common practice among the research participants was that they made limited contact with local communities. This suggests that the research participants preferred to stay within a familiar environment, make familiar choices and that they were not interested in learning about cultures and local communities but focused their holidays on the natural environment. This is of practical importance as it suggests low-risk appetite among Saudi tourists when choosing their destinations, accommodation and services at the destination. This may explain why travel influencers were found to play an important role among the research participants.

8.2.4 Travel Influencers and Instant Messaging Apps

The current research highlighted that most participants followed the advice from travel influencers, friends and relatives, and acquaintances on social networking applications rather than using travel agents as a source of information. A key explanation for such behaviour was found to be related to the level of trust as users of social networking apps normally knew each other or shared similar backgrounds, while also receiving these recommendations free of charge. The advice and recommendations were mostly provided over social networking platforms, e.g. Snapchat, WhatsApp and Telegram. Travel influencers were found to play a

leading role in shaping the choices of the research participants. The importance of their role stems from the characteristics of holidays, especially their high cost. The participants found that travel influencers provided certainty as their recommendations helped avoid costly mistakes.

The characteristic of the research participants explained earlier that they were found to have a low-risk appetite made the role of recommendations extremely important to them, as almost all participants said they asked questions before they travelled for a holiday, and sought recommendations from people with previous experiences especially friends and experts. Most of these communications were found to take place using Instant Messaging applications, e.g. WhatsApp and Telegram. This points out the importance of instant messaging as a tool of communication in tourism as they led the influence on the current research participants.

In personal communication with family, friends and colleagues, communication using IM apps mostly took place over WhatsApp, which provided a convenient way for discussions and allowed multimedia sharing. WhatsApp Groups were where most influences took place as participants received spontaneous content from their friends, relatives and colleagues that motivated them to travel, e.g. someone shared a photo or video of their experience in a specific destination, driving other members in these groups to think and ask questions about the destination, activities and attractions they saw. Telegram was found to play a similar role but was more influential in the later stages of the decision-making process.

Unlike WhatsApp, in Telegram, the key actors were travel influencers or what participants referred to as 'experts'. The discussion suggested that travel influencers used Telegram because it enabled them to engage with a larger audience compared to WhatsApp. The participants of the research used Telegram to seek recommendations from experts and learn ideas for their travel. This implies that social networking apps, particularly WhatsApp and Telegram groups, play an extremely important role in the holiday choices today and that tourism businesses and destination marketing organisations need to consider them in their marketing strategies.

8.2.5 The Role of Women in Holiday Choices

The review of the literature showed that previous research ignored the role of Saudi women in holiday choices as they failed to reach them. Similarly, research from other fields on Saudi women role in household decisions was scarce. In the current research, this issue was explored among a sample of female and male participants from across Saudi Arabia. Generally, studies that addressed Saudi tourists believed women role in holiday decisions was limited as traditionally men lead families in the Arab culture. However, the current research suggested that women had an important role in their families' holiday choices.

Like western women whose role changed over time as they achieved more economic independence, the contribution of women in the current research to holiday choices also changed depending on their changing economic and social status. The analysis showed that female participants had a varying role, e.g. some of them shared the cost of the holiday and shared most decisions; others shared the cost of the holidays and major decisions, but their husbands made other decisions; others influenced their husbands through making requests, while few female participants said they led the decisions. The more a woman was involved in the financial cost of the holiday, the more they were found involved in other decisions. This suggested that although culture continued to give men a leading role in their families, the previously viewed limited role of Saudi women on holiday is changing as their economic status evolves.

The current research noted that the social restrictions on women domestic leisure activities, lead to pressure on men to take their families abroad for holidays. Most men in this study said that they understood the desires of their wives and family and hence would normally work to satisfy them. This influenced all aspects of the holiday from the choice of destination to accommodation and activities. While both direct and indirect influence exists, the research suggests that considering the culture of participants, the indirect influence of women was larger. Nonetheless, the culture of the participants also made men responsible for satisfying the desires of their families and hence this indirect influence is of great importance.

This has implications for marketers that although it seems that men lead the decisions in the Saudi culture, the role of women in holiday decisions is critical, and their influence on the primary decision-maker is clear. Moreover, as women's status in Saudi Arabia is dramatically changing with several reform plans that empowered women further, it is expected that women will be more engaged in their family decisions, including holidays. Therefore, tourism marketers focusing on Saudi Arabia should direct more of their messages towards women as they play an important role in the decision-making process.

8.3 Contribution to Knowledge

The current research contributes to knowledge related to the phenomenon of leisure travel by exploring the role of culture on holiday choices among a sample of Saudi tourists. The research builds on the broad gap in knowledge related to tourists from non-western culture, specifically Saudi tourists. It was argued that the models used in tourism research to understand tourist consumer behaviour may be of limited applicability to the context of Saudi Arabia for cultural reasons. However, the research found that some of these models can be useful to explore specific issues related to holiday choice behaviour and are possible to apply in the Saudi context. This, however, needs to be done with careful considerations of the cultural variables of the Saudi culture, especially religious and social norms.

For example, the model presented in Plog (2001) was not used in this research as it did not fit the purpose of the research. It was not suitable for use in research focused on choice behaviour and motives for holidays. However, the findings related to seeking novelty and familiarity suggest that the model can be useful to predict which destinations Saudi tourists may seek or avoid, depending on how psychocentric or allocentric they are. Also, the research findings suggested that the push and pull model of Dann (1977) can be useful in investigating the motives for holidays in the Saudi context.

The research also criticised the over-dependence of tourism research on grand models of marketing. While these grand models can be useful in general marketing research, especially that focused on product-based industries, they are less effective in tourism to understand the

tourist decision-making process. For example, although some of the stages presented in Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (1968) are similar to the stages tourists go through, the decision-making process in tourism is more complex and cannot be accommodated in simple steps.

Tourists travel for different reasons, not only because they recognise a need to travel, and more factors influence their choices than there are in product-based industries. Also, grand models consider information search as a step in the decision-making process while in the current research information search is viewed as a continuous activity that is embedded in and influences all phases of the holiday planning process. This is in line with the assumptions presented in Hyde (2008) that information search is not a step but an activity that continues throughout the decision-making process.

The current research did not follow a specific model in its investigation because it assumed that no single model could fully explain tourists' decision-making behaviour. Instead, researchers need to study each market independently by considering the different variables that influence tourists from different countries. For example, in the case of the current research's participants, social norms were key escape motives, but for tourists from other cultures, this may not be an issue. However, the research made use of the simple classification provided in Iso-Ahola (1982) escape and seeking model which was found suitable to classify the motives for travel for the research participants.

