The Construction of Destination Images in Jordan: Modelling Tour Guide and Tourist Inputs, Interactions and Consequences

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Abstract

Destination image is recognised and extensively researched as a key factor in tourism development. However, the construction of destination image during the tourist consumption experience has suffered from a paucity of theorisation, not only in regard to patterns of destination image as perceived by tourists during a visit, but also in regard to patterns as projected by tour guides. This exploratory research aims therefore to provide in-depth understanding of patterns of destination image as actually constructed by tourists and tour guides during the consumption experience.

The research adopted an interpretivist qualitative paradigm of empirical ‘Straussian’ grounded theory to investigate the phenomenon of destination image construction in Jordan. Thirty five tour guides were interviewed, followed by participant observation of a group of twenty USA tourists undertaking a guided tour of Jordan. Twelve of these USA tourists were then interviewed, along with their designated guide.

Findings demonstrated that destination image was constructed at regional, national and site levels, specifically the Middle East, Jordan and local Jordanian sites such as Petra. A variety of tour guide impressions were identified and categorised thematically into a number of different types of constructed image such as ‘official’, ‘personal’, ‘dressed up’, ‘distorted’, ‘poignant’ and ‘relatively realistic’ images. Similarly, pattern analysis of the tourists’ perceptions in regard to visited destinations uncovered a further range of themed categories, to include ‘fuzzy’, ‘relatively realistic’, ‘dynamic’, ‘static’, ‘peculiar’ and ‘deteriorated’ images.

This research contributes to methodology by demonstrating the efficacy of participant observation in revealing the complexity of destination image. It also advances theoretical knowledge around issues related to tour guiding and destination image. Finally, valuable implications are provided for strategic image management and marketing, as well as for enhancing tour guides professionalism.

Dedications

In loving memory of my mother, who offered me the greatest encouragement,
before she passed away during my PhD journey,
and in honour of my father,
along with everyone else who has supported me.

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List of Abbreviations

CBJ	Central Bank of Jordan
DoS	Department of Statistics/Jordan
EFTGA	European Federation of Tourist Guide Association
JD	Jordanian Dinnar
JIB	Jordan Investment Board
JNTS	Jordanian National Tourism Strategy
JTB	Jordan Tourism Board
JTGA	Jordan Tour Guide Association
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities/ Jordan
QAIA	Queen Alia International Airport/ Jordan
TMO	Tourism Marketing Organisation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WFTGA	World Federation of Tourist Guide Association
WTM	World Travel Market/England

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research problem and states the research aim and objectives. The research rationale and key assumptions are then presented, followed by contextual background information. The final section outlines the structure of this dissertation.

1.2 Research Problem

A review of tourism literature highlights destination image as figuring as a research focus since the 1970s. Different theories have been proposed to understand the complexity of this construct, with the most frequently researched themes being: destination image formation process (Gunn, 1972; Gartner, 1993; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a; Tasci and Gartner, 2007); destination image components (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991; Gartner, 1993; Tasci et al., 2007) and issues surrounding destination image measurement and research methodology (Reilly, 1990; Tasci, 2007; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010).

A substantial body of research has examined the interrelationship between destination image and various marketing concepts, to include tourist behaviour (Mayo, 1973; Chon, 1992; Assaker et al., 2010); branding and positioning (Crompton et al., 1992; Cai, 2002; Hosany et al., 2006; Hankinson, 2009); motivation (Crompton, 1979b; Dann, 1981; Beerli and Martin, 2004b) and the relationship between destination image and self-concept (Sirgy and Su, 2000; Beerli et al., 2007; Hosany and Martin, 2012). Another line of enquiry focuses attention on the relationship between destination image and service providers (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; Zehrer et al., 2007; Alaeddinoglu and Can, 2010), with a number of contributors focusing on the tour guide stakeholder group (Dahles, 2002; Banyai, 2010; Huebner, 2010; Wong, 2013). A common assumption that links these various areas of research is that constructed image plays a significant role in influencing tourist behaviour and destination development.

It might be anticipated that after several decades of investigation, the literature would have attained a certain degree of maturity, reflecting a satisfactory theorisation of different issues. Yet the opposite appears to be the case. While some authors acknowledge that destination image is a concept widely used in the empirical context, they see it as lacking a solid conceptual or theoretical structure (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Beerli and Martin, 2004b). In the view of Gallarza et al. (2002), this is due to the intangibility and multidimensionality of tourism services. It is also acknowledged that the very subjectivity of destination image as a notion is challenging to any solid theoretical framework (ibid).

More recently, although Tasci and Gartner (2007) have also highlighted the lack of any defined theoretical base for destination image construction, to date there has been markedly little progress, particularly in regard to destination image as constructed during a visit. While the literature review undertaken in this research suggests that image concept, pre- and post-visit, is receiving increased attention (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991; Boo and Busser, 2005; Yilmz et al., 2009; Wang and Davidson, 2010; Choi et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2014), image construction during the tourist consumption experience seems to have been overlooked. On the other hand, some research looking at the consumption process has tended to treat it as an aggregate term, ranging from pre- to during, to post-image (Chen and Tsai, 2007). This theoretical gap might accordingly have resulted in part from faulty conceptualisations of the logic of image concept.

More specifically, the patterns of destination image as perceived by tourists during a visit remain under-examined. As will be shown in Chapter Two, most studies approaching the destination image concept from the tourist’s perspective have focused on how tourist characteristics influence the image formation process (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a; Beerli and Martin, 2004b); the cognitive, emotional and conative dimensions of tourists’ images (Gartner, 1993; Boo and Busser, 2005); the influences of image on the behaviour of potential and actual tourists (Chon, 1992; Um and Crompton, 1999) and tourists' perceived image of a given country (Schneider and Sönmez, 1999; Grosspietsch, 2006; Assaker, 2014). These studies have failed to explain meaningfully the variations in tourists' mental representations of a given destination's various attributes as specifically constructed in the process of the tour. Any true comprehension of the "relativistic, multiple and complex dimensions of image concept" (Gallarza et al., 2002:56) have therefore been limited.

This lack of theorisation appears also to extend to studies investigating the relationship between the tour guide stakeholder group and the destination image. Research in this area has confined itself either to the politics of image (Dahles, 2002) or the role of the tour guide in the image formation process (Banyai, 2010; Huebner, 2010). Even though the guide is typically defined as chief amongst those who may influence tourist image construction in the course of their actual experience, there have been few research attempts to address a very fundamental issue, that is, the patterns of image which they might create of a destination by means of their commentaries.

To conclude, previous research in destination image can be questioned for its problematically simplistic treatment of image. There is clearly a need for a research that explores the complexity of tour guide and tourist image constructions, specifically in the process of a visit. This research therefore intends to address these gaps in knowledge. The central research questions, tailored for this purpose, are what destination images, if any, might be constructed by the researched subjects during a visit, and for what reasons.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The principle aim of this research is to investigate the patterns of destination image as projected by the tour guides and as perceived by the tourists during the consumption of tourism product in Jordan. The following objectives have been identified to achieve the main aim:

- Critically evaluate existing literature relating to destination image and tour guiding in order to identify the key arguments.

- Empirically explore the nature of destination images as projected by the tour guides and as perceived by the tourists during the consumption experience.

- Inductively analyze and evaluate the patterns of destination image as projected by the tour guides and as perceived by the tourists during their consumption experience.

- Develop frameworks for understanding the patterns of destination image as projected by tour guides and as perceived by tourists during the consumption of a tourism product.

1.4 Research Rationale

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing service industries worldwide. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 2013), international tourist arrivals were recorded at 1.35 billion in 2012, and are expected to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. Consequently, there is growing global competition amongst tourism destinations eager to sustain their market share and attract more tourists. A key component of this process is the creation and management of differentiated images which may influence the tourists' destination selection process (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Assaker, 2014).

This research proposes that the process of destination image must be fine-tuned to differentiate between different stages of the consumption experience itself in order to complete the picture. To take this idea further, it may be risky to rely on data related to pre-visitation images alone, given that these might be subject to manipulation from various sources involved in the image formation process. For instance, Gunn (1972) identified induced and organic sources, which, while influential, might lead to somewhat illusionary perceptions based on vague pre-visit assumptions about a destination. Tasci and Gartner (2007) equally argue that tourists' pre-visit choices are relatively based on subjective image rather than on the reality of the destination. Pre-visit images will of necessity differ from those arising from an actual experience, which according to Beerli and Martin (2004a) will tend to be more realistic, reliable and long lasting.

Moreover, it is agreed that images formed during a visit will be compared to the tourist's previously held ideas, and as such, have the power to influence the tourist's evaluation and satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the destination (Chon, 1992). The effect of 'actual images' extends further to influence tourists' post-visitation behaviour, since the tourist will not leave empty headed from a purchased experience, but with a mental representation of that experience (Yuksel, 2008). Such post-visitation representations in tourist memories may take concrete form, such as in tourist travel diaries, written postcards or blogs, all of which in turn may act positively as significant influencers of tourist loyalty, word-of-mouth recommendations, or return intentions in case of satisfaction (Chi and Qu, 2008; Assaker et al., 2010). In this way, positively constructed images of a tour may enhance future profitability of that tour. Framed in this way, it can be said that it is only during the tour that images of places visited will be tested, giving rise to actual images as experienced, and durably constructed. As such, if memories of the places visited are to evoke long lasting positive images, it seems crucial to differentiate the destination image during the actual consumption experience.

However, without reliable empirical research to provide insight into the multidimensionality of image concept, and to establish how it is constructed, there is a risk of stakeholders falling back on homogenised and stereotypical destination images, with limited understanding of how to achieve differentiation in the competitive market place. This research therefore is a significant exploratory study into the patterns of destination image as both projected by tour guides and perceived by the tourists during a tour. Synthesising these phenomena is beneficial for tourism marketers, destination image managers, tour guides and for academia for the following reasons.

Firstly, tourism marketing is expensive. While considerable resources may be devoted to promoting positive images of a given destination, any mismatches between a Tourism Marketing Organisation's (TMO) strategies, and the research subjects' images as constructed during the visit, may lead to a waste of effort, time and promotional budget. Govers and Go's (2004) findings report such a mismatch between unrealistic and undelivered promises in tourist promotions and unmet tourist expectations. Such gaps in the image formation process may result at best in negative word of mouth dissemination. Such a research as this one may thus be crucial in enabling tourism marketers to examine the compatibility and consistencies of their marketing strategies.

Secondly, efficient management of destination image requires sophisticated knowledge of tourists' current mental representations and of ways to move constructed images in a desired direction (Gartner, 1993; O'Leary and Deegan, 2005). At supply level, this process also requires exploration of tourism stakeholders' practices and ideas about a given destination (Dayanand, 2009). Accordingly, assessing existing destination image as constructed by research subjects is crucial for the successful implementation of destination image management. Such research may serve as a TMO framework for developing image formation strategies and for repairing negative or enhancing positive images.

Thirdly, tour guides, in having unique opportunities to interact with tourists over a sustained period of time, are arguably crucial to tourists' image construction whilst visiting a destination (Zhan and Chow, 2004; Harrill et al., 2010; Weiler and Walker, 2014). As such, a research which leads to greater understanding of the tour guide role may serve as a basis for advising new tour guide training and education strategies. After all, the tourism market depends on guides meeting tourists' expectations, and well-trained guides, who know how to mediate tourists' perceptions through appropriate interpretation, will stand a much better chance of directly enhancing destination image.

Finally, this research intends to address under-theorised areas in tourism literature by enhancing academic understanding of the nature of destination image as constructed by the researched subjects during the consumption process (see research problem).

1.5 Key Assumptions

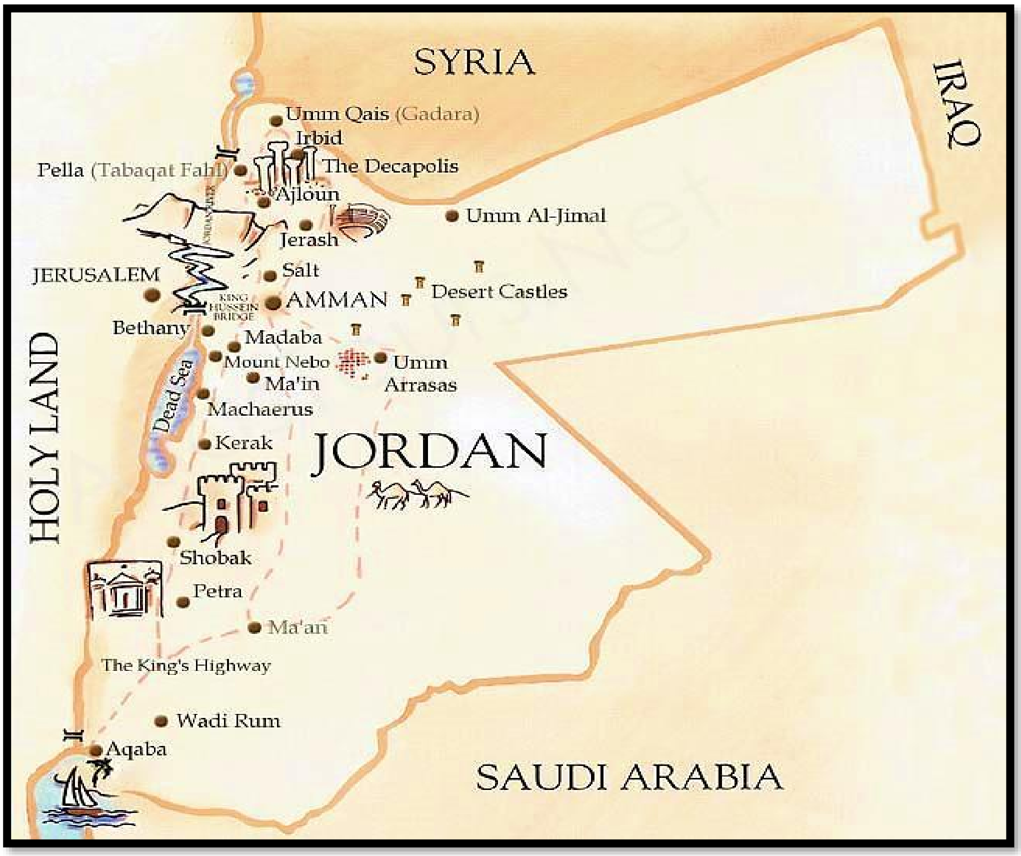
Destination image is defined for the purposes of this research as mental representations about a given destination's various attributes that arise from the interaction between individual cognitions and emotions, which might accordingly influence behaviour (adapted from Chon, 1990; Echtner and Ritchie, 2003).

This researcher believes that tourists' perceived image of the destination is complex. To clarify, tourism destinations are made up of a wide range of natural and built environments. Different tourism stakeholders are involved in promoting these assets prior to visitation, and then delivering tourism products whilst at the destination. The amount and content of information disseminated by the supply agents will influence the destination's perceived image (Baloglu, 2000), as will organic factors such as stories of referent persons (Gunn, 1972). In parallel, the tourists who receive these messages directly or indirectly will interpret the information based on a number of personal factors such as socio-demographic and psychological characteristics (Beerli and Martin, 2004b). Framed in this way, it can be claimed that no one receiver is likely to construct simple stereotypical images, but rather a diversity of images. In turn, these images will be subject to change, given the variety of elements and processes associated with this construct.

It is also assumed that the tour guide destination image projection process is multifaceted, depending on their preferences, their training, instructions received from their employers or other authorities, and the interests they assume of their tour group (Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Dahles, 2002; Banyai, 2010). Given the different agents that influence tour guides' representations, potential variations in the ways the guides' project destination image must be presumed to exist.

1.6 Research Context

The research context is the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, occupying a strategic location in the Middle East (see map 1.1). Rich in evidence of prehistoric civilisation, Jordan was established as a modern nation in 1921. The regime in Jordan is a constitutional monarchy ruled by his majesty King Abdullah II with an appointed government. The population of Jordan was recorded recently at 6 million, 70% of which reside in urban areas, with about 2,315,600 living in the capital Amman (Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities MOTA, 2014). The vast majority of the population is Muslim, although about 10% are Christian. Additional minor ethnic groups also exist.


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

Map 1.1: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Source: http://www.atlastours.net/jordan/sites.html (2014).

As a tourism destination, the country hosts diversified and unique attractions, justifying an increase in Jordanian TMO resources devoted to enhancing the country's image and attracting more tourists. Accordingly, tourism has become one of the most important sectors in Jordan's economy. In 2014 for example, tourism receipts reached 2,408 Jordanian Dinnar (JD) million, contributing about 14% of the national GDP and creating 48,351 direct jobs (MOTA, 2015).

The Jordanian tourism industry depends on six main market segments. These are cultural heritage; religious tourism; eco-tourism; health and wellness; meetings and conferences (MICE) and finally adventure and fun tourism (Jordanian National Tourism Strategy JNTS, 2011-2015). Different cities and sites typify these segments such as Amman, Madaba, Jerash, Aqaba, Wadi Rum, Mount Nebo and the Dead Sea. The country also hosts three World Heritage sites: Qusir Amra, Um er-Rasas and Petra (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation UNESCO, 2013), the latter being named as one of the seven cultural wonders of the world (see figure 1.1).

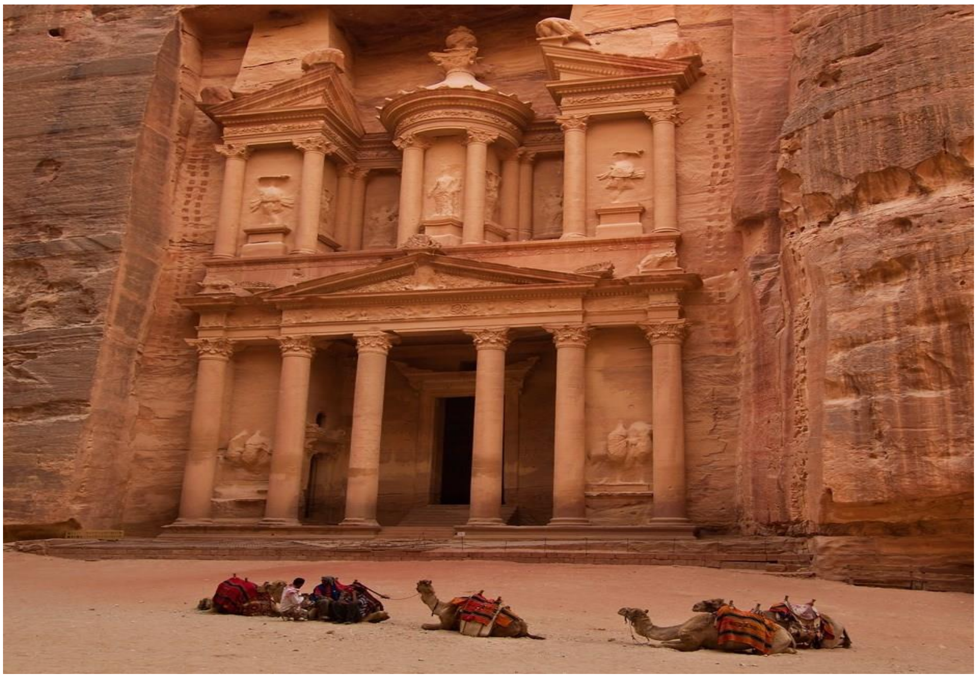


Figure 1.1: Treasury in Petra

Source: Jordan Tourism Board (JTB, 2014).

Despite its emergence as one of the top destinations in the Middle East (UNTWO, 2010), Jordan is still struggling to divest itself of certain negative images that have impacted harmfully on the country's tourism industry, and prevented the sector from developing its full potential. Schneider and Sönmez (1999), for example, highlighted Jordan's particular challenge in creating the image of a peaceful country in a geographical region known for political unrest. More recently, statistical indicators of MOTA (2015) echo these claims, demonstrating that while the country has enjoyed relative stability through constant political reforms (Barari and Satkowski, 2012), the onset of the Arab uprising saw the number of package tours drop from 707,735 in 2010 to 323,144 in 2014. This is reflected in the fall of tourism receipts from 2,545 JD million in 2010, to 2,408 JD million in 2014. Such evidence underpins the importance of the concept of image in tourism; if image can lead to negative outcomes, it equally can be used as a significant tool to turn around tourist misperceptions of Jordan in the market place. Despite the importance of image in Jordan's tourism, the review of the literature shows that only two studies have explored the country's image as a tourism destination (Schneider and Sönmez, 1999; Harahsheh, 2009) (see section 2.8).