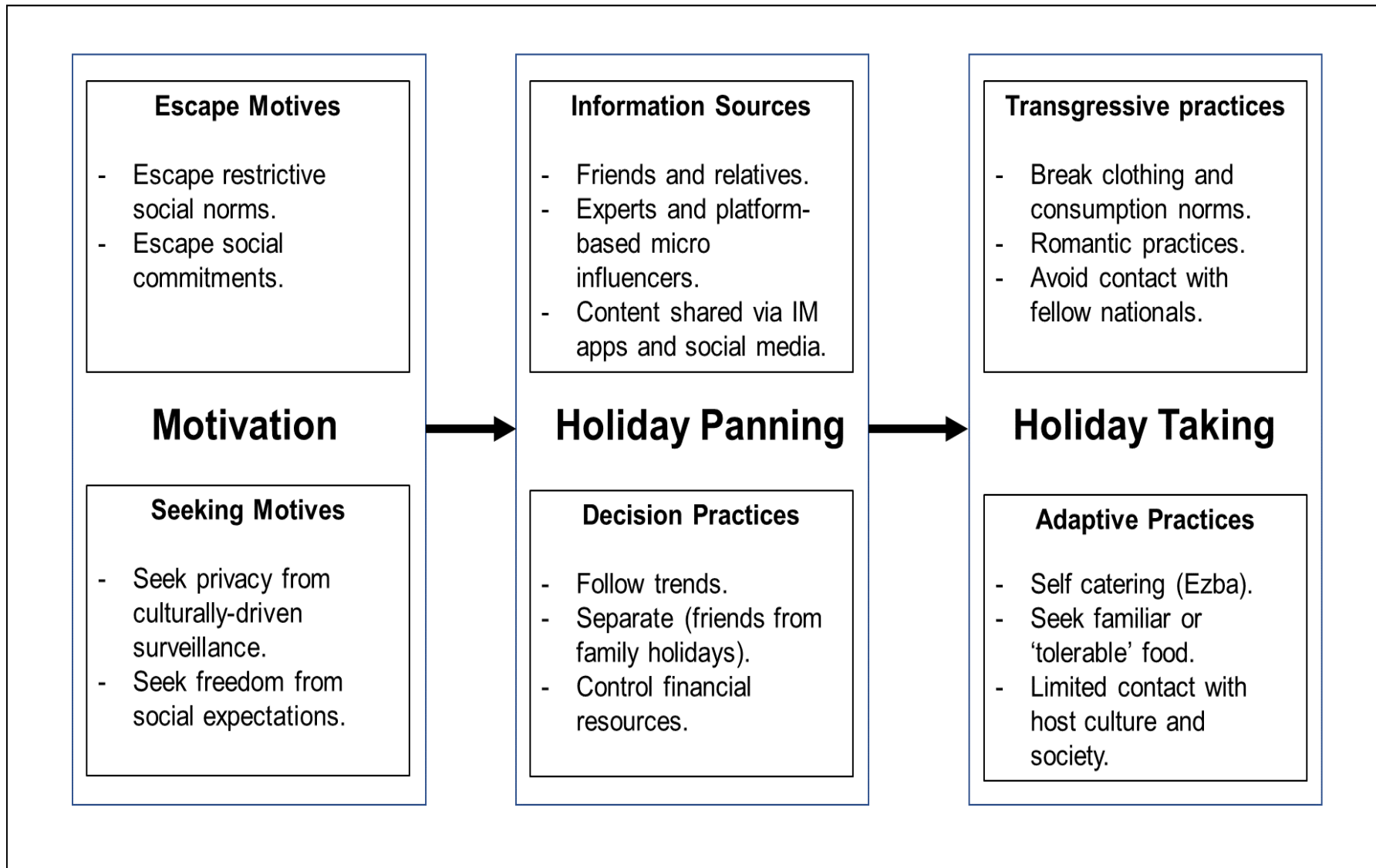
The research outlined several factors that influenced the holiday choices among the research participants, referring them to two main factors: the culture and the natural environment. It explained how culture in the Saudi context, together with the social structure contribute to increasing outbound leisure travel. Nonetheless, in outbound destinations participants preferred to keep elements of their culture, choose destinations they trust, eat food they know and engage in activities with limited cultural contact. Linking these two findings, the research proposes that even though tourists may travel to escape their home culture and society, their low-risk appetite may keep them from exploring new cultures and unfamiliar choices. This proposes a limited correlation between the desire to escape culture and novelty seeking in the

case of the research participants. Figure (12) shows how culture has a pervasive influence in all stages of holiday decision-making among the research participants. It motivated them to spend their holidays in outbound destinations, influenced the information search and decision practices, it also influenced their choices and behaviour at the destination. This shows how strongly culture is embedded in Saudi tourists' behaviour.

The research contributes to further understanding of social networking apps' use among tourists, uncovering the important role of instant messaging applications and travel influencers. While this may be more of practical importance, it is also theoretically important as it explained how IM groups were more trusted as sources of information compared to other social networking platforms. Such behaviour can be linked to the social structure of the Saudi society where people value information obtained through people that they personally know and trust, more than other sources of information, e.g. travel agents and destinations' websites. This is in line with the assumption presented earlier that the research participants showed low-risk appetite and preferred certainty in their travel over venturesome.

Finally, the research contributes to knowledge related to Saudi tourists by explaining the role of women in holiday choices for their families. As previous research failed to address this point due to cultural factors, the current research successfully recruited female participants and uncovered their perspectives and contributions to their family holiday choices. The research explained the important role of Saudi women from the perspectives of both male and female participants. It explained that although women in many cases contributed to the cost of the holiday, and shared many decisions, their influence was mostly the result of their requests and pressure they made on the primary decision-maker. This finding is important as it establishes an understanding of the variant roles that women can play in traditional societies where men are the primary decision-makers. It also suggests that researchers, marketers and policymakers must consider men and women equally when they are studying Saudi tourists.

Figure 12. The Role of Culture in Holiday Choices.



8.4 Limitations of the Research

The methodological approach that was followed in the current research provided satisfactory results and was effective in addressing the objectives of the study. However, it is important to acknowledge that the research had its limitations, which are related to the sample size and type, and the methods of recruitment and data collection. Like most qualitative studies, the purpose was to explore phenomena rather than testing hypothesis. Therefore, although interviews generate rich data, qualitative studies that often use them may be criticised for their smaller population.

The use of the snowballing technique was a successful exercise that helped to reach female participants which previous research failed to achieve. However, it potentially introduced sample bias because it helped to recruit people of similar backgrounds. As a result, in the current research, because the sources described themselves as open-minded or less-conservative, most female interviewees had similar backgrounds that do not reflect those of the wider Saudi society. This limited the scope of the research and left large segments of Saudi women unexplored.

8.5 Future Research

The current research was driven by the general gap in knowledge related to Saudi tourists in general and hence used qualitative research to explore various issues related to the role of culture in their holiday choices. The research reached a saturation point with its number of interviews and unveiled aspects that other research methods may fail to explore. Having successfully achieved the aim of the research and provided foundations for future studies, there remain issues that the current research recommends future researchers to explore.

For instance, the current research identified some of the aspects related to the eating behaviour of the research participants. However, due to the focus of the study, it was not

possible to explore this behaviour further. Future research needs to study the eating behaviour of Saudi tourists in outbound destinations further and expand on the practice of Ezba packing, how widespread it is among outbound tourists and why it is practised. The investigation of such behaviour can compare Saudi tourists' eating and drinking activities to those of others from similarly conservative cultures and examine potential motives and impacts of food and drink-related behaviour on holiday experiences.

Future research should also take other findings of the current research further to provide a better understanding of the holiday choice, decision-making process and the role of culture on behaviour from the perspectives of Saudi tourists. As a largely unexplored market, there is a scope for future research to contribute to knowledge. For example, the current research proposed that Saudi tourists do not prefer to visit places of religious nature, specifically non-Islamic ones, e.g. churches, temples and religious symbols. Future research may explore such behaviour further to provide a better understanding of why non-Islamic religious places are less appealing to Saudi tourists. A possible proposition to test may be the links between such behaviour and the dominance of a single religion and religious education in Saudi Arabia.

Future research may also be able to validate the findings of the current research with the implementation of different research methods and techniques. For example, the use of quantitative methods, especially those based on survey questionnaires and large samples. This may enhance the findings of the current research and add more reliability to them. Among the propositions that are possible to take further by future researchers is the influence of mothering responsibilities on women role in information search and their contribution to holiday decisions.

This is raised as in this research, fewer married women with children were found to participate in key decision-making activities, e.g. information search, choice of destinations, services and activities. Their role was mostly focused on making requests, pressuring the primary decision-maker and in some cases contributing to the financial cost of the holiday. In contrast, more younger women (unmarried) or recently married women were found to be involved in the

decision-making process of their family holidays. It is not clear whether it is the changing culture or knowledge of constantly changing social networking sites that are causing such difference (considering the age element between married and unmarried participants) or is it just that they are busier with more household and parenting responsibilities. Future research can solve this issue by considering these questions.

Finally, Saudi Arabia is currently undergoing a major economic and social transformation with female empowerment being central to the country's Vision 2030. It is, therefore, expected that more women would be employed and become financially independent. These changes will need to be addressed in future research as more Saudi women are expected to gradually begin travelling for leisure on their own or with friends, creating a new market segment in Saudi Arabia. It is important to question whether the culture will continue to restrict female travel in the same way it used to before vision 2030.