Tour guiding is one of the main tourism professions in Jordan, with 1200 individuals registered in this employment in 2014; this number constituted about 2.5% of all registered Jordanian tourism employees (MOTA, 2015). Tour guide education and accreditation, which in Jordan is fully regulated by MOTA, is a multiphase process, beginning with the prospective applicant being asked to fill in a pre-designed application to MOTA. The Jordanian tourism law (No. 34/1998) states that applicants eligible to apply for a tour guiding licence should be of Jordanian nationality, aged twenty years or over, have no criminal record, be fluent in a foreign language and hold a bachelor degree or degree from an intermediate college in related subjects. If such requirements have been met, the applicant then is required to take oral and written language examinations at the University of Jordan in co-operation with MOTA. Once the applicant's language proficiency has been verified, the applicant then must be interviewed by an admission committee, consisting of representatives from MOTA, Jordanian Tour Guide Association (JTGA) and the Jordan Applied University of Tourism. The purpose of this interview is to assess whether applicant possesses appropriate personal qualities for the role of guide, such as self-confidence and good communication skills.

Following this, the applicant attends a number of specialised courses on tour-guiding, organised under the supervision of MOTA. At the end of this training, the applicant is required to pass a MOTA examination. Official guiding courses are currently offered at the Jordan Applied University of Tourism in Amman and at the Faculty of Archaeology and Tourism of Al-Hussein University in Petra. Such official guiding courses are undertaken for one academic year, and focus on different aspects pertinent to Jordanian tourism, including archaeology, geography, history and cultural issues (MOTA, 2015).

Upon completion of this lengthy process, the successful applicant receives a tour guiding licence, of which two types exist in Jordan: one for local site guides working in a defined region or area, and one for national guides working at national level (MOTA, 1998). Jordanian tourism laws also require that a licensed guide accompany any tour group of more than nine tourists (MOTA, 1998). Tour guides therefore can be seen as important gatekeepers to the sites which their tourists visit, and as playing a major role in representing Jordan to international tourists.

To summarise, the context of Jordan is of relevance for exploration in tourism research. The paucity of studies, the vulnerability of Jordan as a developing country with limited natural resources and, on top of that, the political unrest of the region that overshadows its historical treasures makes it especially important for Jordan to devise new national tourism strategies and practices in order to ensure sustainable development. This research will be timely for Jordan’s tourism industry as it may serve as a baseline to raise the professionalism of tour guides, and to enhance Jordan’s image as an attractive tourism destination in the market place.

1.7 Outline Structure of This Research

This dissertation consists of eight chapters. Chapter One introduces the current research, setting the stage for what follows. Specifically, it discusses the research problem, states the overall aim and objectives, explains the rationale and key assumptions for the research and presents background information on the research context.

Chapter Two represents the theoretical basis of this research and focuses on destination image. Numerous definitions of image concept are discussed, as well as various theorisations of the significance and nature of image construct in tourism literature. The chapter moves on to review key strands in this line of enquiry such as destination image components, destination image formation processes and the interrelationships between destination image and different marketing notions. Previous studies that have focused on some Middle Eastern countries, particularly Jordan, are then covered.

Chapter Three continues the literature review with a specific focus on tour guides. Various definitions and classifications of tour guides are discussed. The significance and the multifaceted roles of tour guides in tourism are also explained. The chapter then extends to evaluate tour guides' duties and possible factors influencing their competencies whilst conducting tours.

Chapter Four presents the theoretical background of the research methods employed in this research. The chapter discusses and locates this research within the interpretivist research paradigm; with an inductive approach following qualitative methods, in particular the 'Straussian' version of grounded theory as a research strategy.

Chapter Five concerns the empirical investigation undertaken in this research. Detailed accounts of data collection and analysis are presented. Qualitative trustworthy generic criteria, and grounded theory specific evaluative criteria are then incorporated to judge the quality of this research. Ethical issues and limitations are also addressed in this chapter.

Chapter Six presents the qualitative findings of this research, namely, the patterns of destination image as projected by tour guides during the consumption experiences of their tourists. The first three sections of the chapter present the findings related to ‘regional image’, ‘country image’ and ‘site image’ as constructed by tour guides through their representations. The explored cases are the Middle East, Jordan and local sites in Jordan such as the Dead Sea. The chapter then moves on to explain various patterns of image projected by tour guides in regard to these three entities.

This approach is replicated in Chapter Seven, where the presentation of the primary findings continues, with an emphasis on understanding the patterns of destination image arising from consumption experiences as perceived by the tourists and as understood by the tour guides who participated in this research. The first three sections explain ‘regional image’, ‘country image’ and ‘site image’ as constructed by the tourists. The discussed cases are situated in the Middle East, Jordan and local sites such as Petra. The patterns of image as perceived by tourists in relation to these three destinations are then discussed.

Chapter Eight presents the conclusions of this research. The main aim and objectives are revisited to explain how these have been addressed. The chapter moves on to discuss the theoretical, practical and methodological contributions of this research, and to reflect on its significance for tourism. The research limitations and potential avenues for future research are then addressed, after which the researcher reflects on the research process and the overall doctoral experience.

Chapter Two: Destination Image

2.1 Introduction

A review of tourism literature shows that destination image has commanded researchers' attention over the last four decades. This chapter critically reviews existing academic knowledge related to destination image in order to identify key arguments relevant to this research. The chapter begins with a consideration of various definitions of destination image, followed by a discussion of the significance and nature of this concept in tourism. The components of destination image are then explored. The chapter moves on to examine those frameworks most relevant to the destination image formation process. The interrelationships between destination image and interdisciplinary marketing studies are then discussed. Finally, destination image studies in Jordan are reviewed and analysed, followed by an overall summation of the chapter.

2.2 Destination Image Definitions

Various research conceptualisations of destination image have been proposed over time, starting with Hunt (1975:1) who defined the construct as: "perceptions held by potential visitors about an area". Crompton (1979a:18) later defined image as: "the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination". Crompton's definition has been widely cited in tourism literature (cited in Chon, 1990; Ahmed, 1991; Schneider and Sönmez, 1999; Konecnik, 2002; Gallarza et al., 2002; Kim and Yoom, 2003; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Zehrer et al., 2007; Nadeau et al., 2008; Pearlman and Melnik, 2008; Yilmz et al., 2009; Greaves and Skinner, 2009; Camprubi et al., 2009; Assaker et al., 2010; Ashton, 2014 and others).

However, more recently, some dissenting voices have argued that Crompton's definition is individual-oriented and as such fails to capture a shared image potentially held by groups of people; Jenkins (1999) for instance argues that shared image would facilitate the segmentation and formulation of marketing strategies. However, it must be acknowledged that a single perceived image of a single destination shared by a group of disparate individuals is unlikely, since a perceived image results from the image projected by a destination as filtered through each tourist’s needs and characteristics. Whilst generalisations may be possible, information on processes and agents of image formation resulting in individualised perceived images is probably more enlightening (Um and Crompton, 1990; Andreu et al., 2001; Tasci and Gartner, 2007).

Echtner and Ritchie (1991) argued that some definitions of destination image have tended to be vague and incomplete, with no indication of whether the researchers are considering attribute-based impressions, total impressions, or both. They posited that image can be conceptualised as individual traits, but also as a total holistic impression evoked in the minds of individuals. Other researchers have had similar ideations of destination image. For example, Um and Crompton (1999) define image as a holistic construct derived from attitudes about a destination's perceived tourism attributes. More recently, Assaker (2014) conceives image as a higher order concept comprising several attributes that co-vary to determine the global image of a destination.

Other definitions have been proposed of destination image as a mental picture, based on perceptual/cognitive and emotional dimensions. As such, image can be viewed as containing subjective and objective impressions. For example, Chon (1990:4) posited that image is: “a mental picture resulting from the interaction of a person’s beliefs, ideas, feelings and impressions about an object”. Similarly, Baloglu and McCleary (1999a:870) defined destination image as: “the individual’s mental representation of knowledge, feelings, and global impressions about destination”. Other contributors since then generally agree that a perceptual/cognitive dimension is an antecedent to the affective component; both components are understood to influence the overall mental representation of the destination (Kim and Yoom, 2003; Beerli and Martin, 2004b; Lin et al., 2007).

From a wider conceptual standpoint, some researchers have treated image as a cumulative measure of selected and processed impressions. For example, Gartner (1993) conceived of destination image as the sum of perceptual beliefs, ideas, and impressions based on information selected from a variety of sources over time, resulting in a mental construct. Font (1997:124) similarly defined image as: "a mental construct developed by the consumer on the basis of a few selected impressions among the flood of total impressions". More recently, White (2004) and Xiao et al. (2006) see image as a mental representation of the external forms of an object, which are re-created through a perceptual process, without the actual stimuli being present. The underpinning shared meaning of these definitions is that tourist mental representations of a given destination might not be so much accurate reflections of the real world as a composite of selected impressions. In other words, destination image is likely to be subject to each tourist's cognitive style and personal ability to perceive and recall information.

Consideration of the definitions offered above suggest that some of these are incomplete; while they encapsulate the selected impressions of an individual, based on either the notion of cognitive and emotional process or both, they lack any behavioural dimension. For example, Tasci's et al. (2007:200) definition posits that destination image is: "an interactive system of thoughts, opinions, feelings, visualisations, and intentions toward a destination". This definition is more comprehensive than those offered earlier, in that destination image is seen as potentially influencing a tourist's cognition, affect and behavioural dimensions.

Similarly, earlier definitions conceive destination image as drawn only from a tourist's (demand) perspectives. On the other hand, Tasci and Gartner (2007) view destination image as a composite of a wide spectrum of inputs that can affect either the demand or supply-side of the image construct. Their study grouped these inputs as: 1) controllable, referring to induced image formation agents that aim to polish and project a positive image for a destination; 2) semi-controllable, referring to the autonomous image formation of agents normally beyond the immediate control of destination marketers and 3) uncontrollable, referring to the perceivers' socio-demographic characteristics and past experience, all of which give a destination its image capital and have direct effects on pre-, during and post-trip tourist behaviour. One of the most distinctive aspects of Tasci and Gartner's (2007) conceptualisation of destination image is that the voices of both the tourists and the destination marketers are represented. Further, this conceptualisation offers three thresholds: pre-, during and post-trip image, suggesting that destination image may change over time and according to the situation.

To sum up, while much research attention seems to have been paid to definitions of destination image, there is as yet no exact meaning of this concept offered in the literature. According to Jenkins (1999), this is because the term has been employed in a variety of contexts and accordingly has led to different meanings being generated. Tasci et al. (2007) support these arguments and attribute the numerous definitions of destination image to its complexity. They argue that each research focus is usefully seen as engaging in defining a particular aspect of destination image. However, most of the definitions above project image as a relative and complex concept, from which can be derived a holistic construct of a destination's attributes. This construct involves perceptual/cognitive and emotional states of mind, which can change over time, subject to different agents and inputs. The interactions between such components result in behavioural dimensions toward a particular destination as undertaken by potential or actual tourists.

This research aims to fine-tune this notion, in seeking to focus on perceptual/cognitive and emotional dimensions of destination image, and to establish their relevance in regard to tour guides' and tourists' stances, impulses and worldviews during a consumption experience. The next section considers the significance of destination image in detail.

2.3 Significance of Destination Image

Destination image has become one of the most important topics of interest not only to tourism researchers, but also to industry practitioners over recent years, mainly due to its perceived influence on the supply and demand of tourist services.

On the demand-side, it is acknowledged that destination image affects the behaviour of potential and actual tourists, playing a crucial pre-visitation role in the decision-making and destination selection processes of potential tourists (Jenkins, 1999; Smith et al., 2007; Assaker, 2014). The rationale is that tourists prefer and select a destination that matches or reinforces their self-image (Hunt, 1975; Sirgy and Su, 2000), although other variables may influence the tourist's overall decision-making process, such as the degree of family involvement, time, budget and price constraints, novelty seeking, access and distance (O'Leary and Deegan, 2005; Assaker et al., 2010). For actual tourists, it is commonly agreed that a positively anticipated image of a destination can influence the degree of satisfaction experienced on site. Alongside this, it is argued that where satisfaction is experienced, image can influence post-visitation recommendations and intentions to revisit the same destination as an expression of loyalty (Chon, 1990; Jenkins, 1999; Pike, 2002; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Chi and Qu, 2008).

On the supply-side, Hunt (1975) was among the first writers to highlight the contribution of positive destination image to successful tourism development, arguing that perceived image is an important influence on potential tourists' selection of a given destination. Some researchers have subsequently reported that destination image presents a platform for creating competitive advantage, and is a key component of the destination positioning process (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Greaves and Skinner, 2009). This involves designing and promoting a unique identity for a given destination, to distinguish it from other competitors in the market place. Additionally, understanding the image construct of a destination helps TMOs to control the existing image, to repair any negative images resulting from harmful events occurring at a destination, and ultimately, to plan promotional strategies and implement a long term program of image assessment and modification when necessary (O'Leary and Deegan, 2005; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). Konecnik (2002) posits that the familiarity of actual tourists with a particular destination, and the images they form of it, play a pivotal role. Such attention in turn will affect the promotion of the destination and the images formed by future tourists. Similarly, Bradley and Harrison (2002) found that a positive destination image contributes to success in the events industry, and that a negative destination image constitutes a major barrier to organisers' decision making. Equally, the image of a destination established through the touristic experience is claimed to have a positive effect on the export of products and services and vice versa (Gnoth, 2002 cited in Nadeau et al., 2008). A more recent study implies a further new significance of destination image; that is, if loyal tourists view a destination positively, this is more likely to attract potential investors, in turn enhancing the probability of establishing new businesses (Yilmz et al., 2009).

The above studies reflect a number of significant roles played by image in influencing not only tourist behaviours but also destination competitiveness and development. It is unsurprising that numerous studies have investigated the various characteristics of image. The nature of this construct is explored in further detail in the following section.

2.4 The Nature of Destination Image

Among the small number of studies devoted to explaining the qualities of destination image, the leading researchers have been Gallarza et al. (2002). These authors have identified four features that distinguish the image construct: it is complex, multiple, relativistic, and dynamic. Similarly, Stepchenkova and Mills (2010) claim the image as heterogeneous, complex, and dynamic in nature. The proposition shared in these studies is that image can be seen as a complex, dynamic, subjective and multiple/heterogeneous concept.

The complexity of image is rationalised according to the different components of this construct. Image has been explored from two perspectives, that of the tourist and that of the destination. The tourist component consists of cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions (Gartner, 1993; Gallarza et al., 2002;

White, 2004). The destination image component on the other hand, consists of attribute/holistic, functional/psychological and common/unique elements (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991 and 2003). According to other researchers, image complexity results from the varieties of tourists' perceptions in relation to various attributes of a destination (Chon, 1990). In short, many approaches and perspectives have been employed in studying this construct (Konecnik, 2002; Tasci et al., 2007), which have increased further the complexity of image.

The dynamic nature of image implies that it may change from person to person, depending on the proximity of the destination to potential tourists' countries. According to Crompton (1979a) and Baloglu (2001), tourists who are more familiar with a destination tend to form more favourable images, suggesting that familiarity may represent a key marketing variable in targeting potential visitors (Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). Besides familiarity with place, many researchers have found that change over time is a factor, in that image may change from the pre- to post-visitation stage. That is, pre-visitation may be subjective, while post-visitation may be realistic, complex, and differentiated (Gunn, 1972; Beerli and Martin, 2004a; Smith et al., 2015). Gartner (1993) takes this further to suggest that the speed of image changes depends on the complexity of the tourism system in a given destination. That is, the larger and more complex the system, the more slowly images change.

However, there is a different line of research which posits that image is stable. According to Crompton (1979a), image is stable over time in the minds of tourists and as such not easily open to manipulation, even if the attributes of a destination change dramatically. This implies that the image of a destination is unlikely to change quickly in the light of improved attributes. Some later research supports Crompton's (1979a) claims. For example, Gartner and Hunt (1987) analysed the changes in the state of Utah's image between 1971 and 1983, and found change of image to be slow. One explanation for such discrepant views on how images change over time may be one of differing methodologies in research studies, or of narrow focus. Crompton's (1979a) and Gartner and Hunt's (1987) studies for instance, related exclusively to tourists' pre-visitation images of a destination.

Gallarza et al. (2002) took a different view; for them the relativistic nature of image refers to a tourist's subjective perceptions of a destination (differing from tourist to tourist), such perceptions being generally comparative (influenced by various features). Framed in this way, it can be taken that no one individual is likely to hold exactly the same image of a given destination's features as another. This subjectivity further underpins the complexity of image as a concept. In fact, many contributors acknowledge that tourists' perceptions may be subjective, and at times inaccurate, particularly when they have limited knowledge and limited prior experience in a given destination (Jenkins, 1999; Castro et al., 2007). Nonetheless, understanding such subjectivity is crucial in providing insight into tourists' actions.

Finally, the heterogeneity or the multiple nature of image refers to a variety of elements and processes associated with this construct (Gallarza et al., 2002; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). Gallarza et al. (2002) explained that the multiplicity of image results from two factors; its nature and its formation process. Nature in this context refers to holistic impressions, and/or attributes based on impressions, whereas formation process corresponds to the overall output that results from processing information from various inputs through a sequence of stages.

Although the above studies contribute to the understanding of the nature of destination image, and are useful for identifying the various strands of this construct, their homogenous categorisations are somewhat conservative. As such, they fail to provide in-depth insight into the diversity of the mental landscape potentially created around a given destination. Generic labels of image might therefore be insufficiently informative to allow a destination to maintain competitive advantage in the complex and fast growing market place. The following section explores further destination image components.

2.5 Destination Image Components

The term 'destination image component' is used in this research to reflect a composite of elements that shape the body of this construct. As mentioned briefly earlier, the literature views image from two perspectives, that of the tourist and that of the destination. The following sub-sections discuss these components.

2.5.1 Image Components on the part of Tourists

Image components on the part of tourists consist of three distinct but hierarchical interrelated components: cognitive, affective and behavioural (Gartner, 1993; Dann, 1996). The cognitive component represents the sum of beliefs that tourists hold about a particular destination; the affective component represents the feelings that may be held about a destination, whether favourable, unfavourable, or neutral; and the behavioural component exemplifies how a subject acts towards a destination on the basis of cognition and affect components (Gartner, 1993; Dann, 1996). However, it is recognised that the interaction between these three components will not necessarily result in a 'relatively real' image; tourist images are often more based on selective impressions than on reality (Font, 1997; White, 2004). This can create a challenge for tourism marketing organisations, which aim to communicate specific images to potential tourists.

Theoretically, however, although there is general agreement that the cognitive component is an antecedent of the affective component and both have a direct influence on the overall image, it is argued that the affective component has a stronger influence on a tourist's overall global image (Beerli and Martin, 2004a; Boo and Busser, 2005; Castro et al., 2007; Chen et al., 2010). To demonstrate this point, Baloglu (2000) investigated the respective influences of usage of information; motivation; and mental construct (cognition and affection) on behavioural visitation intentions. Those findings suggested that the amount and type of information, and socio-psychological motivation significantly influenced tourists' cognitive evaluations, which in turn, determined feelings about the destination. The interaction between a tourist's cognition and affect, when positive, in turn motivated them to visit a particular destination.

Moreover, Kim and Yoom (2003) empirically confirmed that the affective construct has more impact on destination image than does the cognitive construct. This is particularly so when a destination's attributes are seen as positive, such as exotic atmospheres, relaxation and good climate. More recently, Lin et al. (2007) have examined the interplay between image components (cognitive and affective) and tourists' destination preferences across three different types of destinations (natural, developed and theme park). Their findings indicate that cognitive construct has significant effect on overall destination image, mediated by affective construct. The overall destination image, in turn, is an antecedent of tourists' destination preferences. However, this research also found that image components varied; depending on the destination type i.e. theme-park destinations were only influenced by affective images. In contrast, the determinant of image for natural places was found to be the cognitive construct, whereas developed places were influenced by both constructs.

The above discussions generally reflect the relative importance of attributes associated with the affective construct in comparison to attributes related to the cognitive construct. In other words, elements such as an exotic atmosphere, relaxation and good climate may be more important to tourists than good restaurants, suitable accommodation and unique architecture. Also to be taken into consideration is destination type. Accordingly, a conclusion can be drawn that tourism marketers should communicate meaningful information about attributes associated with both components, but with emphasis on those related to the affective component. This component appears to exert a powerful influence on destination overall image and on tourist behaviour.

2.5.2 Image Components on the part of Destination

Destination image components consist of three main elements: holistic/attribute, functional/psychological and common/unique (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991 and 2003). The holistic component refers to general destination aspects, whereas the attribute component refers to features that are more specific. Each of these components contains functional/psychological features. The functional component refers to products or services that can be observed and measured, such as climate and prices. On the other hand, psychological components refer to attributes that are less observable, tangible or measurable, such as the atmosphere and the friendliness of the host destination. Finally, image can range from common to unique characteristics. The common dimension of the destination consists of attributes common to all destinations, such as accommodation and transportation. Unique attributes are associated with distinctive characteristics of particular destinations (see figure 2.1).