8.6 Recommendation for Practice

The current research provides recommendation for marketers and policymakers based on its findings. First, the research discussion highlighted the importance of religion for Saudi tourists, functioning as both an escape and a seeking motive. Domestically, religion was found to motivate Saudis for outbound tourism, e.g. the Niqab and Abaya restricts leisure activities of Saudi women. However, when travelling to outbound destinations, many Saudis prefer to use religiously compliant services. Therefore, marketers, tourism businesses and DMOs targeting Saudi tourists should consider this double influence of religion when designing holiday packages for its Saudi tourists. Moreover, participants of the research showed a lack of interest in non-Islamic religious sites of destinations they visit. This is important for the DMOs of these destinations because marketing messages directed to Saudi tourists may be more effective if they focus on elements appealing to them such as natural environment, culturally suitable food, ease of communication and acceptance of the hijab and Abaya.

Second, the perception of social norms and cultural restrictions shared among many participants suggests that participants were more worried about people's judgemental gaze than cultural restrictions themselves. Hence they sought personal space and freedom in outbound destinations. Therefore, it may be better for the Saudi NTO to focus its marketing efforts on the less conservative citizens as they are less worried about social norms, cultural restrictions and people's judgemental gaze. It is expected that people with more conservative backgrounds will continue to seek personal space in outbound destinations where women can remove their Niqab, Abaya, and men and women can engage in mixed-gender activities without worrying about people judgements.

Third, the research highlighted the importance of food among outbound Saudi Tourists, asserting that Saudi tourists did not necessarily consume halal food for a religious reason but because they perceived it to be cleaner. The discussion noted that participants mostly limited their restaurant choices to Arabic and Turkish restaurants or brands that they are familiar with like KFC, McDonald's and TGI Fridays. Still, in these familiar places, their choices normally focused on chicken or vegetarian options because they feared that red meat could be mixed with pork, which is religiously prohibited. It is important that destinations that are seeking to attract tourists from Saudi Arabia to diversify their food options and increase Middle Eastern restaurants in places that are suitable for Saudi tourists.

Fourth, the research successfully explored the use of IM apps among the research participants and found that it plays a key role in their decision-making process. Tourism businesses and NTOs are recommended to consider these IM apps, especially Telegram and WhatsApp in their marketing strategies when focusing on Saudi tourists as they were perceived to be more trusted as a source of information among participants. Focusing on these apps may bring better results for marketers compared to traditional social media and networking apps as their content is more of personal nature and allow better engagement with the audience. Related to this, travel influencers as described in the current research who are mainly active in IM groups are effective in influencing tourists, shaping their holiday ideas and influencing their

choices of destinations, itineraries and services. Therefore, tourism businesses are recommended to use these influencers as they are normally more interactive with their followers and hence more influential on them compared to other platforms influencers.

Fifth, the current research was the first of its type to explore a sample of female tourists from Saudi Arabia. While it is recommended that future research validate its findings using different methodological approaches, the current research found women to play a vital role in their families' holiday choices. Because of their vitality to the decision process, NTO and marketing organisations will need to address this role with more messages directed towards women. Focusing on the needs of women, e.g. personal freedom, suitable leisure activities, and family togetherness can be effective, especially for outbound destinations that target Saudi tourists. However, for domestic tourism, it is also recommended that the Saudi NTO focus its marketing and management practices on these elements as they were vital in driving the participants for outbound destinations. Among the practices that can be applied is allowing women to remove their hijab, Abayas in public and protecting their rights to do so from potential harassment that they may face from the society while remaining modest in their appearance.

Sixth and finally, the research outlined that Saudi tourists escape the domestic natural environment, especially the weather during summer by travelling to outbound destinations that are cooler and greener. However, in winter, Saudis prefer to spend their holiday domestically as the country's weather becomes suitable for outdoor activities. However, the current school holidays in Saudi Arabia do not support domestic tourism. Saudi Arabia follows a two terms school system, which consists of two main holidays, a short one between the two terms (in Winter) and a long one at the end of the academic year (in Summer). Saudi Arabia also has other holidays such national day holiday on the 23 of September, and Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha holidays that are observed using the Islamic Hijri calendar. Table (13) below shows that summer holidays are longer than three months, and during these three months, the weather in Saudi Arabia is extremely hot (see 2.2.3). Therefore, Saudis prefer to spend their summers in places that offer cooler weather. The current research recommends that policymakers in

Saudi Arabia revise school holidays to shorten summer holidays and extend winter holidays to allow Saudis to enjoy the cool weather of their country during winter. This is anticipated to improve the status of domestic tourism and reduce the outflow of Saudi tourists to outbound destinations.

Table 13. School Holidays in Saudi Arabia, source: Ministry of Education

Event	Date (Year 2019)	Date (Year 2018)	Date (Year 2017)
Mid-Year Vacations – Begins	28 Dec 2018	12 Jan 2018	26 Jan 2017
Mid-Year Vacations - Ends	08 Jan 2019	21 Jan 2018	05 Feb 2017
End of Year Vacations - Begins	03 May 2019	15 May 2018	15 June 2017
End of Year Vacations – Ends	01 Sept 2019	02 Sept 2018	10 Sept 2017

Note: Vacation dates change annually depending on religious holidays

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Appendices

- Appendix 1: Ethical Approval



Dr Peter Lugosi
Director of Studies
Oxford School of Hospitality Management
Oxford Brookes Business School
Headington Campus

5 December 2017

Dear Dr Lugosi

UREC Registration No: 1711147
The holiday destination selection process among Saudi Tourists

Thank you for the email of 20 November 2017 outlining the response to the points raised in my previous letter about the PhD study of your research student Huthayfah Madkhali and attaching the revised documents. I am pleased to inform you that, on this basis, I have given Chair's Approval for the study to begin.

The UREC approval period for the data collection phase of this study is two years from the date of this letter, so 5 December 2019. If you need the approval to be extended please do contact me nearer the time of expiry.

Should the recruitment, methodology or data storage change from your original plans, or should any study participants experience adverse physical, psychological, social, legal or economic effects from the research, please inform me with full details as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S Quinton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Sarah Quinton
Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee

cc Rebecca Hawkins, Supervisory Team
Huthayfah Madkhali, Research Student
Jill Organ, Research Degrees Team
Louise Wood, UREC Administrator

- Appendix 2: Participants' Recruitment Form

Title of research:

Exploring the Role of Culture in the Holiday Choices of Saudi Tourists

OXFORD
BROOKES
UNIVERSITY

Recruitment Form for Interview purpose

Hello

My name is Huthayfah Madkhali a lecturer of Tourism management at Jazan University, Saudi Arabia and I am currently studying for a PhD at Oxford Brookes University, UK. I am working on my PhD research that is focused on the holiday choices of Saudi tourists. The study is funded by Jazan University and is aimed at citizens of Saudi Arabia who have travelled to an outbound destination for leisure purpose at least once. If you are Saudi and has visited a foreign country for leisure tourism and feel that you wish to take part in this study, please fill in the attached form. Interviewees will participate in fact-to-face interviews. However, women participating in the study will have the option to participate either in face-to-face or telephone interviews. If you require further information, please contact me via my email 16033465@brookes.ac.uk or my phone number +966555050096. Alternatively, you can reach me via my WhatsApp number +447460772290.

Many thanks
Huthayfah Madkhali

If you wish to take part in this study, please fill in the form below

1. Your name:

2. City of residence

3. Tick your gender:

Gender	Tick
Male	☐
Female	☐
Prefer not to say	☐

4. Tick your marital status

Marital Status	Tick
Single	☐
Married	☐
Prefer not to say	☐

5. Tick your age group

Age Group	Tick
21- 30 years old	☐
31- 40 years old	☐
41-50 years old	☐
51-60 years old	☐
Above 60	☐

6. What countries have you visited for tourism purpose;

7. Would you like to take part in this study?

Your choice	Tick
Yes	☐
No	☐
I need further information	☐

8. If you wish to take part in the study, please provide your contact details:

Phone number	
WhatsApp number	
Email address	

- Appendix 3: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

- Q1. Which countries have you visited for leisure tourism purposes? (Follow up: Why did you choose this destination over others?) (If they go to several, prompt for the one they visit more often.)
- Q2. Why did you choose to spend your holiday in an outbound destination? (Follow up: Will you consider visiting domestic destinations in your next holiday?)
- Q3. When you travel with family, would you choose the same destinations as when you travel solo or with friends? (Follow up: if yes/no, give reasons.)
- Q4. If you travel with friends and family, what is the average number of people involved in the trip? (Follow up: Who and Why?)
- Q5. What type of accommodation do you normally stay at when travelling, whether solo, with family or with friends? (Follow up: Why do you choose this type of accommodation?)
- Q6. What is your primary motivation for travel? (Follow up: Have you travelled for different forms of leisure travel? What destinations do you associate with each of your motivations for travel?)
- Q7. What kind of activities do you get involved in when you travel to your holiday destination? (Follow up: Please explain.)
- Q8. What role do recommendations play in your choice of destinations? (Follow up: Please explain.)
- Q9. Have or would you travel to a destination that no one of your friends, family, acquaintances or social media friends have travelled to? (Follow up: Why? and Would your decision change if you are travelling solo, with friends or family?)
- Q10. How do you think your friends, family, acquaintances and your social media friends influence your destination selection? (Follow up: Please explain.)
- Q11. Do you prefer to travel to countries that speak the same language and have similar culture to yours? (Follow up: If yes, Why? If no, how do you communicate in these destinations?)
- Q12. Do you prefer to travel to Muslim countries for your holidays? (Follow up: Why?)
- Q13. Does your religion influence your holiday destination selection in any way? (Follow up: If yes/no, ask to clarify/expand.)
- Q14. What type of food do you eat when you are on a holiday? (Follow up: What type of restaurants do you go to? Please provide details of your eating practices/behaviours.)
- Q15. When you travel on a holiday, do you or your family prefer to stay in halal hotels? (Follow up: Please give details.)

- Appendix 4: Participants' Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet (for Interviewees)

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study to share your views on the factors that influence your decision when you choose your holiday destination. Before you decide whether to agree to take part in an interview it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Purpose of the study

The study aims to understand the holiday destination selection process of Saudi tourists. I would like to investigate the factors that influence your decision as a tourist when selecting your holiday destination.

Why have you been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate in an interview because you stated in the recruitment form that has been distributed prior to the study that you have been to one or more outbound destination for leisure tourism purpose.

What will your participation involve?

Your participation will involve an interview lasting approximately 60 minutes, where you will be asked about factors that influence your decision regarding holiday destination. The interview will be in Arabic and the interviewer will take notes and make an audio recording of the conversation with your permission. Your participation in the research is entirely voluntary. This research is purely an academic study and if you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and any unprocessed data will be removed from the study.

What are the possible benefits of participating?

We hope you will enjoy the interview. It may help you to gain a deeper understanding of factors that influence your decision making. We do not expect any adverse outcomes to your participation.

Your rights of confidentiality

All information collected will be kept strictly confidential and stored within the Oxford Brookes University's password protected storage system for 10 years. All data will be anonymised and I will keep all personal details private.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the study will be published in academic journals. I will happily provide copies of the findings and any publications that emerge from the study if you contact me. I will provide a summary report.

Funding and Ethical approval for the study

This project is being funded by Jazan University, Saudi Arabia represented in the UK by the Saudi Cultural Bureau in London and has been approved by the Oxford Brookes University's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) and its approval number is (1711147). If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, please contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee on ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

If you wish to participate or find more information

Please contact Mr Huthayfah Hadi Madkhali by email (16033465@brookes.ac.uk) or by telephone in the UK (+447460772290) or in Saudi Arabia (+966555050096)

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet

- Appendix 5: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

PhD Research Interviewees Consent form

Title of Study: Exploring the Role of Culture in the Holiday Choices of Saudi Tourists

Name, position, and contact address of Investigators:

Mr Huthayfah Hadi Madkhali
Oxford School of Hospitality Management, Oxford Brookes Business School, Oxford Brookes
University, Gipsy lane, OX3 0BP
Tel: +44 7460772290
Email: 16033465@brookes.ac.uk

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above study.

☐
☐
☐

Please tick box

4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded
5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications
6. I agree that my data gathered in this study may be stored (after it has been anonymised) in a specialist data centre and may be used for future research.

Yes

No

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

- Appendix 6: Online Recruitment Form (Arabic)

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ygiYd3rPPEOn2MbSQZqv4GLREEFfa7tMuzUWfdEG6_JUNUwyQ1NXVINLNEhaRFJXUUc3WU9VQ0pWSy4u

نموذج استقطاب مشاركين في دراسة علمية

مرحباً، إسمي حذيفة مدخلي محاضر بجامعة جازان وباحث دكتوراه بجامعة أوكسفورد بروكس في بريطانيا. أنا أعمل حالياً على بحث الدكتوراه وموضوع دراستي يتركز حول عملية اختيار الوجهة السياحية لدى السائح السعودي. هذه الدراسة مدعومة بشكل كامل من جامعة جازان وتستهدف المواطنين السعوديين الذين سبق لهم السفر إلى الخارج لأغراض سياحية ترفيهية. إذا كنت تجد الرغبة في المشاركة في هذه الدراسة أرجو منك تعبئة النموذج أدناه. المشاركون في الدراسة سينضمون لمقابلات (وجهاً لوجه) مع الباحث وسيتم سؤالهم عدة أسئلة متعلقة بموضوع الدراسة وستكون المقابلة بحضور الباحث والمشارك فقط. إذا تعثر عمل المقابلة (وجهاً لوجه) فيمكن البحث عن حل بديل. بالنسبة للنساء المشاركات في الدراسة سيكون لديهن الخيار لعمل المقابلة وجهاً لوجه أو عبر تطبيقات إلكترونية أو عبر الهاتف. إذا كنت ترغب في تفاصيل أكثر أرجو الاتصال بي عبر الوسائل التالية:

البريد الإلكتروني
16033465@brookes.ac.uk (mailto:16033465@brookes.ac.uk)

واتساب
00447460772290

اتصال:
+966555050096

تنويه: تعبئتك للنموذج لا يعني الالتزام بمشاركتك في الدراسة

عند الانتهاء الرجاء الضغط على الأيقونة الزرقاء في الأسفل

* Required

سرية المعلومات

جميع البيانات الشخصية وبيانات الاتصال بالإضافة إلى نتائج الدراسة سيتم التعامل معها بسرية تامة ولن يتم مشاركتها مع أي جهة أخرى أو استخدامها لأي أغراض غير بحثية

* الإسم 1.

لن يتم استخدام الاسم في الدراسة

* مدينة الإقامة 2.

المدينة التي تُقيم فيها معظم السنة

3. * الجنس

- ☐ ذكر
- ☐ أنثى
- ☐ أفضل عدم الإفصاح

4. * فئة العمر

اختر فئة العمر الأنسب لك

- ☐ 21-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51-60
- ☐ فوق الـ 60 سنة

5. * الحالة الاجتماعية

- ☐ أعزب/غير متزوجة
- ☐ متزوج/متزوجة
- ☐ أفضل عدم الإفصاح

6. * ماهي الدول التي سبق أن زرتها للسياحة؟

أذكر الدول التي زرتها لغرض السياحة فقط

* هل ترغب بالمشاركة في الدراسة؟ 7.

- ☐ نعم
- ☐ لا
- ☐ أرغب بمعلومات أكثر

* وسيلة للاتصال بك؟ 8.