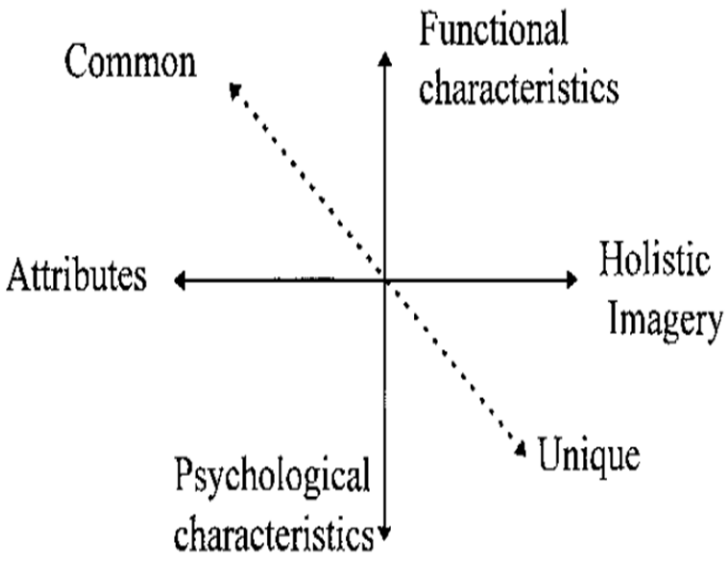


Figure 2.1: The Components of Destination Image

Source: Echtner and Ritchie (1991:40).

Although the model divides the concept of destination image into three different dimensions, there are interrelations that overlap among the three. For example, holistic impressions are based on the attribute dimension, and in turn, impressions about a destination's attributes may be influenced by holistic or overall impressions (ibid).

Following Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) model, many different studies have been conducted to examine the various image components of a given destination. However, Jenkins (1999) reported that the 'common' dimension of Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) model had been often overlooked in the literature, while arguing that unique attributes should be emphasised since tourists often prefer to see unique things. Accordingly, subsequent destination image studies witnessed a shift in the way they employed the three-dimensional model proposed by Echtner and Ritchie (1991), aiming not only to capture unique attributes of a destination but also the overall multi-dimensions of destination image.

For example, this updated framework was used to assess respectively Ireland's image in the French market (O'Leary and Deegan, 2002); Rwanda's image as perceived by tourists and as projected by international tour operators (Grosspietsch, 2006); tourists' perceptions of a distant destination (Prebensen, 2007); and Russia's image as a tourism destination among USA-originating potential and actual tourists (Stepchenkova and Morrison, 2008). The above studies proposed a set of managerial and marketing implications for involved TMOs, based upon assessments of the three main elements of destination image components. This accordingly would allow TMOs to promote a competitive image in the market place.

2.5.3 The Interactive Model of Destination Image Components

In an attempt to integrate destination and tourist image components, Tasci et al. (2007) proposed an interactive system of these components (see figure 2.2). At the core of the system, cognitive knowledge is followed by an affective response toward the common and unique attributes of a destination. The interaction between a tourist's cognitive and affective dimensions toward a destination's unique and common attributes goes to form a holistic or overall impression of the image. Assuming the knowledge of common and unique attributes is fact based, the authors say that the more detailed the core, the less stereotypical will be the holistic synthesis. They also claim that this system is dynamically interactive and reciprocal, given that every item can serve as either a cause or as an effect of change at any time. They argue that these factors cannot be understood in isolation, but rather studied in an integrated manner.

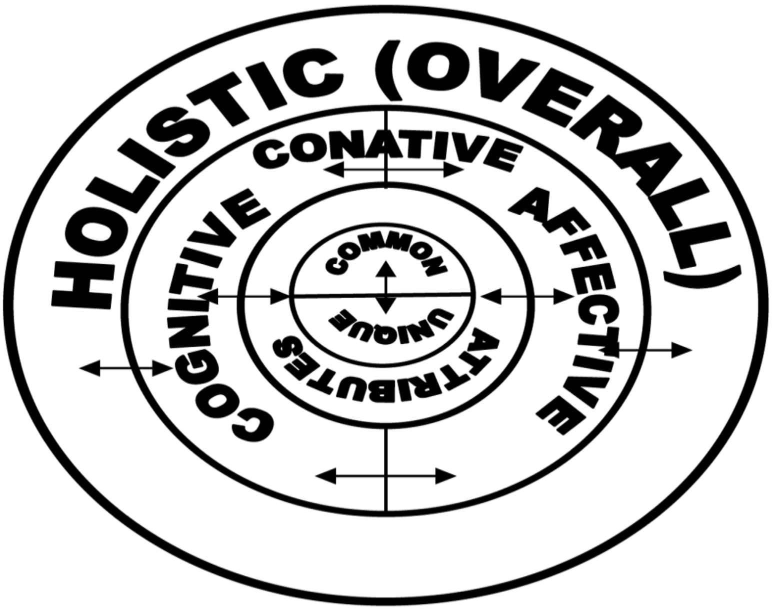


Figure 2.2: Interactive System of Image Components

Source: Tasci et al. (2007:200).

The advantage of Tasci's et al. (2007) conceptual framework is to establish links between the main components of image in an interactive way. Despite this, one of the shortcomings of this framework is its complexity, further exacerbated by the lack of any methodological guidelines for empirically exploring the model. Moreover, even if the model were employed, its complexity might hinder any coherent presentation of the findings, and fail to provide management with a clear direction for decision-making. Thus, the validity of these assumptions remains questionable.

The discussions in the above three sub-sections suggest that image is a complex concept; therefore, tourism contributors have endeavoured to understand image components by means of different approaches in varied contexts. It can be said that a destination's various features will generally evoke certain cognitive and affective states in tourists' minds. Additionally, interactions between cognitive and affective components, when favourable, can stimulate desirable behaviours.

The review of research on image outlined above is of particular relevance to this research, because it contributes to the understanding of different components that shape image construct. However, it can be argued that such research to date has not fully investigated the potential complexity of image. Former contributors, for example, have not clarified meaningfully the patterns of tourists' perceived images of a destination's various attributes, nor alternatively, categorised the objective and subjective dimensions of tourists' perceptions of the destination. Accordingly, the following section details image formation processes on the parts of tourists and of destinations.

2.6 The Destination Image Formation Process

Tasci and Gartner (2007:414) define image formation as: "a construction of a mental representation of a destination on the basis of information delivered by the image formation agents and selected by a person". Different theories based on different agents have been proposed to explain this process. It was in 1972 that an early seven-stage theory was introduced by Gunn, followed by Gartner's (1993) framework of typologies of image formation agents, and then by Baloglu and McCleary's (1999a) image formation model. These models provided a corner stone for subsequent destination image formation studies. In 2004, Govers and Go developed a 3-Gap tourism destination image formation model, and more recently, Taci and Gartner (2007) developed a conceptual model that integrated supply and demand as image formation agents. The subsequent sections review these frameworks. This review was undertaken in order to understand image construction processes amongst the researched subjects during the tour.

2.6.1 The Seven-Stage Theory

Gunn (1972) was one of the earliest researchers to explore the process of destination image formation (see figure 2.3), presenting a ‘Seven-Stage Theory’, divided into three main stages. Gunn (1972) identified the first main stage as the formation of an *organic image* informed by various non-touristic, non-commercial sources of information such as television documentaries, books, magazines, newspapers, movies and stories of referent persons such as family and friends. Altogether, these factors would accumulate throughout a tourist's life span to form a perceived organic image of a place. The second main stage identified was the formation of an *induced image*, resulting from exposure to paid promotional materials of information such as travel brochures and guidebooks. A final third main stage produces a *modified induced* image based on the tourist’s real experience of a destination. During this stage, if the real experience met the tourist's positive expectations formed during the first stage, they would likely be satisfied; otherwise, the mismatch would generate dissatisfaction.

Organic Image

- Stage 1: accumulation of mental images of a place through life.

Induced Image

- Stage 2: modification of images through researching prior to the decision to travel.
- Stage 3: the decision to travel based on image efficiency, anticipated experience but kept within time, money and other constraints.
- Stage 4: travel to the destination.

Modified-Induced Image

- Stage 5: participation or experience at the destination which influnce the image.
- Stage 6: return travel allows reflection and evaluation, including discussing experience with fellow travellers.
- Stage 7: new accumulation occurs after the visit because the process is circular, the end image may be the same or different to the original one.

Figure 2.3: Seven-Stages Theory

Source: Gunn (1972:120).

According to Echtner and Ritchie (2003), the seven-stage theory highlights two important points. First, it suggests that individuals can form an image of a destination even if they have not visited it nor been exposed to commercial information about it. Second, it indicates that destination image can be changed before and after visitation; thus it is desirable to understand images as constructed differently by visitors and non-visitors. Echtner and Ritchie (2003) report that in this manner, the accuracies and inaccuracies of the existing image could be addressed in the design of the promotional strategy. Several empirical studies support these arguments and demonstrate that images held by actual tourists tend to be more realistic, complex and differentiated (Beerli and Martin, 2004a; Smith et al., 2015), even if not completely positive (Phillips and Jang, 2010). On the other hand, Daye (2010) found that the effect of organic formation agents were greater than induced formation agents, thus suggesting that the concept of 'destination image management' is the best tactic for reconciling any potential gaps between the organic and the induced image, and to create promotional strategies based on this.

Since Gunn's (1972) seminal research on the influences of destination image upon satisfaction, the question has been further explored by different authors. Chon's (1992) empirical findings show that satisfaction is a result of a match between positive expected image and positive travel experience, while disconfirmation, conversely, results in dissatisfaction. Andreu et al. (2001) focused on the relationship between promoted and perceived images of Spain in the British market. They found that there were mismatches between promoted and perceived images that resulted in dissatisfaction. Their recommendations to organisations in charge of destination image promotion were not only to project images that would meet their objectives, but also to respond to tourists' needs in terms of destination selection.

2.6.2 Typologies of Image Formation Agents

Gartner (1993) proposed a theoretical framework of typologies of image formation agents, defining the image formation process as: "a continuum of different agents or information sources which act independently or in combination, to form one single unique image in the mind of the tourist" (Gartner, 1993:197).

The author classifies the agents on this continuum as: 1) Overt induced image, which aims to form particular images in the minds of prospective tourists, through information delivered by TMOs via television, radio, brochures, billboards and print media. 2) Overt induced image Π, which consists of information received or requested from information gatekeepers such as tour operators. This sort of information contributes to image formation about particular areas. 3) Covert induced image refers to using celebrities, recognisable spokespersons or satisfied consumers in a destination's promotional activities, to increase its credibility. 4) Covert induced image Π refers to using travel writers or special media groups through familiarisation tours to particular destinations. 5) Autonomous agents involve mass-media broadcasting documentaries, television, programs, and popular culture represented through films. Given that these sources offer high credibility and high market penetration, they are considered one of the strongest agent types capable of changing an image in a short time. 6) Unsolicited organic image refers to information provided by persons who have visited the destination, or believe they know what exists there. 7) Solicited organic agents represent word of mouth of referent persons such as friends and relatives. Finally, 8) is the image that results from an actual visit to the destination. These image formation agents have their advantages and disadvantages, which can be summarised into categories of cost, market penetration and credibility (see table 2.1).

According to Gartner (1993), the selection of the right image formation agents depends on many factors such as the amount of money budgeted for image management; the characteristics of the target market; time; and the type of image projected in the market place depending on the tourism product existing in a given destination.

Table 2.1: Image Formation Agents

Image Change Agent	Credibility	Market Penetration	Destination Cost
Overt induced I	Low	High	High
Overt induced II	Medium	Medium	Indirect
Covert induced I	Low/Medium	High	High
Covert induced II	Medium	Medium	Medium
Autonomous	High	Medium/High	Indirect
Unsolicited Organic	Medium	Low	Indirect
Solicited Organic	High	Low	Indirect
Organic	High	----	Indirect

Source: Gartner (1993:210).

However, Gunn's (1972) and Gartner's (1993) propositions concerning image formation process share some notable similarities, primarily that agents or information sources involved in the image formation process could, under the control of marketers, become intentional promotional agents. In such cases, image is often created and projected by inner/local or outer/foreign agents involved in the tourism industry of a given destination. On the other hand, the destination image may be created unintentionally by spontaneous agents who project sources such as word of mouth via referent persons. Finally, there is the image that results from the actual visitation to the destination.

However, a study conducted by Tasci and Gartner (2007) found that the most powerful of agents is the 'autonomous agent', reflected in the fact that destination image linked to media studies has become a popular line of research in tourism literature (see for example Custodio and Gouveia, 2007; Dewar et al., 2007; Mestre et al., 2008). This is because media represent autonomous agents of image formation characterised by high credibility, high market penetration and capability of changing an area's image dramatically in a short time. Marketers, therefore, have adopted different promotional strategies, including building networks and relationships with media, journalists and the use of films for marketing opportunities.

Interestingly, Gartner's (1993) theoretical framework has been criticised by Stepchenkova and Mills (2010), who argue that typologies in this framework have failed to take into consideration the speed of changes in the digital era. For example, tourists can use virtual space to project destination image, by sharing their travel experiences and photos with other people in discussion forums and personal blogs. Thus, Stepchenkova and Mills (2010) posit that a new typology should reflect the impact of shared online sources. The influences of the internet on destination image are asserted by other researchers (Govers and Go, 2005; Govers et al., 2007; Singh and Lee, 2009), which suggests that the amount of information and pictures as portrayed by TMOs' websites have an impact on the clarity of the perceived destination image.

2.6.3 Integrated Frameworks of Destination Image Formation

The studies undertaken by Gunn (1972) and Gartner (1993) were narrowly focused on external agents that contributed to the image formation process. However, other researchers have integrated these agents into a consideration of tourists' personal characteristics (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a; Font, 1997; Tasci and Gartner, 2007).

In this context, Baloglu and McCleary (1999a) proposed a framework representing the most important determinants of destination image formation (see figure 2.4). They suggested that an image is influenced by tourist characteristics and stimulus factors. While the personal or internal factors include psychological and social characteristics of the individual, the stimulus factor arises from external sources such as tourists' exposure to sources of information and the experience of the destination. According to Baloglu and McCleary (1999a), the interactions between internal and external factors influence the tourists' cognitive and affective reactions, and subsequently the overall global images.

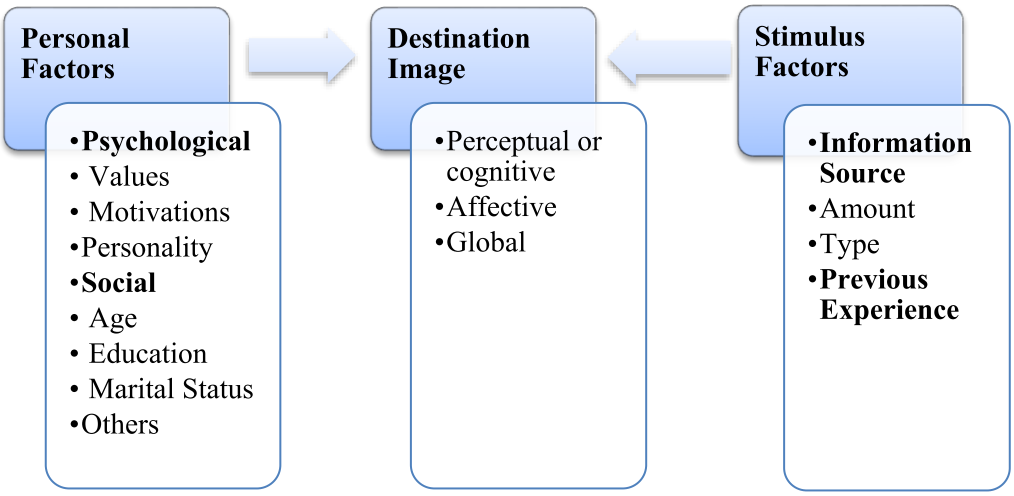

Personal Factors
•Psychological
• Values
• Motivations
•Personality
•Social
• Age
• Education
• Marital Status
•Others
Destination Image
•Perceptual or cognitive
•Affective
•Global
Stimulus Factors
•Information Source
•Amount
•Type
•Previous Experience

Figure 2.4: Image Formation Model

Source: Baloglu and McCleary (1999a:870).

More recently, Tasci and Gartner (2007) attempted to integrate different agents identified in the image formation process, namely, supply-side or destination, independent or autonomous, and demand-side or image receivers. According to Tasci and Gartner (2007), the supply-side agent uses visual promotional materials, the content and amount of which go to determine the images that TMOs promote to target markets. The main concern of this agent is to create awareness and generate interest, resulting in action. The demand-side, on the other hand, represents tourists' unique mental constructs, comprehension and interpretation of the messages delivered by the first agent. Perceivers' socio-demographics and past travel behaviour are claimed to have a role in the image formation process. Finally, Tasci and Gartner (2007) argue further that there are intermediate autonomous factors between the supply and demand agents, such as news articles, educational materials and movies. These sources may modify, enhance, and diminish the information cues being transmitted by the supply-side source.

While the above studies integrate different external and internal constructs involved in the image formation process, some researchers have more specifically focused on investigating receivers' characteristics in this process. Beerli and Martin (2004b), for example, report that the perceivers' socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, level of education, social class, and country of origin) and psychological characteristics (motivations, values, personality, lifestyle, etc.) may reveal a significant influence on the tourist's perceived image post-visitation (first time and repeat visitors). Similarly, Tasci et al. (2007) report that respondent's characteristics such as a tourist origin, distance, religious orientation, age, gender, income, class standing, household status, and previous visitation have been tested in previous studies and have been found to have an influence on the perceived destination image. The variables effectively correlated to image are: length of trip, enjoyment, satisfaction with the destination, visit and revisit intentions, willingness to recommend destination, support for tourism development, desirability of the destination, trip-planning time frame, costs, likelihood to repeat travel and the likelihood of choosing the destination for the next vacation.

Such studies suggest that image might be formed through supply-side agents who attempt to communicate message to polish the destination image. The receivers then interpret these messages according to their various personal characteristics. Tourists' perceptions through this process are also influenced by autonomous factors.

2.6.4 A Model of 3-Gaps

A more recent model has been developed by Govers and Go (2004) to identify other factors significantly influencing the image formation process. Their model identifies three main gaps that could emerge in the image formation process. The first gap is labelled as the 'tourism development strategy gap', referring to the mismatch between an actual tourism product in a given destination and the projected image. The second gap is labelled as the 'tourism delivery' or the 'supply gap', referring to destination failure to deliver promises. The third gap results from tourists' unrealistic expectations arising from false promotion, labelled as the 'tourist demands specifications gap'.

In response to this model, particularly to bridge the 'tourism development strategy gap' and the 'supply gap', a new line of research has emerged, emphasising the importance of cooperation among the various tourism stakeholders of a destination to induce a competitive image in the market place. Govers and Go (2005), for instance, examined the way in which Dubai's image as a tourism destination was projected by online narratives and pictures via private and public sectors. The results indicated that the public sector tended to project cultural identity and heritage, while the private sector commoditised Dubai's image by promoting tourism facilities and activities. These findings imply that discrepancies among tourism stakeholders' practices might potentially result in tourists' unrealistic expectations, dissatisfaction and influence a destination's image negatively. Similarly, Camprubi et al. (2009) assessed the level of coordination among different tourism stakeholders in the process of creating an induced image in two different cultural destinations. The researchers found that the lack of coordination among tourism stakeholders had possibly led to a gap between the reality of the destination and the induced image, thus diminishing tourist satisfaction. Daye (2010), on the other hand, argued that the complexity of the tourism system and the variety of stakeholders involved in delivering a destination image can create a challenge for tourism marketers. Destinations, therefore, face a battle to create and maintain a meaningful image.

Generally speaking, other authors recognise the theoretical position of these 'gaps', and accordingly, assert that destination image management is the best tactic for bridging these gaps (Gallarza et al., 2002). The concept of destination image management refers to TMOs' attempts to design marketing campaigns that enhance positive images, weed out unfavourable images and reconcile any gaps that might be formed by agents outside their immediate control (Tasci et al., 2007; Pearlman and Melnik, 2008). The following section thus explores the interrelationships between destination image and marketing studies.

2.7 Destination Image and Marketing Studies

A number of studies have examined the relationship between destination image and marketing research streams such as self-concept, tourists' behaviour, service providers, motivation and branding. Some aspects within these streams are irrelevant to this research and therefore will not be discussed.

2.7.1 Destination Image and Self-Concept

Tourism literature acknowledges the interrelationship between destination image and self-concept, often termed in the literature as Destination-Self-Congruity (DSC). Self-concept is generally defined as an individual's feelings and impressions toward him/herself (Sirgy and Su, 2000; Beerli et al., 2007).

One of the leading works in this domain is by Sirgy and Su (2000), who proposed a conceptual framework to explain the relationship between DSC dimensions. According to the authors, self-congruity is a process of matching a tourist's self-concept to a destination image. They claimed that the greater the match between a destination image and the tourist's self-concept, the more likely the tourist would have a favourable attitude toward that destination, and therefore be more likely to visit it. Their framework included four main components of self-identity, namely; 'actual self-image', referring to how tourists see themselves, 'ideal self-image', referring to how they would like to see themselves, 'social self-image', implying the way tourists believe they are seen by others, and 'ideal social self-image', which exemplifies how they would like others to see them.