رقم جوال أو واتساب أو بريد إلكتروني

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 Microsoft Forms

• Appendix 7: Interview Questions in Arabic



موضوع البحث:

دور المثقف في إثارة الوعي الاجتماعي والسياسي لدى المثقفين

- س1. ماهي الدولة التي سبق لك زيارتها لغرض المياعة الثقافية؟ لماذا اخترت هذه الدولة؟
- س2. لماذا اخترت قضاء عطلة في وجة قسرية خارجي بدلاً من الوجاهات الداخلية؟ لماذا اخترت وجاهات سياحية لاختيعة خال إجازة لظلمة؟
- س3. عن تجربتك مع أسرتك، هل تعتقد أن سفر الوجة قسرية يغير من شخصيتك أو مع لخصائصك؟ (أذكر الاسباب).
- س4. إذا لم تكن مع لخصائصك أو أسرتك، كم عدد الأشخاص الذين لرجعة؟ لماذا؟
- س5. ما هو نوع السكن الذي تقي فيه عادةً؟ مع أسرة، مع لخدماء؟ ولم اذلت تار هذا النوع من السكن؟
- س6. ما هو اللافع الذي يلهي الذي يجل لك السفر؟ هل سبق أن افرت أل غراض سياحية مختلة؟ هل ليك وجاهات محددة ترتبط بمبدأ السفر؟
- س7. ماهي الأنشطة التي تمارسها في وجفك لسياحية؟ اشرح
- س8. ماهي أل دور التي تعملها التي تصري انفسك احيار للوجاهة قسرية؟ اشرح.
- س9. هل سبق لك، أو هل ستسافر إلى مكان ليها سفر له أحد من لخصائصك أو ليا لظلمة؟ لماذا؟ هل سيغير قرارك لثقتك مع ال أو مع لخدماء أو أقراب؟
- س10. إلى أي مدى تعتقد أن لخدماءك ولأبيك ومعارف ولخدماءك في موقعا لوصول اليجام عي وثارون على لتخيارك للوجاهة قسرية؟
- س11. هل يفضل السفر إلى وجاهات سياحية تحت حدث في سفرك أول يثقل اف قربة بثوق افتك؟ إذن عم، لماذا؟ إذا ال، ليف نتوصل مع لن اسرفي هذه الدولة؟
- س12. هل يفضل السفر إلى وجاهات سياحية إلى وجاهات سياحية؟
- س13. هل يثر بينك لحي احيار للوجاهة قسرية بلي شركل من أل شركال؟ اشرح لك – أعطف ليريل؟
- س14. ما هو نوع الكل الذي ستهلكه خال السفر؟ ما هو نوع ال مطاعم التي تذهب إليها؟ أرجو أن تعطيني فطريل على سلوكك ال عظمي خال السفر.
- س15. دمع تسافر إلى وجاهة، هل يفضل أن أحيار لك إقام قسرية لن ادق الال؟ الرجاء إعطاء فطريل

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رواستاقتي رثاقتي افه على خنتي اراستل سري الخلس عوهين

م غ و م ا ت ل ه م ش ر ك ي ن

هدف لدراسة:

لماذا تم تدعوتك للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة؟

ماذا تستتض من لدراسة؟

ما هي لفوائد لجات في اقل تيسر حصول علي ها من هذه لدراسة؟

حق ليفي سي قل م علومات:

ما نلن جي حاصلات لئو جلد لاسو؟

تمويل لدراس وقتصحي حه:

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نمودج إقرار لمشارك في دراس قب شي قل درج عال لفتوراه

عن وان الواسة: لو اس قو دلي شق اف قبا ختبات الس ياح لعه ودي ين

بيّناتلباحث

السم:

حقیقۃ ہادی مدنی

لعنوان:

كأية الأسفورد إدلوهواي افة، جامعة الأسفورد هبروكس، مدينة الأسفورد، المملكة المتحدة

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لباري د اللكتوني

1. **تؤكد أن يقات وفهمت ورقة العمل ومات لالخص قبل دراسة الاموض ح قيانك ها أعاله ول كل تل دي**
فص قل طرا الس لة لحو لب احث

2. أن أعني أن مشاركتي في الدراسة التحضيرية وأن لدي الحرجة في الحاحي في وقت بدون إعطاء أي

3. ألقِ على المشرك في الدرس ٥ أ موضوع في إنترنت ما أعلاه

نعم	ال

4. أفلق على تسحيل ال قبله صوياً

5. أفلق على قتبس كالمى وشره مغلخفاء هيتي

6. أولئك على حفظ المقيالاة وتلفتها واستخدامها لأغراض بيئية أخرى (بإخفاء هويتها)

التوقيع

التاريخ

اسم المشارِك

التوقيع

التاريخ

اسم الہا حث

- Appendix 10: Example of Interview Transcript

سالم	ذكر	31-40 سنة	متزوج ولدي طفل
يصف نفسه بأنه محافظ الدول التي زارها: الإمارات، اندونيسيا، ماليزيا، النمسا، النمسا وألمانيا			
Married with children	31-40	Male	Salem
He described himself conservative Destination visited: UAE, Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey, Austria and Germany			

ماہی لدواللتی سبق لکزی رات دل رخص ال سی اح قلات فی ہ؟ - فصل ی ل

زرت دول فقيرة، إلامارات وإنديسي والميزي تركي والنمسا والضي. إلامارات زته أبع مراتق، ميين لأ
وال مل وميين مع الصقاء، سفلر تتركلي أليضاً ميين مرة مع الأمل ومرة مع الصقاء، وسفلر إنديسي
ميين، مرة مع الباب ومرة مع الأمل، سفلر شى النمسا وأل مل سفلر تله ميين، مرة مع الصقاء ومقاب الأمل.

لم أنت كرر لي ارة للدول فكثير من مرة؟

أحب أن أجرب المكان قبل أن آخذ عتيقه، وهذا ما أحب أن أفعل بطريقة السيتشيف المكان ميل سفر مع الصديق أأن
النظام فتكون في حضرة وتعرف على البلد في وعلى المكان الذي احيى به عين أخذ زويحي وعيلى له.

بقی غلبت اخذ ا فک لفس لکان لذی زتہ؟

غلب الأمانة الذي بعده، اجتمع الحاضرون في عام ثمان وعشرين غير ونحب الفير، ثم التحق أحب الفير مع الصقاء لغير
 أن النخعة لغير وفاسق، نضحك ونغير جو مريضت عرف الصحاب غير عن الله، لكن بمجرد لململ افر ألي
 يبدؤ ويطلبون مني أن ليس افر بهم، ول عدل إنني أسفله بهم نضل من افرت غ هذا حق هم في.

لماذا انجرت هذه لوجهات؟

سؤال صعب، يعني يتخلف إل جملة حسب البلد بالنسبة إل ما ارتفعت عرف نفق س ح لو قربة هننا ول فرله مضى حلي حاج جواض فر فمي مكان زاس بل إل جازات القصيرة، أم الدول شرفي فأن أحبال طبع قصص راحة ول على السته حاج مضي أي فرصة، والمرحوقا مافرون شرفي شبه سرون وفسا فر م عهم.

عن دكتور فلرمع الصقاع، من يختار لوجهة؟

غالباً، يتخذ القرار من عضبي عيني واحده وان كان اقش حولها **و**عني احياء لبراح قشتر لاني حب
للطبعة، وطامتل ليا وأوروبا هي أفضل لفي لطبع قس خيرات لدونيها ولها ياً أيضاً لحوة وتعطي كنت جبة مضافة
عن تلي وأوروبا.

لم اذا اخذت قضا عطف نفى وجهه سى امة خارجى قبل من لوج هات لداتى؟

بصراحة، أنا ما استعجبك وقت يفيل سعوية ألن لاجو حارفي الصريف ولطبيعة ماهي لمجوة. ولْيَضْ أَيْ أَخِي الصريف فا
ملم بشكل ماهو طبيعي، أعراس ومضابات وعزيم، لواحيش يشارك مرة مرتين وعدا خال صري مل ففرصة لواح
يسفر هيتك من مذي إل التزاماتال مرقة. وبثل قلاتك لمن حبالطبيعة وألجواغلطية، لفضل وج هاتيل سبة
لن ا هيتلخي وأوو بل رق آسي، حت في ماهل شطة ناسب قل عملات غمسل سعوية الال في هاتي ودلخيرة لغى الشطة
والقوي ه. لكن عشان كن وضح أنا ما لمن ع من المايح في السعوية فلكن إذالقيت لمن ناسب وطبيعي حلوة ملكن،
لامم له هلك ونفي الصريف ألن ألجوا ج قَم.

اشرح لطبی علمان شطرتی تی خرطون فی ہ ہوں تس افرون لہ خارج؟

معظم وقتنا نقضيّه حول البحيرات والأنهار. وألممكن الطيعة فسقت عيال طيعة ونطبخ نفس ويلنا الشطة تقوي يية مسابقات بي اخي ال جولاح ونيت خمس كل لل شية. وأحمل أن روح لامل مي عشان الأطفال أونروح انس واول شية نوسكش فالمدال قهبة نهن!