A number of studies have gone beyond Sirgy and Su's (2000) conceptual framework to explore these interrelationships from an empirical standpoint. For example, Kastenholz (2004) examined DSC and its impact on tourists' behaviour with specific reference to rural tourism. The findings were limited, in suggesting that the congruity between destination image and tourists' self-images influence loyalty only in terms of return intentions. Nothing was mentioned about their roles in influencing recommendations. Similarly, Beerli et al. (2007) assessed the role of DSC on decision-making and destination selection. The results indicate the greater the match between a destination image and a tourist's self-concept, the greater the probability of a tourist visiting that destination.

While such studies provide validated insight into the relationships between DSC and tourists' behaviours in terms of visit/revisit intentions, other researchers have attempted to further explore these links with mixed results. Murphy et al. (2007a), for example, investigated the relationships between tourists' needs, brand personality, self-congruity, and tourists' behaviour (visitation intention and satisfaction). The results indicated that the match between destination image and brand personality, consistent with the tourists preferred experiences, might result in a high level of DSC. Self-congruity was found to have a significant impact on tourist satisfaction, but less in terms of visitation intentions due to travel constrains such as distance. More recently, Hosany and Martin (2012) examined the interrelationships between self-image congruence, tourist satisfaction and recommendation intentions in a cruise-ship tourism context. They found that self-image congruence (actual and ideal) positively and directly influenced the cruisers' experiences, and indirectly influenced their recommendation intentions, mediated by their level of satisfaction.

The above discussions imply that DSC influences tourist behaviour strands in various ways, although the differences among research contexts, methods adopted and constructs investigated might explain these variations.

2.7.2 Destination Image and Tourists' Behaviour

Tourism studies have acknowledged the influences of destination image on the behaviour of potential and actual tourists. Tourists' behaviour can be divided into three main dimensions; destination selection, evaluation or satisfaction, and loyalty.

Numerous studies support the influence of image construct on the behavioural intentions of potential tourists (Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Assaker et al., 2010). Given the intangible nature of tourism, prospective tourists will likely act on the basis of their image rather than upon objective reality, particularly when they have limited knowledge and limited prior experience (Crompton, 1979a; Gartner, 1993; Pike, 2007; Greaves and Skinner, 2009).

Destination selection is a multi-staged process, through which image acts as one of the significant variables that influence choice making. In this context, Um and Crompton (1999) examined the roles of perceived constraints (i.e. time and travel-ability) and destination image on tourists' decision-making process. Adopting Howard's (1963) framework drawn from the generic consumer behaviour literature, destination selection was tracked through three main stages; awareness set, evoked set and late consideration set. *Awareness set* referred to all the destinations of which a tourist is aware in a given time. *Evoked set* comprised those destinations that are considered possible for selection, whereas *late consideration set* referred to the process of narrowing down possible destinations to probable destinations. Um and Crompton's (1999) findings indicated that the final destination was elected from the late consideration set. They contended therefore that image plays a significant role in predicting which destinations are elected from evoked set to late consideration set. However, they argued that certain constraints significantly influence the final destination selection, so that only destinations with a strong image would be considered through these evaluation stages. Their findings imply that the stronger the image is, the fewer the perceived inhibitors will be, and the greater the likelihood of the destination being selected.

However, the influences of image and other constraints/variables (i.e. degree of family involvement, time, budget, price, access and distance) in the tourist's overall decision-making process have been asserted by other researchers (O'Leary and Deegan, 2005; Bosque and Martin, 2008; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010).

The relationship between destination image and the behavior of actual tourists has been explored in tourism literature, to the effect that various expected images held by tourists travelling to a particular destination will influence their judgment toward their perceived experiences, and consequently, result in satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In this context, Chon (1992) employed the evaluative congruity theory framework to examine the relationships between expectation, destination image and tourist satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Chon's

(1992) findings show that the greatest tourist satisfaction may result from a negative pre-image followed by a positive perceived experience. Positive image and positive travel experience will result in moderate satisfaction, whereas a negative image and negative perceived experience will result in dissatisfaction. Finally, the most negative evaluation will result from a positive image and a negatively perceived experience. Chon (1992) asserts that any destination should avoid over-promising its images, as failure to meet the image would result in low satisfaction or in dissatisfaction. Subsequent research supported this framework. For example, Andreu et al. (2001) found mismatches between promoted and perceived images of Spain in the British market, resulting in dissatisfaction. More recently, Lee's et al. (2014) findings in Korea indicated some discrepancies between tourists' less favourable pre-images and their more positive experience, resulting in satisfaction and a desirable modified post-image of Korea.

In regard to actual tourists' post-visitations, a number of studies have validated empirically the influence of destination image on tourists' loyalty in terms of word-of-mouth, recommendations and return intentions. Chen and Tsai (2007), for example, examined the interrelations between destination image and evaluative factors (trip quality, perceived value and satisfaction) to predict tourists' future behavioural intentions. Their data analysis suggested that image directly and indirectly had the most significant effects on recommendation and revisit intentions. Similarly, Chi and Qu (2008) found that destination image influences attributes satisfaction, and that both constructs determine the overall satisfaction. This in turn was found critically to influence destination loyalty. More recently, Assaker et al. (2010) explored the influence of satisfaction, novelty seeking and destination image on tourists' revisit intentions. Their findings indicated that positive destination image had the most important effect on immediate and future return intentions, even if those tourists had a poor experience. Their view was that holding a positive image might suggest that the travellers' poor experiences were a rare exception (ibid). Such studies imply that image needs constantly to be enhanced to maintain tourists' loyalty. Other studies, however, report that image can be used as a tool to facilitate the memorising of satisfactory experiences, and thus, encourage re-visitation to a given destination (Jenkins, 1999; O'Leary and Deegan, 2005; Castro el al., 2007).

In conclusion, destination image is seen to have a notable impact on tourists' behaviours, although it can be illusionary and subjective. This indicates that communicating powerful images is crucial for stimulating desirable behaviours.

2.7.3 Destination Image and Service Providers

The concept of destination image has been studied in relation to different stakeholder groups such as tour operators and travel agencies (Santos, 1998; Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; Konecnik, 2002; Alaeddinoglu and Can, 2010), and accommodation providers (Zehrer et al., 2007). Such studies view service providers or intermediaries as part of an image's elements, playing a crucial role in the promotion of the destination's tourism products, and in turn, influencing the destination image.

The review also shows that a new line of enquiry has focused specifically on tour guides as a stakeholder group, with a role in the politics of image. Dahles (2002), one of the first writers to pay attention to this, noted the Indonesian government uses tourism to implement two main objectives in its political agenda: firstly, to polish the image of the country through international tourism and, secondly, to promote national unity through domestic tourism. In order to achieve these aspirations, the government became involved in the regulation of the guiding profession, in terms of licensing, certification, training, conducting tours, organising ethics of guides, and even in controlling the content of information presented by guides to tourists. Guides in that context were thus hired as instruments for controlling what, when, and where the government wished to disseminate images, and for controlling how tourists would interact with local society. The government policy in that study was to keep the tourists away from behind the scenes activities deemed inappropriate for foreigners. In this case, the guides were found to play an important role in the construction of local identity as well as of the destination image (ibid).

In a similar vein, Banyai (2010) explored Dracula tourism in Bran Castle in Romania, as portrayed in Western tourists' internet blogs. Focusing on the role of local tour guides in the image formation process, Banyai (2010) found these guides worked as organic image formation agents, as described by Gunn's (1972) study. These findings also showed that some tourists left the country dissatisfied because the majority of Western tourists visit Romania in search of a mythical Dracula, whereas the guides were more concerned with presenting the historical truth about Dracula as one of the figures in Romanian history. Although these findings indicated that the guides were perceived as the most credible source of information for the tourists during the experience, Banyai (2010) observed that there appeared to be different images held by the guides and the tourists. While the tourists' image of the place seemed influenced by personal factors such as motivation, and stimulus factors such as Western pop culture, the guides' image of Dracula seemed mainly influenced by their culture and other stimulus factors such as government policy.

However, although Banyai's (2010) study suggested that a match between tourists' expectations and the guides' interpretations was necessary in order to enhance tourists' satisfaction, other researchers have been more interested in the implication of unexploited material. In this context, Huebner (2010) argues that the discrepancy between images held and interpretation provided may not necessarily need to be addressed since this rather adds richness to the tourists' overall experience. Huebner's (2010) study elaborated on Banyai's (2010) qualitative data by drawing upon the influence of popular culture on destination image formation and the co-creations of tourists' experiences during the visitation. Huebner (2010) envisaged the actual experience as a meeting point between tourists' expectations and tourism products, stimulated by the provided 'servicescapes'. Thus, the likelihood of varied co-creations of experience would be more prevalent at the site of the study. Huebner (2010) further argued that the main concern might not be so much the image gap between tourists' expectations and guides' interpretations, as an inconsistency in servicescapes as presented between Bran Castle and its surroundings. Huebner (2010) saw it as critical to align the images originating in the immediate surroundings with those represented at the Castle; this would be achieved by introducing three well-defined themed exhibitions in order to reinforce the discourse of the fictional and the historical Dracula.

However, while Huebner's (2010) claims about the co-creations of experience may hold true, the creation of multiple images may not necessarily be a pleasant experience for some tourists. It could be argued that the creation of multi-images may lead to image fragmentation, so that care should be taken to position the destination image coherently (Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). Additionally, it should not be ignored that in the competitive tourist market place, tourists have unlimited options with respect to which destination they can choose. If the creation of multi-images risks evoking negative emotions and results, this may result in confusion, low credibility and unrealistic expectations about the tourism products of a country. Conversely, the creation of reflective images based on meaningful understanding of tourists' ideas and feelings may result more effectively in long-term memories lodged in the tourists' awareness set, as well as more interest from potential tourists.

The above studies serve to reflect the dynamic interplay between the roles of the guide and the destination image. However, while they usefully contribute to the understanding of why tourists and guides may hold different images, they fail to elucidate the types of image that researched subjects might commonly bring to their actual experiences. More specifically, there appears to be a dearth of conceptualisations about the types of impressions that tour guides might create about a destination.

It can be concluded, however, that the creation of destination image strategically requires top down or bottom up co-operation among tourism players at different levels. As Bramwell and Rawding (1996) (cited in Zehrer et al., 2007) suggest, the exploration of stakeholders' ideas and expectations about a place, town and destination may facilitate transmission of a coherent and clear image to tourists.

2.7.4 Destination Image and Motivation

The relationships between destination image and motivation have received considerable attention in tourism literature. Contributors conceptualise motivation as the driving force behind tourists' behaviour, geared to satisfying a given need (Crompton, 1979b; Dann, 1981; Pearce, 2005; Devesa et al., 2010). The underlying construct link is that motivation may be used as a tool to understand tourists' behaviour, and destination image may be used as a key factor in selecting a given destination over other competitors (McCabe, 2000; O'Leary and Deegan, 2005).

The tourist motivation construct is commonly explained by the push-pull model (Dann, 1981). The push factors refer to internal socio-psychological forces that motivate tourists to go on vacation. Examples include the desire for exploration, novelty seeking, and relaxation. On the other hand, pull factors refer to those features that might drive tourists to select a given holiday destination e.g. unspoiled beaches or historical attractions. The importance of socio-psychological motives in destination marketing is emphasised by Crompton (1979b), who identified two overarching motives for pleasure travellers, that is socio-psychological and cultural. The socio-psychological motives encompass seven sub-categories including: escape, exploration, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship, and facilitation of social relationships. Cultural motives include novelty and education categories.

Regarding the relationship between tourist motives and a destination's image, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) argued that socio-psychological motivation arises from personal factors influence the tourists' cognitive and affective reactions, and subsequently the overall global images. Other studies have examined these assumptions from an empirical standpoint. Goossens (2000), for example, saw tourists pushed by their emotional needs and pulled by the perceived emotional benefits of a destination. Image in this process is seen as a motivating factor mediating emotional experiences, evaluations and behavioural intentions. Similarly, Beerli and Martin's (2004b) empirical study suggests that a match between travellers' motivation and destination characteristics will influence positively the affective component of image.

Martin and Bosque (2008) examined the multi-dimensional structure of destination image and the influences of psychological forces in the process of image formation. Their empirical results illustrate that the mental representation of a place is formed as a result of tourists' cognitive and affective evaluations. These authors explain further that image formation is significantly influenced by tourists' motivation and cultural values. The greater the congruence between tourists' emotions about a destination and their motivation to see it, the more favourable the affective image will be. On the other hand, their findings also imply that the greater the cultural distance between tourist and destination, the less favourable the destination image will be. More recently, Esper and Rateike's (2010) empirical investigations report that tourist motivations have a direct effect on their cognitive evaluation. The cognitive evaluation, in turn, tends to affect the global image, which is mediated by the affective evaluation.

The above studies indicate that tourists' motivations significantly influence the destination's global image, mediated in particular by the affective component. These studies also imply that the greater the match between tourists' motives and the nature and image of the destination, the greater the chances of tourists selecting that destination.

2.7.5 Destination Image and Destination Brand

Tourism researchers have investigated the links between destination image and brand. Brand is defined as: "perceptions about a place as reflected by the associations held in tourist memory" (Cai 2002:273). Other researchers have gone on to clarify the main differences and interrelationships between brand and image (Tasci and Kozak, 2006; Murphy et al., 2007b; Greaves and

Skinner, 2009; Hankinson, 2009; Lin and Huang, 2009). The main point of difference is that brand represents an 'identity' designed and promoted by TMOs to reflect all the features of a destination which differentiates it from competitors. On the other hand, image refers to the tourists' perception of the place. The interrelationship of these constructs is seen to be of a dyadic nature. To clarify, destination image is formed based upon brand identity promoted by TMOs, and then the brand identity is managed by marketers, based on tourists' perceptions.

Framed in this way, some authors argue that brand is used as an 'identification' and 'differentiation' tool (Murphy et al., 2007b; Qu et al., 2011). Identification refers to the process of creating an identity for the physical and psychological features of a destination, whereas differentiation refers to the special meanings that tourists might align to a given destination's brand to distinguish it from its competitors. This identity is achieved through creation and communication of brand elements exemplified in name, logo, symbol, slogan, or a combination of these elements (Cai, 2002).

Tourism contributors have examined further the associations between destination brand and destination image. Ekinci (2003), for example, suggested a framework that exemplifies these links (see figure 2.5), involving three main components: destination image, destination brand and brand personality. According to Ekinci (2003), image is a cognitive and subjective construct, whereas destination brand involves the emotional component of destination image. Brand personality is seen as a key determinant in the branding process, and refers to the usage of human personality characteristics to represent destination image, such as friendliness. The destination image may then be linked to the tourists' self-image by fulfilling their emotional demands (e.g. relaxing) and basic needs (e.g. food). The value of congruence between destination image and tourists' self-image and their influence on tourists' behaviours is emphasised by other researchers (Sirgy and Su, 2000; Beerli et al., 2007; Murphy et al., 2007b).

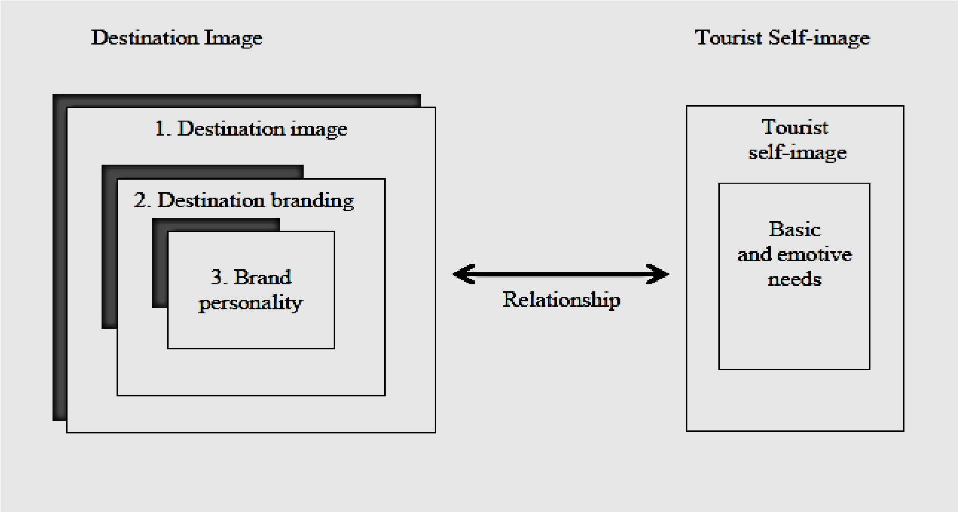


Figure 2.5: Destination Image and Destination Brand

Source: Ekinci (2003:21).

Other researchers have attempted to narrow down the relationship between destination image and destination personality. Hosany et al. (2006), for example, examined these associations by employing Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale BPS, derived from generic marketing literature. This scale encompasses five dimensions: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. Hosany's et al. (2006) findings showed that destination image and personality are related concepts; specifically, the emotional component of destination image relates to three salient dimensions of personality scale established as relevant to tourism destination, including sincerity, excitement and conviviality. Similarly, Murphy et al. (2007b) assessed the significance of brand personality in distinguishing between two coastal tourism destinations in Australia. Their findings revealed that brand personality can be used as a differentiating tool for destinations.

The above studies underpin the dyadic and complex interconnections between destination image and destination brand. The underlying idea asserts the value of creating a brand that reflects the distinctive assets of a destination that will differentiate it in the market place and stimulate tourists' desirable behaviours. Marketers need to assess and modify destination brand in order to create a durable tourist's perception set in regard to the branded places. The following section explores more specifically the range of destination image studies in the context of Jordan as a tourist destination.

2.8 Destination Image Studies in Jordan

The literature shows that most research in destination image has contributed to developed countries, whereas developing countries have gained less attention. In this context, Pike (2007) reports that most studies in this line of enquiry have concentrated on North American and European countries, followed by Asian, Australasian, and Central American destinations. These arguments have been sustained by Stepchenkova and Mills (2010), who contend that these regions dominate progressively the research focus of destination image. Up until the present time, the situation has not changed a lot. A literature review undertaken in this research shows that destination image studies of developing countries are generally in their infancy. For example, research in the context of Middle Eastern destinations has focused mainly on Egypt (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; Abdalla, 2008; Jalil, 2010), Dubai (Govers and Go, 2005), Kuwait (Alhemoud and Amstrong, 1996) and Lebanon (Kanso, 2005).

Other Middle Eastern countries such as Jordan have received little academic attention. Schneider and Sönmez (1999) were the first researchers to explore the tourism image of Jordan as perceived by interregional and intraregional visitors to the Jerash Festival for Culture and Arts. The overall results showed that Jordan was perceived as a safe, interesting, and hospitable destination. Evaluations of Jordan's services on the other hand, including shopping and entertainment, were less positive. However, analysis of Schneider and Sönmez's (1999) study suggests some shortcomings in their research design. Notably, these researchers focused on holistic and common dimensions of Jordan's image (from Echtner and Ritchie's model (1991)), such as accommodation, accessibility and safety, whilst appearing to neglect the unique dimension of Jordan's image, although this might have been used to create competitive advantage over neighbouring countries.

A second contextual contribution to Jordan can be found in Harahsheh's (2009) research, which examined the perceived image of Jordan as a tourist destination in a cross-cultural context (British and Swedish markets), and explored the influence of religious beliefs upon the formation of destination image. The research results indicated that there were variations between British and Swedish organic and experiential images of Jordan, and that the perceptions of British tourists were more positive than those of the Swedish tourists. The author also found that religious beliefs had a significant influence upon image formation for both nationalities, that is; tourists with strong religious beliefs tended to positively evaluate Jordan across a range of attributes including: historical and religious sites, beaches, scenery, nightlife, tourist information, accommodation, quality of service, cost/price levels, airport facilities, adventure and cleanliness.

Generally speaking, Harahsheh's (2009) research findings appear to support Schneider and Sönmez's (1999) results, that Jordan was perceived as a safe and hospitable destination, with friendly people. Notably, however, the evaluation of Jordan's services and facilities such as cleanliness, tourist information and shopping were negative. These findings imply that the psychological components of Jordan's image had a more positive impact than the functional components. This is possibly due to the limited financial resources available to Jordan for developing their tourism infrastructure, and to the low budget allocated for tourism development.

It becomes clear that there is a paucity of destination image studies focusing on the Middle East, and specifically on Jordan. Moreover, limited research, if any, has assessed the projected and perceived images of Jordan during the consumption experience. Therefore, more studies are needed to provide a means for effective management of the country's image in the market place. It can be also argued that using Jordan as a relatively new context for investigation might uncover new findings about destination image construction, given that Jordan has distinct and different socio-cultural structures than those to be found in developed regions.

2.9 Summary

This chapter set out to explore existing academic research related to destination image. Numerous definitions of destination image were firstly analysed. This research defines image as a holistic output emerging from interaction between an individual's cognitions and emotions about a given destination's attributes, which accordingly impact on the individual's behaviours. This chapter then assessed the roles of destination image on tourism, reflecting on its significant influence on tourist behaviours and on destination development. The review also highlighted the theorised nature of image as complex, dynamic, subjective and multiple/heterogeneous.