ذكرت أنالس عوي هي هاقوود على أن شطة و لتفي دي ش تقصد؟

ولبرى ناخذ رايحنا الكثر، زوجي هيف فيالس عويّة وصعب تشاف وجهه، انكبرى تأخذ رايحها ومحي طالعها، وحتى ان اقرر نل عفي ال مال هي مخلص غار، لكن فيالس عويّة صعباخي لمن اسحق عدوني طلعون نيينا.

هل لكم ان يكون عندكم في ليرة، ولم اذا؟

إلا سفرت مع أسرتي فيكون خمس فأشخ اص، أن ا وفتي بثالث تطفال، لكن إلا سفرت مع الصق اغ غلب أن يكون 4
أشخ اص و هذا هو العدد النسب، في ناجي القتل وفي ناجي قسي الكفة ووقت اللوحة، في عيل ووصارت شراكة نبال
يس مل حل هال مان يكون أبوع فأشخ اص لكن إذا زال عدت شعب الوحل وقت خرب، و هذا صار مع عي ردهي ا.

إيش اللي حصل؟

واحد من الشباب ملل اي ميه مخبر عني الوحلة كان كل شي في طالع المشكله، وكان عن دمشق طحات غريبه. مع اني امل بلغي
بألف في الرجال.

لناسب قلوبك، فهو نوع لسكن لذيت مخاره عادة؟ ولم اذا؟

فلنضل الشقوق طائماً، الآن أو فرت جرم وظلن نفسي مكان واحد، هي عري نفاضة لفنزل لجموعه فلين ادق ما أستخدمه إلفي لاحتال الضرورية أولئق تبسروحي، لكن إذا الفت مفرل للبري اح فتلطم الشقوق هي بخاري الفضل.

لكن فلن اذقني ها خدمات مختلفة عن الشقق؟

بصراحة ما أقدم بل خدمات للفقيرة، هي تجري ما أكران في است خدمت مسيح أو سرون، ونشل مع عرف فزاست خالم بار انتفي
لن اذق فاللثرق فلصل لن اللفا لصل رقصي معظم لنق تبصرى نيت تبعل جواء والبطيعة.

بخل ف السباب التي كنت اسبقاً، ما هي ال دواعي السري التي تجتازها؟ اشر حليل الفهريل.

أهم سبب بل سبب قلبي لالخروج من الروتين، يجرى مع سيرة من ضغوط طالع والالتزامات الاجتماعية للواحد في تلك الفئ
فبنفسه. غير أن كذا طئماً أثار ألم كمن لا مريح للتلظر والفهم، خاصة ألكم لا طليعية لأجولة. وللسبب في إلامارات ف هي
دولة هي لك وفي هاخيار استعفي مجيدة وهاش في إلامارات القصيرة وفي ها مال هيلو لأطفال. لكيش كل عام أفضل
ألكم لا طليعية بل سبب قلبي أي كمان طليعية خنداء وجولة وأمر فونواس بل ي.

ما هي لوجيات التي تتركب من ات هـ من تقال؟

أفكر في زيارة لليوسنة، ولتخيل سنه العاجلة راح نزور ما ثبتت الخيرون اسي زورين ما هي مدحون ها. طبعها خالصة
ورخصصة، وملكناش شيء لواجب حتاجه بل مدح ووقوس عره مدحول. وفلكر يلصقني زي ارقبلن دا وسل فاني، افكير
ي مدحون ها.

ما هي ألن شطلتي تملس هفج هت ك ال سي جي ة؟ اشرح

أغلب الوقت رفقة صديقه متعمشة واستمتع بالطيعة، يتقلى بين أكثر من مكان من ركز غلباً على البحيرات والشلالات وألن دار وأحياناً أنزور لأمهين فتعرف على بعض الأمور غي هالكن غلب وقتاً أنت متعمجبالطيعة.

خَبُونِي عَنْ أَهْمِ الْمَكْنَلَتِي زَرْتَهَا.

بصراحة ألكم كن الخيرة في تربيته! أملاً أجمل لك أن تزوره هي أوزن جول، أخي جمال هو طبعي، عبارة عن وادي ومن حول الجبل الوفية بحيرة جميلة، ولجول السالم في هذا ريب. الكثير من أسرى زورون طبعي رمضان وألعي أدبيل سبقت لنمسا وألندي، هزلنا في مخ وقضين في ليلة مع دهن لاطن إلى السلا زور غوقضين في هايوي بنع دهل وجن الكلبون وفي المرسى وقضين في هذا 5 أيام ألكم هي أجمل ألكم ليلي فالتعب دهن رحن زاميروك وقضين في هايوي بنع دهن قارمشيوي بنع دهن رحن في ملخي لتيك. النمسأ غالية، طبعي مختفة ولتقود هي أجمل دولة في وجه الأرض.

سلكت نفيس لمسار مغل شباب ولا عجلة؟

علي همدشيت عل فيفس المسار، افنت حابان في كثر ب عض ألشياء وكون وثق من ظواتي وعللي مدي.

م اهي ال دوار لي ت عدله الوصري انتلي بضلك من آل خي نفي ختي ارك للو حته الس يخي ة؟

وملل لبصراحة أنا أحب للم عنصري ح أمل ال خيرة، وما أحب أغامرفي بل فر بلداً. لكن قبل ما أطلب نصري ح كوني في الغالب عن اسفي السن البشوف ت جاربهم وإثقت شيء أعصني بلداً بحث عن علوم اتفي النت وأسأل أهل ال خيرة.

من مم أمل ال خيرة اللي يسألهم؟

فليenas محدين بي عري أمجلأ للأسل للخص لللي بلبعه وأمجلأ للأسل ألفي للنت، وأمجلأ إذا حصل تقرب اتفي بيلي غرام أسألها.

خبرن ياكشر عن قرب انتلي غرام

نظم في مقرب اتفي اللي غرام مخصص قلب عض الدول وفيها ناس يح دم خريقق سدس آلهم بي عري خطتري وأل مليا والنمسا أختها من هم عنفسل شيء الصديق يسألون بع دهن ضم عرقور.

هل سبق لك، أو ملتي سفلر لي مكان لبي سفلر له أحد من هس قائلك أو قائلك؟ لماذا؟

ال منمجل، نجل حلتلك ما أحب أغامرفي لبي بلداً، أنا لملر عن ان لمتم عبق قتي لي ش أورتفس في مكان ما أخفه هينع وقت في أخطاء لملها داعي؟ ال حلهل ماق حسي تلي أخطأ تفي حاجة ألني أهم للفريل الحقيقة، وظمأ للوف نصري ح ت جارب للناس لللي قولي.

لي أي مدى هس قائلك في موقع لبي واصل التمام عي وثرون على خت ليراتك؟

أعتقد إن أغرب للشيء عي عني من موقع للتوصل التمام عي، نجل أمجلأ للوف أحدش رصورة أوني عي عني فيلداً بحث عن المكان وأجمع مقومات عي، وإذ القيت له فيلب غلباً أحطه من خي ارتي. لكن فيضاً، أنا لمتم خدم التوصل التمام عي نجل قاتلك عشان أسأل وأجمع علومات.

هل تشاركك زوجت في خت ليرات لرخة؟ اشرح

ال، بلداً. أنا أتبك لشيء عي عني مكن هي أمجلأ لتطبع بعض الأشياء لكن معظم الأشياء أن أتبها، للني أعرف ليش يبعون ولتار رحلة زما سب للللنا.

كيف لغة معك؟ قصد للتوثر لغة على خت ليراتك للو حته الس يخي ة؟

التوصل ليشكلة، لكن أنا ما أقدم ليشو بلالغة ألني غلباً لملر ودي برنامج ولضح وكل شيء محدد ومجرب من اللين افرق بلي. ونجل قاتلك أنا أقدم للفريل الحقيقة وبمع خطوات لناس اللي يح دم خيرة فيلدهي سري است خدمت سواق ومصراحة كل تفكرة متبازة.

متبازة من لي نجي ة؟

السواق هي ته ل أخذك لكل مكان تبغاه، هتخرج مل كشي شرح لك عني سواق وتخرج مل كشي ووفر عي لك لشيء، حتى وتغى أشياء هوي حبالك ففعل عي لواح حلي لملر مع أحد.