The chapter then discussed destination image components as understood from two perspectives, that of the tourist (cognitive, affective and behavioural) and that of the destination (attribute/holistic, functional/psychological and common/unique). The destination image formation process was another central issue explored. It was found that although TMOs attempt to introduce attractive images to the market place, tourists might not necessarily construct positive images. This is because tourists' images may be further influenced by their personal characteristics and autonomous agents over which TMOs have little control. However, the chapter then explained the interrelationship between destination image and interdisciplinary marketing studies, to include self-concept; tourists' behaviour; service providers; motivation and destination brand. Finally, destination image studies focusing on the Middle East, and specifically on Jordan were reviewed, revealing that investigation of these areas is in its infancy.

This chapter clearly demonstrated the paucity of research exploring image construct during the consumption experience from the tour guides' and tourists' perspectives, and leads to justification for undertaking this research. Accordingly, the next chapter will review studies on tour guides to understand more deeply their role and impact on the tourist experience.

Chapter Three: Tour Guides

3.1 Introduction

The role of tour guide has received relatively little scholarly attention, although tour guides are typically seen as critical players in the tourism industry. This chapter reviews academic research related to tour guides in order to identify key arguments relevant to this dissertation. The chapter commences by assessing the definitions and classifications of tour guides, followed by a discussion of the significance of this stakeholder group in tourism. Various roles of tour guides are explored, followed by an evaluation of tour guide duties, and potential factors influencing their performance whilst conducting tours. The last section summarises the key points of this chapter.

3.2 Key Definitions and Classifications

The literature suggests that no clear definition of the role of tour guide is available. Rather, the role seems relatively misunderstood and to overlap considerably with other concepts, perhaps because the role assigned to this group is multifaceted and varies from country to country. Beginning with a general definition, the Oxford English Online Dictionary (2014) defines a guide as: “a person who advises or shows the way to others, especially one employed to show tourists around places of interest”. The dictionary’s definition implies that a guide works as a positioner or director of motion, or alternatively as a geographical director.

However, tourism contributors’ view of guides goes beyond the role of one who gives directions, to one who provides interpretations of places visited. Pond (1993:13-17), for example, defines the tour guide as: “the one who conducts tours of a site, city or region… one with a broad-based knowledge of a particular area whose primary duty is to inform and interpret”. Similarly, Mancini (2001) conceives the tour guide as an individual who takes tourists on a tour for a limited duration and interprets the places visited. Bowie and Chang (2005) support these assumptions while stressing the tour guide’s sightseeing commentary skills.

Other definitions include such aspects but emphasise the personal qualities, ethics and conduct that a competent guide must display. The Professional Tour Guide Association of San Antonio (1997), for instance, defines the guide as: "the person with an effective combination of enthusiasm, knowledge, personality qualities and high standards of conduct and ethics who leads groups to the important sites, while providing interpretation and commentary" (cited in Ap and Wong, 2001:551). Personal qualities that contribute to good conduct are also emphasised by tourism researchers (Pond, 1993; Zhang and Chow, 2004; Bowie and Chang, 2005; Hunag et al., 2010; Lin et al., 2014).

The World Federation of Tourist Guides Association (WFTGA) included other elements that constitute guide work, namely knowledge of foreign languages, and a regulatory aspect. The WFTGA (2007) defines the tour guide as: "a person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area, which person normally possesses an area-specific qualification, usually issued and/or recognised by the appropriate authority". This definition is often adopted in tourism literature (cited in Zhang and Chow, 2004; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006; Huang et al., 2010). It is also adopted by some specialised institutions such as the European committee for standardisation (cited in Collins, 2000).

While the above definitions pay attention to various important attributes of a tour guide (i.e. pathfinder, interpreter, personal qualities, bilingual and regulatory aspects), another definition seeks to integrate all these key features. For example, the definition put forward by the European Federation of Tourist Guides Association (EFTGA) is that the guide is: "a person who guides groups or individual visitors from abroad or from the home country around the monuments, sites and museums of a city or region; to interpret in an inspiring and entertaining manner, in the language of the visitor's choice, the cultural and natural heritage and environment" (cited in Mak et al., 2010:206). This definition is the one adopted as the most appropriate for this research.

However, some authors attempt to differentiate between different guiding concepts, occasionally used interchangeably. These include tour manager, tour guide and interpreter (Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Collins, 2000; Christie and Mason, 2003). The main points of differences amongst these are that a tour manager travels with a group for longer distances, and assures the smooth running of the tour (i.e. hotel rooms and meals). The manager role is administrative in nature. Synonyms include leader, tour director or courier in Europe (Bowie and Chang, 2005). However, at the same time, tour guides are understood to work in a defined country and possess more knowledge. Tour guide work tends to involve more interpretations of the places visited. The role of interpreter, on the other hand, refers to the art of explaining the significance of cultural, historical and natural resources available at specific sites provided for solo travellers. This suggests that the interpreter is a site guide who provides detailed information for non-captive tourists (Pond, 1993). While theoretically differentiation exists, these roles might be inseparable once on the ground. To clarify, a tour manager might convey valuable information for the tourists, while a guide might give interpretations and manage the itinerary to assure the smooth running of the tour. This suggests, regardless of the titles, the pivotal roles played by this stakeholder group.

The varieties of tourism products and tourist interests have resulted in many different types of guides. Therefore, tourism researchers classify tour guides according to their aligned responsibilities. Pond (1993:18), for example, categorises tour guides as: urban guides, government guides, driver guides, adventure guides and business/industry guides (i.e. conducting familiarisation tours). More recently, Collins (2000) labels guides as: in-house guides (i.e. in cathedrals), boat guides, open-top bus guides, site guides, walking-guides, farm-tourism guides, ski guides, conference guides, antiques guides, step-on guides and press guides (joining journalists).

Translated into the Jordanian context, two main categories of guides emerge: the site guide and the national guide (for further details see section 1.6). It is noticeable that most authors, no matter how they define and categorise guides, assert that delivering informative commentaries for the tourists is among the top duties. The following section discusses in more detail the significance of the tour guide in the tourism industry.

3.3 The Significance of Tour Guides

The literature reflects the significance of guides in tourism, seeing their performance as considerably influencing on both the supply and demand of the industry. On the demand-side, most researchers agree that tourist satisfaction and the success of their consumption experience depend on the performance of a competent guide. Holloway (1981) argues that tourists' attention whilst at a destination is directed inwardly towards the accompanying guide more than outwardly towards the surrounding settings. Other researchers support this view, and therefore, assert that the guide is an important part of the fabric of the experience (Howard el al., 2001). Tourism contributors describe guides as front-line workers with whom tourists interact for considerable lengths of time; they provide the moment of truth for the tourist, and have the ability to make, break or transform the tourists' visit from a tour into a rewarding experience (Ap and Wong, 2001; Salazer, 2005).

Some studies maintain that guides may go beyond influencing the tourists' consumption experiences per se, to impact on tourists' worldviews. Holloway (1981), McDonnell (2001) and Christie and Mason (2003), for example, claim that guides can foster moral and social interactions amongst group members, and are commonly seen as the most important educational agent involved in the process of making tourists mindful. The same authors also assert the importance of guides' interpretation in transforming tourists intellectually and emotionally. More recent research elaborates on the significance of guides and suggests more multifaceted influences. Guides are not only seen as responsible for providing direction, access, security, problem-solving and safety for a group, but also for giving tourists new insights into the host culture, by providing meaningful stories about the places visited and people encountered (Leclerc and Martin, 2004; Scherle and Nonnenmann, 2008; Wong, 2013).

On the supply-side, a number of researchers recognise that the guide’s performance can influence a destination’s reputation and how it might be perceived (Dahles, 2002; Zhang and Chow, 2004; Banyai, 2010). This is because guides can influence where tourists go, what they see and what aspects of the host culture they are exposed to. Therefore, tourists’ experience of a destination is partly constructed by the guides (Yu el al., 2002). More recently, Salazar (2012) claims that tour guides’ presentations not only influence construction of destination image, but also modify images of people and places visited (see section 2.7.3 for more details).

The literature also suggests that the tour guide carries great responsibility for tour operators and travel agencies. For Geva and Goldman (1991), a motivated and competent guide might influence tourists’ loyalty, and accordingly, generate repeat and new business. Additionally, guides are seen to function as ‘business cards’ with a capacity to affect their company’s image and translate the philosophy of the tour operator in the minds of the tourists (Mossberg, 1995; Scherle and Nonnenmann, 2008; Mak et al., 2010). For Lin et al. (2014), a qualified tour guide can increase the revenues of tour operators and tourism investors mediated by tourists’ satisfaction.

Tourism contributors, moreover, posit that this stakeholder group acts as a gatekeeper to host society, to mediate tourists’ understating about the local community through their verbal construction and meaningful interpretations of wide cultural aspects (McDonnell, 2001; Yu el al., 2002; Ying and Simkin, 2009). Tour guides can also have a key role in sustaining tourism sites, minimising tourists’ negative impressions and ensuring that tourists are more destination friendly through appropriate communications (Howard et al., 2001; Christie and Mason, 2003; Randall and Rollins, 2009). Yamada (2011) further claims that guides increase tourists’ appreciation of natural assets available at the destination, by thus conserving their sustainability.

The above discussions suggest that the success of the tourism industry depends partly on competent tour guides. Their occupational position as front-line workers reflects their significance for sustainability of tourist flow, and of natural and economic resources. This may explain why governmental and tourism agencies alike seek to improve tour guide professionalism. The following section explores the roles of tour guide in tourism literature.

3.4 The Roles of a Tour Guide

A number of studies have explored the roles of tour guides. Holloway's (1981) groundbreaking work is one of the early studies in this arena. Holloway (1981) suggested that the role of guide is multifaceted, involving a number of subsidiaries and sometimes conflicting sub-roles. Typical sub-roles include information giver, fount of knowledge, teacher or instructor, motivator, ambassador, entertainer, confidant, shepherd, ministering angel, group leader, disciplinarian and cultural broker. Holloway (1981) argued further that these roles might at times conflict, as for example where the desire to present information may be frustrated by the need to entertain a group. As such, guides are found to develop manipulative skills to satisfy tourists' desires for a unique touristic experience. The main roles in Holloway's (1981) view are information giver and mediator.

Some research supports these arguments. Pond (1993), for example, sees the roles of the tour guide as multifaceted to include four main types: leader who assumes responsibility, educator who facilitates tourist understanding of the social environment, ambassador who represents the destination visited, and host who accommodates the guests in every possible way. In practice, these roles are interwoven and synergistic.

However, Cohen's study (1985) about the origins, structures and dynamics of guide roles has attracted considerable research attention. He emphasised that the original roles informing the work of modern tour guides are 'pathfinder' and 'mentor'. A pathfinder is a geographic guide who leads the way through an environmental setting or through a social territory, to offset tourists' lack of orientation, or unfamiliarity with routes and attractions in the host destination. The role of the mentor is much more complex, involving more interpretations.

Mentors resemble teachers in pointing out and interpreting objects of interest. Mentors may select objects of interest in accordance with their own personal preferences, their professional training, directions received from their employers or the authorities, or the assumed interests of their party. Cohen (1985) elaborates further, that a guide not only selects and directs tourists' attention to what he/she wants them to see, but also distracts them from what he/she does not want them to see. Cohen (1985) argues that the role of the guide has shifted, from the logistical or geographical aspect to the facilitation of the experience, from the pathfinder to the mentor role, away from leadership towards a mediating role, with the communicative component becoming the centre of the guiding profession.

While some researchers are supportive of Cohen's (1985) view of the roles of the tour guide (McDonnell, 2001; Dahles, 2002; Mak et al., 2010), some dissenting voices have also been raised, arguing that tour guides' roles are becoming more crucial than originally proposed by Cohen (1985), due to the complexity of tourism market. In this context, Howard et al. (2001) extended Cohen's (1985) view of the roles of general guide as pathfinder and mentor to include the guide's role as a constructivist educator. From this perspective, the guide is assumed to take on resource management roles which comprise two subsequent dimensions. The first one is the resource management role of motivator, who reduces any negative cultural and environmental impacts of tourists on the host society, for example by giving them constant reminders to respect the site. The second one is the resource management role of environmental interpreter, who changes tourists' perceptions toward a site by interpreting the value of the area within their own cultural context. It is noted that Howard's et al. (2001) suggested roles are consistent with Holloway's (1981) view of guides as motivators, information givers and disciplinarians.

Reisinger and Steiner (2006) similarly argue that guides in their current incarnation might be superfluous, particularly when operating in specific niche markets such as heritage tourism, which exemplifies tourists' desire to project themselves as authentic tourists. In this respect, the traditional guide roles proposed by Cohen (1985) would not be appropriate for such tourists. Accordingly, Reisinger and Steiner (2006) have reconceptualised an interpretation role for guides through the lens of Heidegger's philosophy of interpretation (1996). The authors claim that tour guides in such a scenario act more as companions and meaning pathfinders, to light the way and promote tourists' engagement with a destination as situated within its context and as related to other entities.

Other researchers, however, demonstrate the ability of skilful guides to reconcile different globalised cultures and to adapt to different cultural settings, while at the same time remaining conscious of facilitating tourist understanding of their aboriginal culture. Salazar (2005), for example, argues that guides are front-runners of 'glocalisation', a concept amalgamating globalisation and localisation. A competent guide may represent the glocalised life around them as an authentic local culture, while adapting the represented information to the tastes and expectations of different groups of tourists, in Salazar's case, in Yogyakarta-Indonesia. Scherle and Nonnenmann (2008) in their empirical research similarly argued that guides prototypically function as 'cosmopolitans' of the 21st century based on their constant ability to move back and forth between divergent cultures. In other words, guides engage with tourists' culture without being directly involved in it, while at the same time acting as 'cultural mediators' who interpret their own culture. This reconciliation of own and other requires knowledge of cultures, appropriate outlook, disposition and sufficient intercultural competence. It can be noted that Salazar's (2005), and Scherle and Nonnenmann's (2008) studies overlap on their proposition of guide as cultural broker.

A more recent study conducted by Ying and Simkin (2009) investigates tour guides' perception of their own roles. Four main roles were identified: service-provision, linking or cultural brokering, education and controllability. However, Ying and Simkin (2009) report that while most of their guides recognised service-provision as a main role, they differed about the components of what they were providing, perhaps encountering a challenging variety of tourists' interest and preferences. Ying and Simkin (2009) interestingly distinguish between old and young guides' interpretation abilities as cultural brokers, observing that some old guides tend to be more professional, selective and persuasive in their interpretations, whereas younger generations focus on the entertainment facilities available in a host destination. Ying and Simkin (2009) observe further that while some guides adopt more neutral roles, others allow personal issues to impinge on their interpretations particularly when they feel that their self-esteem and national identity are challenged. Finally, the authors highlight the controllability role derived from guides' language skills and their cultural broker role. The authors argue that this power is essential if guides are to carry out effectively their professional role. Table (3.1) presents taxonomy of tour guide roles, and synonyms used in the literature.

Table 3.1: Tour Guide Roles

Tour Guide Roles	Synonyms Used in the Literature
Information giver	Information giver, fount of knowledge, teacher, instructor, mentor, interpreter/ translator, walking-encyclopaedia.
Cultural broker	Cultural broker, cultural mediator, middleman, buffer, intermediary, front-runners of glocalisation, cosmopolitan.
Housekeeper	Motivator, disciplinarian, resource management roles, organiser.
Pathfinder (physically & psychologically)	Leader, pathfinder, geographical director, guide, meaning pathfinder.
Companion	Confidant, shepherd, ministering angel, companion.
Service provider	Service provider, salesperson, and front-line worker.
Representative	Ambassador, diplomat, host.
Entertainer	Storyteller, entertainer.

Source: adapted from Gronroos, 1978; Holloway, 1981; Pearce, 1984; Cohen, 1985; Bowman, 1991; Pond, 1993; Howard el al., 2001; Zhang and Chow, 2004; Salazar, 2005; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006; Scherle and Nonnenmann, 2008; Ying and Simkin, 2009; Lin et al., 2014; Weiler and Walker, 2014.

The meanings in common ascribed by different researchers in this table demonstrate a strong emphasis on the cultural mediation aspect of the tour guide role. The concept of meditator/broker refers to persons who stimulate interaction, understanding and action between people differing in language and culture, for the purpose of reducing cultural shock (Yu et al., 2002; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006; Salazar, 2012). This essentially involves different parties: the tourists with the host destination including the local community, and various service providers in the tourism industry. The guide also is regarded as someone who builds cultural bridges among the group members themselves (Ap and Wong, 2001; Dahles, 2002; Christie and Mason, 2003). This special interest in the cultural mediation role has possibly emerged not only because an understanding of the host's culture has come to be seen as an important determinant of tourist satisfaction (McDonnell, 2001; Yu el al., 2002), but also because most key contributors in this respect are from culturally and socially academic backgrounds such as Holloway (1981) and Cohen (1985). Perhaps therefore, the tour guide is conceived as an information-rich entity through which the cultural interaction between host and guest can be explored.

Elsewhere in tourism literature Cohen’s (1985) view of the tour guide is supported as a base line, but constrained by the need to satisfy the interests of the majority rather than the specific interests of a particular niche market. Since Cohen’s (1985) seminal work emerged in the 1980s, during a period of increasing interest in package and charter tours, considerable changes have been wrought in the roles of guides (i.e. cosmopolitan and meaning pathfinder), in response to rapidly changing trends in the tourism market, and growing interest in new forms of tourism. New roles might further be aligned to guides’ personal accounts of their role, depending on the trends that the tourism industry might witness over time.

In summary, the contemporary roles of the tour guide are characterised by complexity. The message emerging from this review is that guides must assume different roles in different situations harmoniously. However, such ideation seems an idealisation of tour guides’ roles, since some of these roles are in conflict with one another as observed by Holloway (1981). The following section summarises various guides' duties while conducting tours.

3.5 Conducting Tours

Conducting a tour is like leading an orchestra. Even though tours are often well planned in advance, the actual experience of the destination is always atypical and unique (Pond, 1993; Collins, 2000). The literature suggests that a tour can be divided into different stages during which the duties expected from guides will be complex.

The pre-tour stage involves much backstage planning (Pond, 1993; Collins, 2000). Tour operators and travel agencies must arrange many details well in advance, booking a tour guide and sending him/her literature (i.e. itinerary and tourist information sheet) either earlier or closer to the tourists' arrival. According to Pond (1993), this is advantageous in: 1) Giving the guide the opportunity to be fully aware of different aspects of the tour. 2) Allowing the guide to understand the specific interests of the tourists, and accordingly, the potential focus of the tour. 3) Helping the guide to visualise the actual implementation of the programme, and check any potential inconsistency in the itinerary. 4) Giving the guide the chance to update their information, particularly if they are not familiar with certain sites.

The first day of the tour is very important. Authors in this respect assert that the guide is expected to arrive early to the meeting point, so as to have enough time to appear at ease (Collins, 2000; Mancini, 2001). This is critical because it influences the tourists' first impressions positively, and subsequently, the mood of the tour (Pond, 1993). Upon meeting the tourists, the guide must approach the tourists confidently, introduce him/herself enthusiastically, inquire solicitously about the tourists' trip, and give the group members clear instructions about the immediate procedures. At the outset, it is also important for guides to establish certain policies or goals (i.e. respect time) to manage different tourist expectations, and ensure the smooth running of the tour (Pond, 1993; Collins, 2000; Mancini, 2001).

During the course of the tour, as suggested in the seminal works of the three key authors cited, there are daily routine protocols that a tour guide should follow. These involve: 1) Giving a briefing about the daily tours; according to Pond (1993), this is one of the most overlooked but important aspects of a guide's duties, having practical and psychological significance in mentally preparing the tourists for the experience. 2) Informing/reminding the tourists to wear comfortable shoes and suitable clothes. 3) Managing tourists' time within the duration of their stay in the country and sites visited (i.e. travelling, dining and sightseeing). 4) Staying mindful of tourists' needs while keeping group members moving efficiently.

Tourism literature proposes some guidelines for setting the stage for the tourists during the tour. This might take place in close or open contexts. In a close setting, Pond (1993) and Collins (2000) suggest some presentation principles, which guides may use on a coach tour including: 1) Introducing the driver. 2) Pointing things out according to the tourists' right and left, rather than the guide's own. 3) Avoiding talking about a site far ahead of its location. 4) Stopping at the roadside when possible, when presenting nearby significant scenes. 5) Explaining regulations concerning eating, drinking and smoking on the coach. 6) Walking about the coach to talk with the tourists at the back and finding out if they have any concerns.

Once at the given site/attraction, Pond (1993) suggests that the guide should provide brief background information about the area. Such presentations can take place either in the coach or outside on site. This is particularly useful to raise tourists' enthusiasm about unique sites. The interpretation then has to be more detailed and relevant. For example, presenting a natural site might involve descriptions about the land, flora, a site's rock formations, local ecology and the cause and effect of an unusual phenomenon.

Pond (1993) outlines further guidelines about how to bring a site alive, including: 1) Passion and a sense of delight for the site or subject matter. 2) Passion for people and making tourists feel welcome. 3) Enhancement of the relationship between site and experience by presenting relevant information and facilitating tourists' interactions with the locals. 4) Emphasis of interpretation over information. Interpretation in this respect refers to a process of distilling relevant information. 5) Willingness to be personal and authentic. In some cases, the guide is one of the main people tourists get to know at the destination; therefore it is important to present personal perspectives. 6) Ability to create and tell stories. 7) Ability to ask questions and make communication interactive. 8) Ability to relate the parts to a whole. 9) Sense of humour. 10) Using clear and colourful language. 11) Knowing when to be silent and when to allow tourists their own time and space; to enhance the tour and more lasting personal experiences whilst on the site.

Given that the guide serves as middleman between the tourists and other actors in the tourism system, they also have to take responsibility for other aspects of the tour, including checking in and out of hotels/restaurants, checking the cleanliness and equipment of the carrying coach, handling money and bills, and confirming/cancelling events (Pond, 1993; Collins, 2000). However, the post-tour stage involves further kinds of tasks. The tour guide is expected to describe for the company any unusual event, to hand in required papers (i.e. vouchers) and to report on any shortcomings in the itinerary (Mancini, 2001).

It can be concluded from the above that tour guides are held responsible for the safe and efficient conduct of the tour from the tourists' arrival until their departure. Tour guides' duties also extend to giving feedback to agencies, and supplementing travel agencies' work throughout and beyond this cycle. The next section explores the factors that might influence tour guide performance.

3.6 Factors Impacting on Tour Guide Performance

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the tour guide is expected to assume different roles and duties during the tourists' visit. For example, the tour guide as a mediator has to facilitate interaction between different parties e.g. the tourists with the local people. In this research, the act through which tour guides carry out their aligned responsibilities is conceptualised as ‘tour guide performance’.

The tour guide performance, however, might not always be predictable. Different factors might impact on the effectiveness of tour guides whilst conducting a tour. The literature recognises that these factors can be categorised into three overarching themes: personal factors, immediate-operational factors, and wider-operational factors[1].

3.6.1 Personal Factors

Various factors under the relative control of the guide have been found to influence tour guide performance (Pond, 1993; Ap and Wong, 2001; Yu et al., 2002; Zhang and Chow, 2004; Ying and Simkin, 2009; Huang et al., 2010; Lin et al., 2014). Such studies propose that guide performance is impacted by their personal characteristics, including knowledge, communication skills, attitude/personal qualities and commercial considerations.

The knowledge dimension refers to information that the guide possesses about the host destination’s various features (i.e. history, culture, geography, attractions) and the culture of tourists’ destinations. These inputs constitute the baseline for tour guides’ work, given their roles as information giver and interpreter. Therefore, the greater the tour guide’s knowledge, the more informative his interpretations will be expected to be. In addition, to be taken into consideration is the influence of other factors such as tourists’ interest (Wong, 2013). Knowledge is acquired through education, training and experience (Yu et al., 2002; Bowie and Chang, 2005). This would explain why considerable attention in the literature is paid to tour guide education and training as a means to enhance guides’ professionalism (Black et al., 2001; Christie and Mason, 2003; Black and Ham, 2005).

Communication skills are another important ingredient contributing to tour guide performance. Leclerc and Martin (2004) describe communication as the verbal and nonverbal styles that guides use to disseminate information. Other purposes of communication exist such as problem-solving, entertaining and motivating tourists to appreciate the host's resources. However, there are key canons to sending message effectively. Pond (1993), for example, identified a set of presentation skill attributes. These include; 1) body language such as centred posture, natural and purposeful gestures, eye contact, and suitable dress; 2) communicative competence such as appropriate voice volume, and clear and colourful vocabularies. Pond (1993) claims that body language is more important than verbal communication because when a guide sends mixed messages, tourists will believe what they see rather than what they hear. Ying and Simkin (2009), however, identified different strategies for effective communication. These involve; 1) emphasising cultural similarities among the tourists themselves and among the local community; 2) discussing conflicting relationships, with attention to tourists' facial expressions; 3) avoiding being offensive and maintaining neutrality in commentaries; 4) demonstrating commitment to appropriate ethical and professional levels.

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[1] This researcher has adapted the classification of Kotler and Armstrong (2008) in explaining the market environment.

The attitude dimension refers to appropriate behaviours as exhibited by the guide. A number of researchers have identified a list of personal qualities that contribute to a good attitude in an ideal guide, and consequently to the ability to perform effectively and appropriately (see table 3.2). Some researchers suggest that good training should lead to changes in the guides' attitudes and improvement of such qualities (Christie and Mason, 2003; Salazar, 2012).

Table 3.2: Personal Qualities of Ideal Guide

Enthusiastic	Pleasant	Punctual
Friendly	Sense of humour	Problems solving skills
Self-confident	Sound judgment	Good looking
Proactive& responsible	Decisiveness	Integrity (i.e. honest and polite)
Sensitive	Good health	Equity (treat tourists equally)
Flexible& patience	Cleanliness	Leadership skills
Authentic	Charisma	Organisation& management skills

Source: adapted from Pond, 1993; Bowen, 2001; Zhang and Chow, 2004; Bowie and Chang, 2005; Hunag et al., 2010; Mak et al., 2010; Lin et al., 2014.

The commercial dimension refers to tour guide predispositions to enhance their income through their presentations, based upon their judgment of what tourists would be interested in. According to Ying and Simkin (2009), some guides may commercialise their communication with the tourists through advertising, promoting products, taking commissions and directing tourists to certain shops. Some authors contend that the degree to which guides might alter their presentations to enhance their income depends on whether they are money-oriented or service-oriented (Zhang and Chow, 2004; Bowie and Chang, 2005; Mak et al., 2010), and suggest that establishing a monitoring system is the best tactic to reduce unhealthy practices (Ap and Wong, 2001).

3.6.2 Immediate Operational Factors

A number of studies have endeavoured to analyse tourist satisfaction with the tour guide/tour leader, and have identified a set of factors beyond the immediate control of the guide which might influence their performance. These factors are therefore labelled in this research as immediate operational factors. This categorisation refers to external forces influencing guide functionality, which although out of their direct control, can be relatively managed. The underpinning findings of the literature are that guide performance is influenced by tourists' characteristics, relationships with other tourism service providers, destination setting, and the quality of tourism services.

Tourists' characteristics are one of the most influential factors impacting on guide performance. Theoretically, the identified variables include tourist nationality (Leclerc and Martin, 2004; Wong, 2013), tourists' interest (Pond, 1993; Zhang and Chow, 2004), attitude (e.g. non-punctuality) (Bowie and Chang, 2005), group size (Yu el al., 2002), the group itinerary and the length of stay (Pond, 1993). Some researchers contend that the guide has to live the dream of many tourists, and be responsible for the cohesion, integration and morale of the tourists (Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Dahles, 2002). Therefore, guides have to adapt their styles to satisfy the varying demands of group members.

The adaptability of guides' presentations according to tourists' characteristics have been well captured in Wong's (2013) study, who examined the ways in which Macau in China (a former Portuguese colony) was interpreted to different tourists by the local tour guides. Wong (2013) found that those tour guides avoided any references to Macau's colonial history when guiding Chinese tourists, due to their particular lack of interest in historical interpretations, and also to avoid any potential references that might offend Chinese tourists' identity. In contrast, the interpretations presented to non-Chinese tourists tend to involve information about Macau's colonial history to address those tourists' demands (ibid).

Tour guide relationships with other tourism service providers are also an influential factor. These particularly involve bus drivers (Holloway, 1981; Pond, 1993), and the tour operators'/travel agencies' organisational culture (Geva and Goldman, 1991; Dahles, 2002; Yu et al., 2002; Huang el al., 2010). Researchers assert that tourism service providers are essentially a guide's colleagues and teammates; although the duties of each stakeholder group are distinctly different, their roles overlap. Therefore, the ideal relationship is cooperative for the sake of a successful tour (Holloway, 1981; Pond, 1993).

While theoretically the necessity of co-operation is asserted, this might not be the case once on the ground. The relationship might be in state of conflict, with struggles over competition, power, or divided interests. In fact, a study conducted by Mak et al. (2010) reinforced such assumptions, in that their study identified outbound travel agents in mainland China using below cost tour fares to attract more tourists. As such, the tour guides were pushed to assume a salesperson role, to persuade tourists to visit certain shops or to purchase optional tours to cope with the financial pressure laid on by the travel agencies. It was also found that these travel agencies lowered or removed the guide fees to reduce costs. These practices impaired the service quality provided by the tour guides and led to an undesirable money-oriented mentality (ibid). These findings imply that travel agencies may not only influence tour guides' performance, but also reshape the ways in which tour guides themselves and societies perceive the profession.

However, while tour operators' organisational culture may influence tour guide performance, other researchers suggest the opposite might not necessarily be the case. The empirical findings of Geva and Goldman's study (1991), for example, suggest that tour guides had limited influence on tourist satisfaction with the company offering the tour, or on tourist intentions to repeat touring with the same operator, or on tourist recommendations to others. Similarly, Huang el al. (2010) found that tour guide performance had a direct effect on tourist satisfaction with guiding services and accordingly with tour services, but only an indirect effect on satisfaction with the overall tour experience.

Geva and Goldman (1991) and Huang et al. (2010) found similarly that tour guides had limited direct impact on tourist satisfaction with the tour operators and with the overall tourist experience. While surprising, such findings may support certain assumptions: 1) Tourists are often experienced travellers, very aware that factors beyond guide's control such as the weather may influence their satisfaction; therefore, guides cannot be completely perceived as tourist satisfaction agents. 2) Package tourists often stay in a bubble environment created by the tour operator in a foreign destination (Huang et al., 2010); this is shaped by the tour operator to control what tourists do, see and experience. Accordingly, tourists may perceive the tour operator as more directly responsible for their experience. 3) Some guides may fabricate (Cohen, 1985), or employ their communication skills to enable them to reach their financial goals, especially if they are strongly money-oriented (Dahles, 2002; Ying and Simkin, 2009). Therefore, it is possible for some guides to attribute tour successes to themselves and attribute experience failure to other parties such as tour operators, in order to gain financial earnings.

Other research, however, has claimed that destination setting, whether natural, cultural or urban, may influence tour guide performance (Yu et al., 2002). This is because guides essentially function as interpreters, to facilitate tourists' understanding of the surrounding environmental context. In this context, Pond (1993) suggests that one of the best strategies to bring a given site to life is to emphasise interpretation over information, through distilling and selecting relevant information. This implies that guides may have to adjust their interpretations according to the nature of the site.

Finally, the literature suggests that the quality of tourism services may also impact on tour guide performance. Bowie and Chang (2005), for example, identified different factors that could influence a tour leader performance such as delayed flights, hotel labour shortage, and overcrowding in restaurants. Tour guides in such scenarios are expected to resolve any problem or services not meeting tourists' expectations, given that tour operators depend on them for continuous quality control at the destination (Scherle and Nonnenmann, 2008). In other words, such incidents might alter a tour guide's role in a given context, for example, from information giver to problem-solver.

3.6.3 Wider Operational Factors

Certain other factors, labelled in this research as wider operational factors, influence guide performance are beyond their capacity to control, manage or change. The literature suggests that such factors generally merit only a fleeting mention in the literature or remain implicit. Theoretically, the identified agents might include weather (Pond, 1993), and seasonality (Yu et al., 2002; Zhang and Chow, 2004).

The weather cannot be ignored as influencing guides' performance, given that most tourist activities and sightseeing take place outdoors. Thus extreme weather, whether cold or hot, may influence a guide's mood, motivating them to rush a tour, present briefer commentaries or alter the itinerary schedule.

Seasonality may also be an influential factor. To clarify, political unrest in a given destination/region, or a natural disaster, may impact on tourists' holiday patterns, resulting in fluctuation of demand or frequent low seasons. This would also be likely to impact on a guide’s income sustainability. Accordingly, tour guides arguably may commercialise their presentations and rely on shopping commissions during high seasons to cope with financial pressure during the low seasons. Empirical research supports these assumptions. Some authors found that tour guides with low salaries have adopted such strategies to maintain a balanced income (Zhang and Chow, 2004; Ying and Simkin, 2009; Mak et al., 2010).

3.6.4 Toward an Integrated Framework

The above sub-sections have reviewed factors that may impact on tour guide performance. The literature suggests that these factors could be categorised into three main themes. However, although these studies have been validated, none are entirely sufficient in offering a deeper understanding of specific impacting factors, because they have been restricted to either internal or external forces. This has resulted in a lack of any integrated framework of evaluating the range of factors that may influence guide performance. Such studies, however, can be combined to present a framework for explaining and describing these various factors (see figure 3.1), for assessing guide performance and for identifying the best strategies for dealing with inward and outward challenges. Moreover, the advantage of this model is that it may allow any other potential factors to fall within certain categorisations as described.

Certain factors that influence guide performance, and that are under their control, could be integrated into a single general dimension representing ‘personal factors’; these factors reflect internal characteristics over which guides have a relatively high degree of controllability and manageability in determining their performance. These include four sub-dimensions: 1) Knowledge determined by the guide’s education, training and experience. 2) Communication skills, including verbal and nonverbal styles used to disseminate information. 3) Attitude, or appropriate behaviour exhibited by guides, and influenced by their personal qualities. 4) Commercial factors which determine guides’ predispositions to commercialise their commentaries.

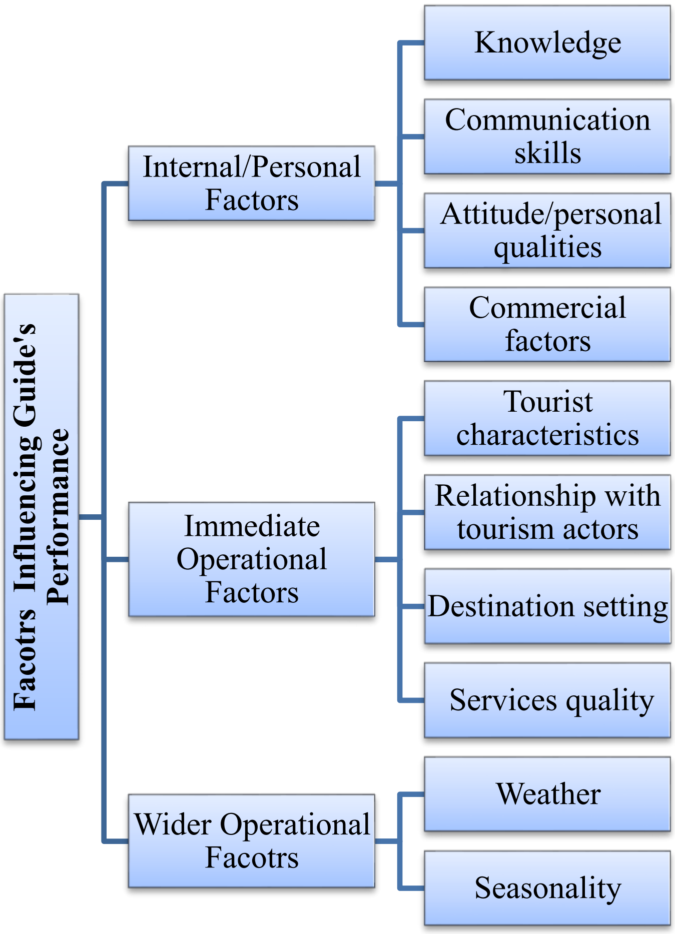
Facotrs Influencing Guide's Performance
Internal/Personal Factors
Knowledge
Communication skills
Attitude/personal qualities
Commercial factors
Immediate Operational Factors
Tourist characteristics
Relationship with tourism actors
Destination setting
Services quality
Wider Operational Facotrs
Weather
Seasonality

Figure 3.1: Integrated Framework of Factors Influencing Guide's Performance

Source: adapted from Geva and Goldman, 1991; Pond, 1993; Ap and Wong, 2001; Wong, 2001; Yu et al., 2002; Christie and Mason, 2003; Leclerc and Martin, 2004; Zhang and Chow, 2004; Bowie and Chang, 2005; Weiler and Yu, 2007; Ying and Simkin, 2009; Huang et al., 2010; Weiler and Walker, 2014.

Factors that influence guides' performance but are outside of their direct control are also addressed in the literature, as integrated into a single general dimension representing 'immediate operational factors'. While such forces are external, guides are expected to manage them. Such factors may vary in influence and frequency on a daily basis. These include four sub-dimensions: 1) Tourist characteristics such as nationality, interest, group size, length of stay and attitude. 2) Relationships with tourism stakeholders, in particular, bus drivers and tour operators/travel agencies. 3) Destination settings referring to the historical, cultural and natural resources available at a destination. 4) The quality of tourism services provided by different players in different settings such as delayed flights.

Factors that influence guides' performance but are beyond their capacity to control or change are labelled as wider operational factors. These include: 1) weather, and 2) seasonality. While guides might create some strategies to adjust their performance to such agents, they cannot control or change them themselves. To this end, these factors altogether might enable or constrain the success of a guide's performance and in turn might influence the degree of tourist satisfaction.

3.7 Summary

This chapter set out to review theoretical knowledge related to tour guiding to identify philosophical arguments relevant to this research. The chapter commenced by explaining the definitions and categorisations of tour guides as proposed by tourism authors and specialised federations. This research adopts the definition suggested by EFTGA and the categorisations proposed by MOTA, due to their consideration of key elements of guide work that are pertinent to this research.

The significance of guides in the tourism industry was then discussed. It was found that tour guides' interpretations went beyond the role of merely influencing tourist satisfaction and worldview, to influence destination image and the local culture/environment. Perhaps due to the vital occupational position of tour guide, a number of researchers have paid specific attention to tour guides' roles. The literature indicates that guides need to fulfil various roles simultaneously. Eight main roles emerged from this review including: information giver, cultural broker, pathfinder, housekeeper, companion, service provider, representative and entertainer. The mediation aspect was found to be the most prevalent of these roles.

The review also raised key issues related to tour guide duties while conducting tours. It seems that tour guides have to facilitate tourists' actual experiences at every stage from arrival until departure. They also have to provide feedback of any extraordinary events to the company, reflecting their responsibilities toward their employers. The chapter, finally, reviewed a range of factors that might influence tour guide performance whilst conducting tours. These factors were identified and categorised into three main themes: personal factors, immediate operational factors and wider operational factors.

This chapter generally suggests that in response to increasing demands and tourists' various preferences, the significance, roles and duties of guides have developed over time and become more complex. However, even though scholarly evidence exists in relation to tour guide influence on destination image, this researcher has not located any studies which analyse the different ideas and feelings which might load a tour guide commentary, nor how such commentaries might influence long lasting tourist's impressions of a destination. In other words, there is a dearth of understanding of how destination image might be constructed by means of the guide's interpretations during the tourist consumption experience. Thus, the literature review undertaken in this chapter has uncovered these areas for investigation and has provided further justifications to undertake this research. The following chapter will discuss the research methodology, with specific focus on theoretical aspects.

Chapter Four: Methodology- Theoretical Background

4.1 Introduction

For ease of presentation, the research methodology is divided into two main chapters; theoretical and practical. This chapter discusses the theoretical background of the research methods employed, in order to explore the nature of destination image constructed by the participants during the visit. This chapter commences by revisiting the aim and objectives of the research. The philosophical assumptions underpinning this research are then addressed in the research paradigm. This chapter goes on to elucidate the research approach, and research methods, followed by the research strategy considered appropriate to this research. The final section summarises key points of this chapter. Figure (4.1) below adapts Saunders' et al. (2009:109) "research onion", to demonstrate the methodological scope of this research.