من لواضح أن معظم الدول لبي سفلر له إسالمية ما عدالان من أول ليري، هل بفضل لل سفلر لبي اح قهي لدول الإسالمية؟

ال، ما أقم بين الدول اللي أروح لها، للني أهتم ل هتكون زما سب قولي لاسوتي. لجن أسرة حافظة وراضيفي ببلد لنان ح سفعي بالمان عري لوصلي تفي حيقو نجل ملتم عرض لي أحد أو ال؟ ملتم عرض زوجي لشر لك بسبب حمله؟ إذا مكن تفي نجل لملر لك قبل دناس بلي.

كيف كان واضحاً على نسبة لكفيتكيا والاضيا؟

ومل لبش كل عام كان الوضع في تلك ذات خلو من نظرات الزدراء أحميل، أسوأ عيترلي أو ألام لي ابس هذا غلب أك انفي المذن، أهلي لاي فوهل ا محـد حرك وأل مور من أفضل تلكون. لكن المشكل قبل سب ثلن ا هي اقتر لل س عويين أحميل، ي جري مثلك قترلي ولد دويي ال مليلة س عويين في الصريف وم عاقت هم لئان فيل س عويية ي جري مافي هـ خص وصرية، وزوضي تملت اح.

هل وثدي نك غيخت ليتاك السيجية بأي شكل من الأشكال؟

ال ما أنصحك أن هي غير، نضل ما أكثر تل كالم معيك وان بل تتهمس امح م عألدي ان ولاح جاب الى ش عباطي ف مالح مس ل ي ن ف هذا لي في.

طيبقل لي، ماهونوع ألكل لي تأكله خاللسفرك؟

ثُمَّ أَجِدُ أَحَبَّ أَجْرِبِ الْكَلْفِي أَلَمْ يَكُنْ الَّذِي أَسْفَلُوا بِسِمْثَلٍ نَدَّ عَرَفَ أَجِدُ أَكُلُّهُمُ مَوْزِينٌ وَمَا أَعُفَ إِشِي بِخُونٍ،
فَنَكَلْفِي مَطَاعِمَ رِيَّةٍ وَعَرِيَّةٍ. إِذَا لَقِيتَ مَعَ الثَّيَّابِ غَلْبًا أَنْ طَبَخَ مِنْ كُلِّ مَنَ طَبَخًا، وَأَجِدُ أَنْ كَلْفِي مَطَاعِمَ لِحَالِلٍ، لَكِنْ
مَعَ الْوَلَدِ أَلْزَمِي خَيْلَ فِشِي، فَيَكُونُ فِيهِ كُلُّ أَتْرَفِي أَلَمْ يَكُنْ يُضَيِّدُ أَنْ طَبَخَ فِي الثَّقَةِ، خُصَّةً لِقَطُورٍ وَأَجِدُ
الْعِشَاءَ.

نقص أن كيتسفلون بأغراض طبخمكم؟

طيه، إذ ادمس فلين شهاب نأخذ عزة عن هيء التي شيء، ألقى وق موة هسكوت وشاي وغيره أعش ان التي اتبس م مع الأولى نأخذ بسكوت وكيك وق موة بوعض أل شري العل اسرية ول تحفة أل ننا حششت ونجل خي لاري ف.

وم اطبيعة لمطاع ملقي تأكلون في ه؟

المطاعم الحالبشكل عام، التركيبة والعريّة. وأميل أنصربمأك ولقيأك.

لكم هبة تأكلون خال لال سفر؟

فطور وعشاء، وتضيف للعداء بس أمجد أن غدٍ شيء قبيح عن أن طعم. الفطور في آل عاذق في آل شرقه والخبز في طعم.

هل تستخدم خدمات فليمن دقم مثل هسبح لويلونا ولمساج؟

ال من يقبها، وما أكثر الذي قد نزلت في مباح ال لها وال علي. لصال غلب أي يكون خلق في الدرجة الأولى يتبع بالطبيعة
والجواء فها هم أرقض يويها التي مبرى، فطر الصباح ونطع و ملرجع إل ال مراء.

خالل تخطي السراجي، هل تقوم بمشركة هُفْلَيْك وفي ايك لحظات رجليك؟ اشرح.

مواثيق، زوجتي ستخدع دلم سرنا ب والنهت غرام افتر، احملا الشرب بعض الاق طاتفى اليريد بسب شكل عام احب اوثق لحظا تر حلتى واعظبه ككيات.

• Appendix 11: Example of early coding process.

مسحر	أنثى	20-30 سنة	غير متزوجة (عزباء)
تصف نفسها أنها منفتحة ومن عائلة متبعة ومنفتحة الدول التي زارتها: دبي (بشكل متكرر)، فرنسا، هولندا وألمانيا			
Single	Female	21-30	Sahar
She describes herself as an open-minded and her family less conservative Destinations visited: Dubai (regularly), France, Netherlands, and Germany.			

ماهي الدول التي سبق لك زيارتها لغرض السياحة والترفيه؟

سافرت دبي أكثر من مرة، يمكن عشر مرات وسافرت فرنسا وهولندا وألمانيا

Commented [HM1]: Regular visits to Dubai

لماذا اخترت هذه الدول؟

أنا أحب دبي كثير وأزورها في كل فرصة ممكنة أحياناً مع أهلي وأحياناً مع صديقتي، نتسوق فيها ونحضر حفلات ونغير جو، بلد حلوة وقريبة وتذكرها رخيصة وفيها خيارات كثيرة. أما فرنسا وألمانيا وهولندا فزرتنا في رحلة وحدة مع الأهل. هدفنا كان زيارة أوروبا والسياحة بشكل عام

Commented [HM2]: Variety of options in Dubai

Commented [HM3]: Exploring Europe for the first time (I sense prestige enhancement in this choice).

تحدثني لي أكثر عن رحلتكم إلى فرنسا وهولندا وألمانيا.

زرتنا الثلاث دول في رحلة واحدة وقضينا فيها 15 يوم، ما أعرف كم كلفت بس تقريباً حول 40 أو 50 ألف ريال، أمي هي اللي دفعت. كنا 4 أشخاص أنا وأختي وأخوتي وأمي بدأنا الرحلة في فرنسا، زرتنا باريس وديزني، بعدها هولندا وألمانيا.

Commented [HM4]: Multiple visits in one trip (Schengen) - long duration

Commented [HM5]: No involvement in financial costs

Commented [HM6]: Size of group

لماذا اخترتم قضاء العطلة في الخارج بدلاً من داخل المملكة؟

بصراحة، بالنسبة لنا احنا البنات، السياحة في السعودية مو حلوة، يعني فيه حاجات كثير ماهي حلوة. أقصد فيه قيود كثيرة وملاحق أستمع بوقتي بحرية كاملة مثل لما أكون برا. أقصد القيود في اللبس، والناس يراقبون كل شيء، الوحدة ملقطة تمشي.

Commented [HM7]: Social restrictions and seeking freedom.

نقصدي الحجاب والعباية؟

الحجاب ماهو مشكلة، لكن العباية والنقاب بصراحة مشكلة. شوف بالنسبة لي لما أروح جدة ما أعطي وجهي لأن الناس منفتحون وكثير حريم ملقطنون والناس متعودين هناك على كذا، لكن المشكلة في العباية.

Commented [HM8]: interviewee took some time before answering the question, it seems that questions on Hijab, clothes and religious aspects are not easy to answer for women

Commented [HM9]: Abaya cause restrictions on activities

في المدن الأخرى، هل تلبسي نقاب؟

في الجنوب لازم ألبس نقاب لأن معظم الحريم هنا يتغطون وإذا ما تغطيت ممكن أتعرض لمضايقات، لكن في جدة والمدن الكبيرة ما تغطي لأن فيه كثير حريم ملقطنون.

Commented [HM10]: Niqab is socially required in the south (where she is from).

هل تعتبرين النقاب والعباية عائق أمام السياحة بالنسبة للمرأة؟

أكيد، معظم البنات اللي أعرفهم ماهم مرتاحات مع القيود على اللبس خاصة فرض العباية والنقاب، وكثير ما يتغطون لما يسافرون جدة أو الرياض أو لما يسافرون برى المملكة لأنه ما أحد يعرفهم هناك.