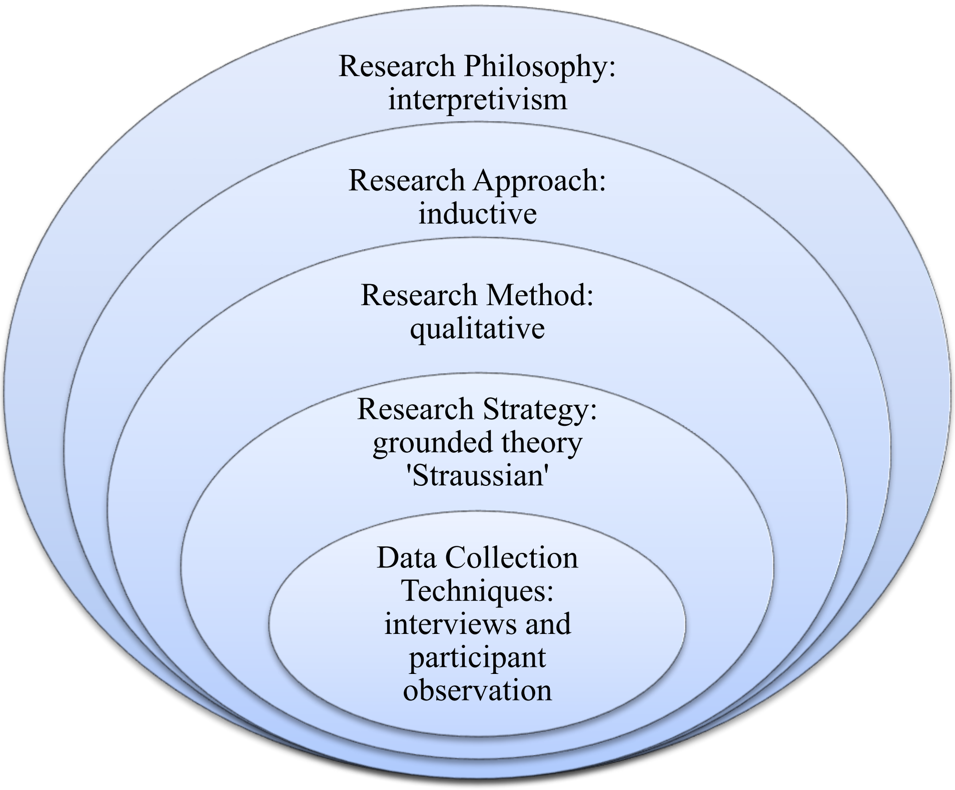
Research Philosophy: interpretivism
Research Approach: inductive
Research Method: qualitative
Research Strategy: grounded theory 'Straussian'
Data Collection Techniques: interviews and participant observation

Figure 4.1: The Methodological Scope of This Research

Source: adapted from Saunders et al. (2009:109).

4.2 Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of this research is to investigate the patterns of destination image as projected by the tour guides and as perceived by the tourists during the consumption of tourism product in Jordan. The following objectives have been developed to achieve the main aim:

- Critically evaluate existing literature relating to destination image and tour guiding in order to identify the key arguments.

- Empirically explore the nature of destination images as projected by the tour guides and as perceived by the tourists during the consumption experience.

- Inductively analyze and evaluate the patterns of destination image as projected by the tour guides and as perceived by the tourists during their consumption experience.

- Develop frameworks for understanding the patterns of destination image as projected by tour guides and as perceived by tourists during the consumption of a tourism product.

4.3 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is the basic belief system or worldview that guides the researcher (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The selection of an inquiry paradigm involves the ontological, epistemological and methodological stances of the researcher in understanding a phenomenon under investigation. Ontology is a branch of philosophy; its essential concern is the nature of reality and its characteristics. Epistemology is a theory on the nature of knowledge applied; it determines what constitutes acceptable knowledge in a study, and what relationship is appropriate between the researcher and the researched. These theories in turn influence the researcher's methodological stance as to what he/she believes can be known (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Creswell, 2013).

Guba and Lincoln (1994) identified four philosophical research paradigms which define what falls within and outside the boundaries of legitimate inquiry, including positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructionism/interpretivism. The main differences between these paradigms are presented in table (4.1). While some authors support Guba and Lincoln's (1994) stance, conceiving these paradigms as in a state of competition (Bryman and Bell, 2007; Saunders et al., 2009), Weber (2004) argues that the differences between positivism as opposed, for example, to interpretative rhetoric are shallow rather than deep. Weber (2004) contends that fundamentally the goals of ontological and epistemological rhetoric are to enhance our understanding of the world, irrespective of whether researchers believe in single objective, or multiple and socially constructed reality. Weber (2004) observes that research methods associated with positivist and interpretivist paradigms sometimes overlap, and certainly there is existing literature addressing how interpretive studies can be conducted within the positivist tradition. Both paradigms also propose criteria for evaluating the quality of their findings (ibid).

Table 4.1: Key Features of Research Paradigms

	Ontology	Epistemology	Methodology
Positivism	Single objective reality	Researcher and reality are separate	Largely quantitative
Post-Positivism	Objective reality, but imperfectly and probabilistically could be known	The researcher background can influence the researched objects. The findings thus probably true	Qualitative & quantitative
Critical Theory	Reality is shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender factors	The researcher and researched objects are interactively linked (value mediated findings)	Qualitative & quantitative
Constructivism/ Interpretivism	Multiple constructed realities	Researcher and reality are inspirable	Largely qualitative

Source: adapted from Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Weber, 2004; Bryman and Bell, 2007; Saunders et al., 2009; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Hammersley, 2013.

Tourism research is no exception to such paradigmatic controversy, since the central issue concerns the state and validity of interpretivism as opposed to positivism. To clarify, some researchers observe that the positivist paradigm has progressively dominated tourism literature (Echtner and Jamal, 1997; Ritchie et al., 2005). However, other authors have questioned the validity of this paradigm for understanding tourism phenomena (Botterill, 2001; Goodson and Phillimore, 2004; Veal, 2006). Their arguments are based on the premise that the social implications of tourism are complex, thereby suggesting that the significance of an enquiry paradigm is not so much about objectification and quantification of experiences, as about reasoning, meanings, and gaining an subjective insider perceptive not fully realisable within the positivism paradigm. Similarly, Tribe (2006) critiques positivism as failing to provide insight into the phenomenological world of tourism, because firstly, it allows only measurable parts of a phenomenon to be investigated, leaving huge parts of reality in all its complexity unexplored. Second, positivism is not completely choice-free, because researchers are influenced by the factors that impact on knowledge production, such as person, rules, position, ends, and ideology (ibid).

The state and validity of the interpretivist paradigm in tourism research are also debated. Some studies observe a growing use of interpretivism in tourism (Goodson and Phillimore, 2004; Dwyer et al., 2012), although it has been criticised as largely unscientific and lacking rigor (Decrop, 1999b; Davies, 2003). Trustworthiness criteria derived from social sciences have been employed in tourism to handle such criticisms. Those approved as appropriate to tourism researchers' epistemological assumptions include credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Tribe, 2006).

A second criticism of interpretivist research is that it dares to make claims about objectivity, to engage in abstractions, and to generalise from an inadequate sample population (Decrop, 2004; Szarycz, 2009). Although the critics of interpretivist research acknowledge its usefulness in providing a subjective in-depth understanding of the unique lived experiences of subjects, they object to interpretivist researchers abstracting such data to the point of providing a general framework for application to every relevant experience. They also object to interpretivist claims that a phenomenon 'can be objectively described' using this approach, or to any attempts to generalise from a small sample. The end product of such kinds of interpretative study, it is argued, may well end up claiming to be as abstract, objective and generalised as the findings of positivist enquiry, in which all uniqueness and all the lived experiences completely disappear (Decrop, 2004; Szarycz, 2009).

However, from the qualitative researcher's point of view, it is important to uphold interpretivism as an approach with the capacity to generate rigor and dependable findings, and also to uphold its applicability to the criteria of validity, reliability and generalisability. As such, these criteria can be used to legitimise knowledge production of any given unit of research. If such criteria are applicable in interpretivism, this necessarily means that this paradigm is capable of producing as valid knowledge as positivism. Moreover, it could be argued that the capacity to abstract a set of findings from data emerges from an in-depth understanding of the meaning of individuals' lived experiences, which in turn may generate generalisable theories as the ultimate outcome of such understanding. Schwandt (1994) underpinned this view in suggesting that the interactivity of the inquirer in the inquiry allows him/her to understand subtle nuances, details, and multiple dimensions of the topic under study that would otherwise be lost. Thus, knowledge is arguably not only constructed by the researcher, but also by the respondents who agreed interactively to take part. This process of knowledge production is described by Plack (2005:229) as "subjectively created and intersubjectively validated", which suggests that a potential outcome of interpretivist investigation is the generalisability or transferability of the findings to similar situations, albeit typically offered with great caution.

Moreover, this researcher's stance is that interpretivism can never be a 'soft paradigm', since understanding individuals' subjective ideas, and the multi-realities that shape the social world, is not an easy mission. Research using this approach therefore largely requires sensitivity, reflexivity and ingenuity on the part of the interpretivist researcher, who capitalise on their intellectual abilities to analyse and theorise such ‘multi-realties’ into a single reflective theory. This is contrasted with positivist research, which aims to understand only ‘one single reality’ and to analyse the data by using predetermined statistical procedures.

This research therefore has excluded use of the conventional positivist paradigm, because it assumes social structures to be single, static and objective (Guba and Lincoln, 1994), capable only of representing an idealised view of people and their behaviours and moods. Even if such assumptions hold true, this begs the question as to why researchers constantly carry out investigations in different contexts. Moreover, using objective methods for measurement does not necessarily mean that research outcomes will be entirely objective, since even objective method is open to subjectivity, for example, while selecting specific items for measurement. Some subjectivity in any given human research is probably unavoidable. Additionally, this paradigm lacks clarity as to the influence of immediate environmental settings on human actions (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). In real life scenarios, the environmental impact cannot be ignored; for example in this research, it is believed that both tourist and guide participants will bring to the stage many different expectations, interests and energy levels. Therefore, the processes which inform a guide’s image projection or a tourist’s perceptions are unlikely to be exactly replicable in every tour or context, although some aspects might be common to all tours. Based on this, the notion of a single paradigmatic stance derived from physical sciences contradicts the nature of this research.

An interpretivist paradigm therefore seems more suitable to address the current research problem for number of reasons. Firstly, the researcher ontologically believes that the image constructed by researched subjects is multidimensional. The literature indicates that destination image is made up of various attributes, and formed from various organic and induced agents that might influence the mental representations for a subject (Gunn, 1972; Beerli and Martin, 2004b; Tasci et al., 2007). This research therefore requires a paradigm capable of providing insight into a construct characterised as complex, relativistic, multiple and heterogeneous (adapted from Gallarza et al., 2002; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). Therefore, the ontological premises of interpretivist inquiry, in seeking to understand the complexity and the multi-constructed realities that shape the social world, are deemed more suitable to the topic under investigation.

Secondly, the researcher epistemologically assumes that the problem at hand could not be understood without the researcher being interactively involved with the researched subjects, in order closely to observe their ideas and feelings. This is of particular relevance to image studies because, as Gartner (1993) suggests, tourists' perceptions involve subjective and objective components and both influence the conative dimension. Given that this research problem has not also yet been adequately encompassed in theory, the paradigm used in this research therefore needs to humanise the investigation and pave the way for personal interactions with participants. The tenet of the interpretivist paradigm, in seeking to understand a given phenomenon from 'emic' perspectives (Schwandt, 1994), seems once again to be more compatible with the epistemological assumptions of the researcher.

Thirdly, literature suggests that the destination's components/setting might influence the tourists' perceived image (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003) and the tour guides' performances (Yu et al., 2002). Thus in this research, it was assumed that the researched subjects' worldviews might also be influenced by measures in the wider context of the Middle East region e.g. political conflict. This raised the need for a paradigm that considers the context wherein and from which the participants might construct their mental representations. Interpretivism thus appears to be a relevant philosophy for this research. As Guba and Lincoln (1994:110) advocate, the realities within this paradigm are "apprehended as socially based, local and specific in nature, even if certain elements are commonly shared among many people and even across cultures".

Finally, over the last four-decades of research into destination image, positivist/quantitative philosophies have dominated this line of inquiry (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991; Pike, 2007; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). It appears timely, after such a relatively long history of investigation, to explore this construct from the interpretivist paradigm perspective, in order to gain fresh understanding and conceptualisation.

To conclude, the ontological and epistemological premises of the interpretivist paradigm appear an ideal means to address the problem at hand. This paradigm has therefore strongly influenced the methodological stances of the researcher. These are discussed in sections (4.4) and (5.3). The openness to the participants' subjectivity and emphasis on the multi-meanings of the lived world of this paradigm has allowed the researcher to understand the complexity of image construction through the participants' words. The following section discusses the selected research approach, that of inductive reasoning.

4.4 Research Approach

Research method studies suggest that there are two approaches for reasoning; deductive and inductive (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Saunders et al., 2009). The main points of difference between these two logics are that the deductive approach derives from a positivist paradigm, beginning with the development of a theory and hypotheses to understand the relationship between different variables. The approach ultimately ends with tests of given hypotheses to confirm or modify the proposed theory (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2013). Deductive researchers generally use large samples of population, and structured questionnaires to facilitate testing of hypotheses (Veal, 2006; Saunders et al., 2009). On the other hand, the inductive approach derives from an interpretivist paradigm, involving the collection and analysis of primary data to develop a theory, by using qualitative methods based on smaller samples (Saunders et al., 2009).

Some authors, however, see purely inductive research as rare and relatively challenging, if not impossible in its pure form (Bryman and Bell, 2007), arguing that taking a purely inductive approach would require prior knowledge held at the start of a given study to be disregarded, so that theory emerges only from the empirical data (Carson et al., 2001). This research does not follow these arguments, since it seems impossible to come tabula rasa to the research, with no prior knowledge informing the question. In fact, Saunders et al. (2009) suggest that followers of a qualitative, inductive approach cannot begin the research without developing some initial understanding about the topic under investigation. Such knowledge is used by investigators as a sensitising framework that guides the fieldwork (Patton, 2002), which otherwise could lead to unfocused research (Miles and Huberman, 1994), wasting time, effort and resources. These arguments are consistent with Creswell's (2013) conception of the inductive approach as a complex reasoning process, which involves moving back and forth between primary and secondary data to establish a competent level of understanding. It can be also argued that developing initial understanding is not only valuable in determining the quality of collected data, but also important for guiding data analyses. In other words, prior knowledge can serve as a platform from which it is possible to evaluate the causes of given phenomena.

However, the above discussions suggest that if deductive reasoning had been adopted for this research, then the data collected would only have served to test predetermined hypotheses (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2013). While this process would allow generalisations (Saunders et al., 2009), such is not the aim of this research. Rather, this research is exploratory in nature and thus data would not readily emerge from structured questionnaires and surveys. In addition, as explained in Chapters Two and Three, the research problem remains largely unexplored in the literature. Therefore, developing a predetermined theory would seem risky, and scientifically questionable, given that such theory would be based mainly on the researcher's assumptions.

There is a further rationale for adopting an inductive logic in this research. Firstly, this approach derives from interpretivism as a way to understand how individuals see and interpret their social world (Veal, 2006; Saunders et al., 2009). Such premises are more relevant for this research, which seeks to examine the researched subjects' perceptions. Secondly, inductive logic is seen as a flexible approach that would permit conceptualisation of the research questions to shift as needed in the gathering of primary data (adapted from Eisenhardt, 1989 cited in Carson et al., 2001). Based on this approach, a set of key assumptions and questions have been developed to be explored in the main fieldwork. Such assumptions are not a rigid set of premises or predetermined categories (adapted from Miles and Huberman, 1994), but rather used as a guideline for what might be collected and observed in the field. This has involved the researcher adopting a "delicate balancing act between drawing on prior knowledge, while keeping a fresh and open mind to new concepts as they emerge from the data" (Goulding, 2005:296).

In summary, the limited knowledge and the exploratory nature of this research has required an inductive approach to examine phenomena that would need interpretation in order to give rise to new understanding. It is hoped that this in turn would contribute to a framework reflecting the uniqueness of the researched subjects' image construction during the visit. The next section expounds on research methods adopting the qualitative method.

4.5 Research Methods

The term research method refers to a set of processes for collecting and analysing data (Silverman, 2001). Three main methods are generally used to answer research questions: mono method, mixed methods and multiple methods (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Saunders et al., 2009). Mono-method refers to the usage of a single data collection technique, which may be either qualitative or quantitative. Mixed methods involve the combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques within one study. Finally, multiple methods refer to the integration of different data collection techniques within either qualitative or quantitative boundaries of a single study. Whilst both qualitative and/or quantitative methods enable a researcher to address a research question, each approach has its own characteristics as presented in table (4.2) below.

Table 4.2: Key Characteristics of Research Methods

Assumptions	Quantitative	Qualitative
Ontology	Objective single reality	Subjective multiple realties
Epistemology	Outsider perspective to objectively describe reality	Insider perceptive to understand the social structure, in real life scenarios
Research Focus	Facts and causes of behaviour	Lived experiences, feelings, social and cultural phenomena
Data Collection Tool	Survey by using questionnaires	Observation, interviews and textual analysis
Data Analysis	Statistically oriented	Thematic analysis
Knowledge Products	Numeric data	Rich descriptive or/and explanatory data

Source: adapted from Bryman, 1984; Luckett et al., 1999; Silverman, 2001; Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Golafshani, 2003; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Bryman and Bell, 2007; Saunders et al., 2009.

Quantitative methods have been most commonly adopted (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2003), but historically have been criticised for failing to address certain research problems where reality is multiple-faceted and socially constructed; thus their capacity to generate theory that is grounded in people's experiences is questionable. For example, Johnson (1975) raised doubts as to whether it is possible to study human behaviour with methods inherited from the natural sciences. Similarly, Silverman (2001) argued that the assumption of value freedom in quantitative research might be undesirable or impossible in social studies. More recently, Davies (2003) challenges the assumption of quantitative research in regard to universal and covering laws. Davies (2003) contends that the causes of covering laws can change over time, and hence, if this assumption holds true, there may be laws which remain unexplored.

On this basis, some researchers have preferred to employ mixed methods to capitalise upon the strengths of each method. However, there is also a long-standing debate over the use of quantitative and qualitative methods in the same study. For example, Jick (1979) criticised followers of mixed methods for failing to present sufficient clarifications about how triangulation were employed in their research. In a similar vein, Bryman (1984) argued that one of the problems of combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies was the treatment of the philosophical and epistemological issues underpinning each of these methods. Thus, differences between methods encompass more than simply data gathering techniques. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) sustained these assertions in claiming that qualitative research is expansionistic in nature, not reductionist as in quantitative research. Therefore, qualitative research in mixed methods studies is critiqued as filling just an auxiliary role, which takes qualitative method out of its natural home (ibid).

Translated into a tourism context, some authors argue that the quantitative approach has traditionally dominated tourism, and been favoured by researchers tending to an objective, tangible and single view of reality whereby generalisations are seen as possible (Echtner and Jamal, 1997; Decrop, 1999a; Ritchie et al., 2005). Reviews of methods used in destination image research confirm these assumptions. In this context, Echtner and Ritchie (1991) were among the earliest writers who noticed the influence of methods adopted as to how destination image is conceptualised. Noticing that destination image research had adopted largely a quantitative approach by using structured questionnaires; they attempted to provide guidelines for the usage of mixed methods, in order to capture a complete list of destination image attributes. Moreover, Pike (2007) reported that the majority of studies on destination image used structured techniques, whereas qualitative techniques had been less adopted. Pike (2007) claims that the unquestioned replication of quantitative methods significantly weakens the quality of research, in that it tends to rely on the selection of attribute lists from previous studies. Since such attribute lists would have been developed and conducted in other destinations, their relevance to respondents in a different travel situation might be questionable. Moreover, given that tourists have different preferences and expectations, the selection of irrelevant attributes might result in uninformed responses by respondents unsure of particular attributes (ibid).

Similarly, Tasci et al. (2007) have claimed that issues of both internal and external validity of destination image studies might be at risk due to overreliance on self-administered surveys. Tasci et al. (2007) also contended that some destination image studies run the risk of limited external validity due to a small sample size, and therefore, lack capacity for generalisation of results to other target markets. More recently, Stepchenkova and Mills (2010) conducted a comprehensive review of conceptual and empirical research on destination image, published between 2000 and 2007. Identifying emerging trends in destination image studies, they noticed a growing number of applications of quantitative techniques such as the structural equation modelling and path analysis to study conceptual models involving behavioural components, whereas qualitative techniques were less adopted.

Tour guiding literature also contains some research method issues that need to be addressed. For example, Zhang and Chow (2004) employed mixed methods to assess the performance of guides in Hong Kong as perceived by Mainland Chinese outbound visitors. However, their research method analysis is questionable and has some validity shortcomings. Their research aim was to assess the performance of guides as perceived by outbound tourists, notably not as perceived by travel agencies' managers who, according to the authors, rated the importance of the selected attributes and provided feedback about which items would be used in the survey. Moreover, a review of their research methodology raises doubts about their sampling strategy. To clarify, Zhang and Chow (2004) targeted tourists who had previously engaged in a guided tour to Hong Kong within the past two years during the time when the research was conducted. A potential limitation of this research would be the respondents' capacity to recall in accurate details how the guides might have performed at the time of the visit. Taking into consideration that some targeted tourists might well have visited other destinations, their evaluations of any one tour guide might accordingly have been contaminated by recall of other guides' performances elsewhere. Furthermore, the ordering of the questions in Zhang and Chow's (2004) research questionnaire is questionable; in that the respondents were asked to rate the perceived importance of selected attributes in the first section, and then to rate the actual performance of guides in the second section. This order raises the possibility that potential pre-priming of desired criteria might have contaminated the evaluation, by causing tourists to blur their recall of what they had actually encountered with what they might have thought they should have encountered.