Commented [HM11]: Abaya and Niqab restrictions

هل تفكرين بزيارة وجهات سياحية داخلية في الإجازة القادمة؟

لا، بالنسبة لي ما أفكر إني أقضي الإجازة في السعودية. أسافر جدة والرياض للتسوق لكن في الإجازات ما أحب أسافر داخل السعودية، إما أسافر للخارج أو أبقي في البيت أحسن لي. أحتي صديقتي، معظمنا نفضل السياحة برا بشأن نعيش شيء مختلف، بعيد عن القيود وعن الحر والناس.

Commented [HM12]: I either travel outbound or stay at home

من هو الشخص المسؤول عن اتخاذ القرارات المتعلقة بالسفر واختيار الوجهة؟

القرارات جماعية، أبوي متزوي فأمي تدفع للرحلة، لكن بقية القرارات أحنا نقررنا مع بعض. عندي أخ أكبر مني بسنة وهو رجل البيت لكن ما يتحكم في القرارات أو أي شيء. نجلس مع بعض كل شخص يقدم مقترحات ونشاور ونناقش، وأمى تدفع.

Commented [HM13]: Decision is made as a group. No primary decision-maker

Commented [HM14]: Their mother paid for the holiday

ما هو نوع السكن الذي تقيمون فيه عادة؟ سواء إذا سافرت لوحده أو مع أصدقائك أو مع العائلة؟ ولماذا؟

على حسب الهدف، يعني إحنا دائما نختار الفنادق لكن مرة جربنا بيت في هولندا لأننا كنا نبي نطبخ ونشوي في الحديقة وكلفت تجربة ممتازة. نختار الفنادق لأنها آمنة وفيها خدمات كثيرة.

Commented [HM15]: Choice of accommodation depends on the need

Commented [HM16]: Preference of Hotels for security reasons and availability of services

ما هو الدافع الرئيسي الذي يجعلك تسافرين؟

أسافر عشان أغير جو وأتبسط، يعني مافى هدف محدد بس تمشية ونتبسط ونستكشف أشياء جديدة.

Commented [HM17]: Novelty seeking

هل سبق أن سافرت لأهداف مختلفة أو عندك وجهات محددة تفضلين السفر لها؟

ما عندي وجهات محددة لكن أنا أحب دبي، مدينة حربية وفيها خيارات كثيرة، تقريبا كل شيء فيها وقريبة الوصول لها سهل، شخصيا ما أشبع منها، حتى أحلها أروح لها في الوبكند. أوروبا أعجبتني كثير ونفسي استكشفها أكثر. نفسي أروح باريس مرة ثقيلة لكن مع صديقي.

Commented [HM18]: Ease of access, cost of travel, variety of options

Commented [HM19]: Repeat travel

ما هي الأنشطة التي تمارسينها عند السفر؟

مافى أنشطة محددة، تتمشى وتتعرف على البلد ونزور المعالم اللي فيها. حبيت الثقافة الأوروبية وتخطيط المدن، حتى أنا فضينا معظم الوقت في المدن نستكشفها.

Commented [HM20]: Novelty of culture – preference of cities.

أعطيني أمثلة على الأنشطة التي تمارسونها في أوروبا؟

رحنا الملاهي، ديزني و يورو بارك، وأخذنا جولة في الأرياف والمدن. حبيت المقاهي والمطاعم عندهم أحسن أليفة، ونمط الحياة فيها رهب.

Commented [HM21]: leisure – theme parks – cafes and restaurants – lifestyle

ما هي الأدوار التي تعملها للتوصيات (من الأصدقاء والأقارب والإنترنت) في اختيارك للوجهة السياحية؟

غالبا، لمن أشوف صور وفيديوهات في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي أبدا أفكر في زيارة هذي الأماكن، ولما نقرر السفر أبدا أطلع هذي الأفكار على أهلي وصديقي.

Commented [HM22]: influence of photo and videos viewed on social media

والأنشطة التي تمارسونها أحد نصحكم بها؟

أكيد، كنت أشوف الناس في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي وأسجل المعلومات، يعني إحنا من زمان نعرف عن ديزني في باريس لكن ما كنا نعرف عن ملاهي يورو بارك، وكان عندنا أماكن محددة نبي نزررها نصحني بها بعض الناس اللي عندهم خبرة في السفر.

Commented [HM23]: experts and social media influence choice of activities.

هل تفضلين السفر لوجهات سياحية تتحدث نفس لغتك أو ثقافتها مقارنة لثقافتك؟

لا، لا، ما أهتم كثير باللغة أو الثقافة. احنا نساافر عشان نتعرف على ثقافات جديدة لكن مهم بي أكون قلارة على التواصل مع الناس في الأماكن اللي أزورها. أعرف أكلم إنجليزي مو كثير بس لغتي تكفي. مثلاً، في فرنسا كان الوضع أصعب من هولندا وألمانيا لكن في الغالب والأماكن السياحية تقدر تتواصل بالإنجليزي.

Commented [HM24]: No language problem – open to new cultures

Commented [HM25]: Seeking novelty of culture

Commented [HM26]: Use of English for communication

هل يؤثر دينك على اختيارك للوجهة السياحية بأي شكل من الأشكال؟

لا أبداً، أنا ما تحجب في الخارج وهذا يخليني أخذ راحتى أكثر وأستمتع أكثر. أقصد الناس يتواصلون معي بطريقة طبيعية وما تعرض لأي مضايقات. يعني في فرنسا مثلاً، الوضع ماهر آمن للمحجبات ونفس الشيء في ألمانيا ومعظم أوروبا، فليش أحط نفسي في موقف ممكن تعرض فيه لمضايقات؟

Commented [HM27]: Hijab limits enjoyment!

Commented [HM28]: Hijab limits communication with locals and may cause problems

ولو كنت في بلد مسلم، هل تتحجبن؟

أكيد، أنا ما ألبس الحجاب في أوروبا ولدي لأن معظم الحريم ملتحجبن، والحجاب ممكن يقيدك شوي، لكن إذا كان البلد اللي أزوره أكثر النساء محجبات، تحجب لكن ما تنطى ولا ألبس العيلة. مثل ما قلت لك أول، المشكلة ماهي في الحجاب، المشكلة في العيلة والنقاب.

Commented [HM29]: Hijab is not the problem; it depends on the country and people. Participants repeat comments on Niqab and Abaya

طيب غير الحجاب؟ خليني أسألك عن الأكل، تأكلي فقط في مطاعم حلال ولا ممكن تجربتي المطاعم المحلية؟

الأكل، أكيد ما أكل إلا في مطاعم حلال وهي موجودة في كل مكان. يعني في العادة نطعم في الفندق، وبعدها نطلع وقت النداء نتعدى في مطعم حلال والعشاء أيضاً في مطعم حلال.

Commented [HM30]: Participant strict on food and only eats in Halal and familiar restaurants.

أخبريني عن نوع المطاعم اللي تأكلون فيها في العادة؟

مطاعم حلال، عربية أو تركية. أو إذا حبينا نغير نأكل بيتزا خضار، بس اللحوم مأكلاها إلا في المطاعم العربية والتركية

Commented [HM31]: Only Arabic and Turkish restaurants

عندما تسافرين للسياحة، هل تستخدمين خدمات الاستجمام في الفندق مثل المساح والسونا والمساج؟

نعم، إذا كانت متوفرة استخدمها، المهم تكون مخصصة للنساء وبالنسبة لي ماهي ضرورية بس إذا متوفرة أحب أستخدم. يعني في دبي دائماً استخدمها بس في أوروبا مأكلاها.

Commented [HM32]: Female only hotel services (swimming pools, Sauna and Massage) if available

خلال رحلتك السياحية، هل تقومين بمشاركة أصدقائك وأهلك لحظات رحلتك عن طريق مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي؟

ضروري (ضحكة) هم أصلاً يكونون منتظرين يشوفون الرحلة. فأشركهم على المناب وبعض الصور في الانستغرام.

Commented [HM33]: Shares holiday moments over Snapchat and Instagram