The evidences from the above studies suggest some serious potential weaknesses in the capacity of quantitative methods for understanding complex and multi-faceted constructs, such as the topic under exploration. Moreover, it is noticeable that knowledge production for some of the destination image studies has been subject to what Tribe (2006:5) describes as "MacDonaldizing tendencies", where standardised procedures are used to produce a uniform and predictable knowledge set. This recipe approach, in replicating the same concepts in different contexts, could be argued to have led to mass-production of destination image studies. Reflecting on this, traditional ways of researching are no longer adequate to provide understanding of increasingly complex constructs. Given also that this research set out to evaluate the patterns of image that the tour guides and tourists construct of the destination rather than measuring and quantify them, the method adopted in this research needs to lay emphasis on the quality of the data and to facilitate a more finely-tuned insider view of such constructs. In line with the interpretivist paradigm, reflecting the researcher's philosophical assumptions, the qualitative method serves to offer powerful opportunities for collecting rich data, loaded with the researched subjects' ideas and feelings. This is above all the overarching aim of this research. The next section delves into research strategy, from which grounded theory was selected as the main strategy.

4.6 Research Strategy

There are five main research strategies in qualitative method, including narrative research, ethnography, case study, phenomenology and grounded theory (Berg, 2001; Creswell, 2013). The choice of research strategy depends on the research aim and questions (Saunders et al., 2009). However, the aim of this research was not to write a narrative chronology of respondents' lifestyles as in narrative research (Lieblich et al., 1998); nor to observe cultural phenomena amongst participants over a prolonged period of time as in traditional ethnographic studies (LeCompte and Schensul, 2010). Neither was this research concerned to explore a very specific process or individualised case as in case study research (Yin, 2009). These strategies were therefore deemed irrelevant to this research and consequently were excluded from the research design.

Ultimately, the strategies considered were grounded theory and phenomenology. In this context, the principle goal of grounded theory is to discover new ideas and meanings, which are then configured into a theoretical framework (Goulding, 2005; Creswell, 2013; Charmaz, 2014). On the other hand, phenomenology seeks to identify the essence of human experiences of a phenomenon as defined by the participants (Creswell, 2003), or alternatively, to describe the lived experiences (Patton, 2002). This research was therefore oriented to grounded theory for two reasons. First, previous studies related to destination image construction during the visit seem inadequate, paying only superficial attention to the complexity of the researched subjects' perceptions. Thus they lacked the necessary strategy to build exploratory frameworks of these phenomena, being limited merely to describing them. Second, grounded theory offers researchers clear methodical guidelines for data collection, analysis and theory building (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), unlike the phenomenological strategy that lacks systematic guides to studying experiences (Pernecky and Jamal, 2010).

Grounded theory roots lies in symbolic interactionism, which concerns the subjective or socially constructed meanings that individual impose on objects, events, and behaviours (Morse, 1994; Kendall, 1999; Goulding, 2005). It was from this theoretical basis that grounded theory strategy was posited by two American sociologists Glaser and Strauss (1967), as a perspective of understanding human behaviours and social phenomena under certain circumstances, through interactions between the researcher and that being researched. Following the original propositions, grounded theory was divided into two approaches: Glaser (1978) in *Theoretical Sensitivity*, and on the other hand, Strauss and Corbin (1990) in *Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*.

Since then, however, another line of enquiry has attempted to resolve philosophical controversy between the two co-originators: Glaser and Strauss. Such methodological argument claims that while both versions essentially share common characteristics, including theoretical sensitivity, theoretical sampling, constant comparison, coding, memoing, verification and identifying of core categories, each version has its own characteristics (McCann and Clark, 2003; Walker and Myrick, 2006; Mills et al., 2006). The main differences between the two versions are presented in table (4.3) below.

Table 4.3: Key Tenets of Glaserian and Straussian Approaches

Characteristics	Classical Approach- Glaser	Evolved Approach- Strauss
Theoretical Sensitivity	Enter the field with few predetermined thoughts to remain sensitive to the data.	Integrates various techniques and concepts to provide different ways to know the data.
Literature Treatment	Delaying the literature review until after data collection to avoid preconceived ideas.	Engaging proactively with the literature to increase theoretical sensitivity.
Coding	*Open coding* to develop core categories. *Selective coding* to integrate the core categories and their properties. *Theoretical coding* to saturate theory.	*Open coding* to develop categories. *Axial coding* to link categories to their subcategories. *Selective coding* to refine the theory.
Verification	Inductive only.	Induction, deduction and verification are essential through the research.
Core Category	Identified during open coding.	Identified during selective coding.
Researcher's Role	Maintain analytic distance to discover data in an objective and neutral way.	Involve in theoretical reconstruction through transactional act with the data.

Source: adapted from Glaser, 1978; Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Kendall, 1999; Hall and Callery, 2001; MacDonald, 2001; Glaser, 2002; Goulding, 2002; Glaser and Holton, 2004; Heath and Cowley, 2004; Hallberg, 2006; Mills et al., 2006; Walker and Myrick, 2006; Charmaz, 2014.

Following the above two versions, a constructivist mode of grounded theory was proposed by Charmaz (2000), to include two types of grounded theory: objectivist and constructivist. These assumptions were based on Glaser's (1978) beliefs in objective and external reality, which a neutral observer discovers through value-free inquiry. Charmaz (2008) argued that Glaser's approach resided in the positivistic paradigm and went on to question claims to objectivity by stating:

"What researchers define as objective still reflects partial knowledge and particular perspectives, priorities, and positions. Subjectivities are embedded in data analysis, as well as in data collection. Methodological procedures neither make research objective nor preclude responsibility to locate research relative to time, place, and situation" (Charmaz, 2008:402).

Thus constructivist grounded theory appraises the explanatory power of traditional grounded theory and adopts its guidelines as a tool, but adheres ontologically to relativism and epistemologically to subjectivism (Charmaz, 2000 and 2008). In other words, constructivist grounded theory assumes that there are multiple social realities that could be understood through on-going interaction between the inquirer and the participants (ibid).

However, constructivist grounded theory seems also to mirror Strauss and Corbin's (1998) philosophical assumptions. Some authors claim that the Straussian version is ontologically rooted in a relativism in which the reality cannot be fully known but can be partially interpreted (Annells, 1997; Hallberg, 2006). Moreover, Strauss and Corbin (1998) urged inquirers to get involved with the participants to understand their experiences. These arguments have been well captured in Mills et al. (2006), who argued that Strauss and Corbin's work on grounded theory possesses a discernible thread of constructivism, and acknowledged Charmaz (2000) as the first researcher to describe that explicitly.

This research adopts the 'Straussian' version of grounded theory as a research strategy for a number of reasons: firstly, Corbin and Strauss (2008) disregard neither prior knowledge nor initial literature review before data collection. These premises have suited the current research, for which an initial literature review was carried out to guide the primary data collection process and to fulfil the university's research committee requirements. Secondly, the 'Straussian' approach considers the macro-environmental and social conditions that influence the phenomenon under investigation (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Starks and Trinidad, 2007). This has been an important consideration in this research (see section 4.3 for explanations). Thirdly, the epistemological premise of the 'Straussian' approach has been considered supportive in addressing more closely this research aim, which seeks to explain the complexity of destination image through interaction with the participants.

As mentioned briefly earlier, grounded theory outlines systematic steps for doing research. Corbin and Strauss (2008) illustrate that the research starts with identification of research questions, which may be derived from the literature but with sufficient flexibility to explore a topic in depth. Grounded theorists frequently use qualitative methods for data collection, such as interviews and observations (Starks and Trinidad, 2007). Data collection and analysis go hand in hand in the field. The aim is to identify pertinent concepts/themes during data analysis that guide the next round of data collection. For this reason, the participants are selected based on the emerging concepts/themes, by a process labelled “theoretical sampling” (Corbin and Strauss, 2008:143). Theoretical sampling ceases when the data is saturated or repetitive. The empirical data are then analysed by assigning a conceptual label, known as a code to items of data. The coding process involves three main techniques: open coding, axial coding and selective coding (see table 4.3 above). Constant comparison is another important element during the analytic process. Constant comparison involves comparing incidents against incidents for differences and similarities in order to validate interpretations of the data (Goulding, 2002; Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Moreover, writing memos that reflect the researcher’s ideations is essential in order to enhance sensitivity to the data.

Although Corbin and Strauss (2008) offer detailed descriptions of data collection and analytical processes, the authors report that these steps may be used whole in part. The authors also state that grounded theory may be used for different purposes such as theory development, construct generation and establishment of thick descriptions. These flexible views were proposed to help “the researchers pick and choose among the procedures, using those that most suit their purposes” (Corbin and Strauss, 2008:332).

While these premises seem supportive of certain research aims, it must be acknowledged that the 'Straussian' mood has been criticised in the literature, some researchers contending that its approach to data analysis is largely mechanistic; as such it risks restricting the creativity of the analyst and the potential of the data (Melia, 1996; Kendall, 1999; Heath and Cowley, 2004; Mehmetoglu and Altinay, 2006). While it may be true that there is a danger of the researcher thinking only in the categories that might emerge from the coding process, there is also the need to establish validity and consistency in the research findings. In fact, Silverman (2001) strongly argued for an analytical procedure as prerequisite to maintain quality in the research. Therefore, Strauss and Corbin's (1998) analytical guidelines may be considered useful rather than restrictive.

4.7 Summary

This chapter concerns the theoretical background of the research methods employed in this research. This chapter began with the aim and objectives of the research. Philosophical issues surrounding the research paradigm, approach, method and strategy were then discussed. Interpretivist, qualitative methods were explained as laying emphasis on the complex and multi-constructed realities that shape the social world, best understood through interaction with researched subjects. This theoretical position appeared most compatible with the researcher's questions and philosophical assumptions. This research therefore capitalised largely on an interpretivist, qualitative paradigm as a method of enquiry.

A review of research methods studies also suggested that grounded theory, namely the 'Straussian' version, was the most appropriate strategy within qualitative methods to address this research aim, through processes of inductive reasoning of the respondents' explored worldviews. The next chapter will continue discussions on research methodology, by placing more attention on practical aspects relating to the empirical grounded theory research process.

Chapter Five: Methodology- Practical Background

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concerns the empirical investigation undertaken in this research. The first two sections provide detailed account of data collection processes, followed by discussions of data analysis. The following sections present trustworthiness criteria and grounded theory specific evaluative criteria employed to judge the quality of this research. Ethical issues and limitations are then respectively addressed. The final section presents the summary of this chapter.

5.2 Data Collection from Secondary Sources

Secondary data were collected from various sources, which are presented in different sections of this research. The theoretical structure underpinning this research is presented in Chapters Two and Three respectively. These were established by reviewing literature related to destination image and tour guides.

A literature review of destination image started with early seminal research (e.g. Gunn, 1972; Hunt, 1975; Crompton 1979a). The numerous theorisations of the meaning, significance and nature of destination image in tourism were covered. The literature suggested further relevant topics for evaluation, such as destination image components, the destination image formation process and the interrelationships between destination image and different marketing notions. A review of secondary sources shifted then to existing academic research on tour guides, on definitions and classifications of tour guides, as well as the significance and the multifaceted roles of tour guides in tourism. Other relevant philosophies about tour guides' duties and factors influencing their competencies whilst conducting tours were also discussed.

Generally, the most frequently reviewed articles were drawn from, but not restricted to, the *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, the *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Tourism Management* and the *Journal of Travel Research*.

These are ranked among the top academic journals in tourism (Ryan, 2005). Therefore, relevant articles within these journals were reviewed to establish a solid theoretical structure for this dissertation. However, data relating specifically to the Jordanian tourism industry were collected from industry-specific statistical government sources, such as UNTWO, MOTA, and JTB.

A broad review of the above theoretical frames was conducted before the empirical investigation. These frames were used to develop initial ideas/questions that would delineate the research scope and sensitise the data collection. In other words, the literature was employed "to formulate questions that act as a stepping off point during initial observations and interviews" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:51). An exhaustive literature review was not undertaken beforehand, to ensure openness to data, and to avoid seeing the field through the lens of existing theories (adapted from Goulding, 2005; Creswell, 2009).

Subsequently, questions which arose and which influenced the research methodology are presented respectively in Chapters Four and Five. These chapters were informed partly by secondary data appearing in research methods studies. While this research capitalises on interpretive qualitative methods, philosophical premises of other paradigms such as positivist quantitative paradigm appearing in Guba and Lincoln (1994); Creswell (2003); Bryman and Bell (2007); Saunders et al. (2009) and other authors were also reviewed. This review was undertaken to arrive safely at a relevant methodological paradigm that would appropriately address the problem being pursued.

Following the empirical investigation, a more focused review of the above theoretical frames was conducted as presented. Moreover, the boundaries of tourism research were crossed and other secondary data from interdisciplinary studies were pooled to interpret the research findings in Chapters Six and Seven. Studies included psychology, archaeology, religion, politics, international relations, communication and media. While these processes were very time consuming, this level of abstraction achieved through compare/contrast analytics (Corbin and Strauss 2008), increased the researcher's sensitivity and the validity of the data. This secondary data altogether added richness and colour to this research.

5.3 Data Collection from Primary Sources

Data collection and analysis were simultaneous processes, undertaken at different stages of the fieldwork (see table 5.1). The findings of each stage guided the subsequent data collection and analysis. More specifically, the empirical data were collected through semi-structured interviews and participant observation. These methods and approach for collecting the primary data are favoured in grounded theory research as permitting in-depth exploration of a particular topic (Goulding, 2002; Hallberg, 2006; Creswell, 2013). The following sub-sections detail the processes by which the primary data were collected in this research.

Table 5.1: Primary Data Collection Processes of This Research

Stage	Data Collection Technique	Participants	Sampling Strategy	Sample Size
Pilot Study	Semi-structured interviews	Tour guides	Purposive sampling	Five guides
Main Fieldwork	Semi-structured interviews	Tour guides	Purposive sampling	Thirty guides
	Participant observation	A group of US tourists visiting Jordan in guided tour for about one week	Purposive sampling	Twenty US tourists
	Semi-structured interviews	US tourists encountered during the tour	Purposive sampling	Twelve US tourists
	Semi-structured interviews	The guide of the tour	Purposive sampling	One guide

Source: the researcher.

5.3.1 Main Fieldwork: Interviews with Tour Guides

The interview in qualitative research is described as a purposeful conversation between two or more people (Saunders et al., 2009). This method takes the researcher close to the subjects' worlds to understand their experiences, actions and opinions (Ryan, 1995; Patton, 2002). It is a flexible data collection tool that enables researchers to explore issues as they emerge in the field (Silverman, 2001; Mason et al., 2010). Generally, interviews include three forms: structured, semi-structured or unstructured. This research employed semi-structured interviews, a flexible rich-information generating method suited to the exploratory nature of this research.

Prior to the main fieldwork, a pilot study was conducted in Jordan (March 2012). The aim of this stage was to examine the research questions before deploying them further in the main field work. Interview questions were driven by the literature. The access to guides was relatively straightforward. The JTGA and the Tourism Professions Department in the MOTA were approached because guides are licensed by these bodies. A list of contact details of tour guides was provided, and a guide the researcher was already acquainted with acted as a gatekeeper to experienced guides from the list. Some tour guides were then contacted by phone to ascertain their willingness to take part. The interviewees were selected purposively, using snowball technique to allow sufficient flexibility for potential leading concepts and findings to emerge at this stage (see section 5.3.1.2 for details about selection criteria).

Piloting involved five interviews with national tour guides conducted at the Jordanian capital Amman. The interviews took place in cafés and JTGA meeting room, each lasting on average 95 minutes. The interviewees were informed that the researcher was engaged in a pilot study, and were encouraged to raise any relevant issues from their perspectives. Interviews were conducted in Arabic, electronically recorded and subsequently transcribed on to the researcher's password protected computer. Transcriptions were translated into English by the researcher and checked by a proof reader.

The proofed version was then examined by the researcher to check the meanings consistency. The data were analysed thematically and more pertinent questions were identified. The pilot findings were incorporated into the main fieldwork findings, given their valuable meanings.

A further thirty semi-structured interviews with tour guides were conducted during the main fieldwork. The principal aim of this stage was to gain insight into the topic being pursued from a wide sample of guide informants. The following sub-sections present explanations about these interviews, including questions design, sampling strategy, data collection and recording. Limitations related to these interviews and how these limitations were addressed are also discussed.

5.3.1.1 Question Design

Interview questions were driven by the literature and the findings of the pilot study. Such reciprocal ties between data collection and theory, or reformulation of questions based on emerging findings were based on suggestions by Strauss and Corbin (1998), and other qualitative researchers (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2013).

The questions were designed to explore image construction during the actual experiences of participants. These were divided into two main themes, the first being to understand the nature of images as projected by the tour guides during the tours. This involved questions focusing on the stories that the guides presented for the tourists, what types of tourist questions they encountered, how far these questions influenced the guides' representations, how their representations might be loaded with certain ideas and feelings in ways as to create certain kinds of image, and any unprofessional behaviours exhibited by other guides. Moreover, probing questions were raised during the interviews to seek further insights, for example, what attributes were used to represent the Middle East region and why.

The second theme aimed to explore tourists' perceptions as observed by the tour guides during the course of their work. This consisted of question-sets focusing on the nature of tourists' ideas and feelings about their visited destination(s), particularly at the beginning of their tour, and any adjustment that might occur in the tourists' perceptions during and by the end of their tour. Any negatively perceived images, particularly those expressed at the end of the tourists' tour, were further examined. Additionally, other questions were raised as appropriate during the interviews, with respect to the durability of 'dynamic images', more details about tourists' perceived images of the Middle East and/or given sites in Jordan, and why some tourists were attracted to visit these areas, despite having some negative preconceptions.

These questions provided insight into the tour guides' worldviews, terminologies, and the complexity of destination image constructions in the process of a visit. They also allowed tour guides to express their broad notions about tourism in Jordan, resulting altogether in rich data (see appendix B).

5.3.1.2 Sampling Strategy and Recruitment

The sampling strategy used in this research was purposive. This strategy refers to the deliberate selection of informants who would be most relevant to the research aim. Choice was based on certain criteria for tour guide selection (Patton, 2002; Ritchie and Lewis, 2011; Saunders, 2012), being guides who were: 1) Officially licensed by the Jordanian authorities. 2) In possession of a valid tour guiding licence. 3) Experienced in the field and thus a potentially rich source of information.

Different types of tour guides were interviewed in different regions of Jordan during this stage. National tour guides were interviewed in Amman and Petra. Site tour guides were also interviewed in Petra and Jerash. These cities/sites were chosen due to their pivotal positions on the Jordanian tourism map. The rationale for incorporating further sites and respondents was threefold: 1) To gain insight into guides' experiences and practices in different geographical regions of Jordan as a means to capture multi-contextual realities, and to uncover variations in the data, as suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008). 2) To identify common themes re-occurring consistently in the diversified data. 3) To enhance the representation of the sample.

A combination of two purposive sampling techniques was employed to conduct these interviews. This approach is commonly used when complex issues in a given qualitative research are being examined (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). In line with grounded theory, *theoretical sampling* was actively used. At the outset, the tour guide interviewees were selected based on concepts/themes derived from the pilot study's findings. Such themes included 'official image', 'personal image' and 'relatively realistic image' constructed by the tour guides, as well as 'static image' and 'dynamic image' constructed by the tourists. Therefore, further interviews were simultaneously conducted and analysed to elaborate and discover new themes. The subsequent incoming data guided what, where and from whom to collect the next set of data, as recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2008).

A *snowball purposive sampling* technique was also employed. Some respondents interviewed during the pilot study were contacted and asked to propose other participants who would meet the sampling criteria described above and who could potentially take part (adapted from Patton, 2002; Saunders, 2012). This approach was then used with each interviewed guide. The sample in Amman built up to nineteen national tour guides, who were interviewed throughout the main fieldwork. However, tour guide informants outside Amman were approached through their chiefs. Each archaeological site in Jordan has freelance guides, who informally recognise a 'chief' (often the oldest and most experienced guide). Such guide 'chiefs' served as gatekeepers in gaining access to other potential participants. In snowball purposeful manner, five national tour guides were interviewed in Petra. Subsequently, three site tour guides in Petra and then in Jerash were recruited to densify the emerged 'site' category.

The risk of compromising the sample diversity inherited in snowball technique (Ritchie and Lewis, 2011) was mitigated by asking each interviewed guide to propose other participants who would fit the sampling criteria but with variations in characteristics. In the event, guides from different backgrounds and experiences were recruited, which resulted in rich data that reflected perspectives from a male and female vantage point, as well as differences in guides such as national origin (being Jordanian, Jordanian-Palestinian, Jordanian-Armenian), religious affiliation (Christian and Muslim), and capacity with languages (e.g. German, English, Spanish, French, Hebrew, or Italian).

The number of guides to be interviewed was not determined beforehand. This is because the aim of this qualitative research was not intended to be statistically representative, but rather to provide in-depth understanding by means of collecting rich information (adapted from Ritchie and Lewis, 2011). Thus, interviews in the field ceased when the data reached ‘the point of redundancy’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), or ‘theoretical saturation’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), signifying that the data collected from the tour guides appeared to be repetitive, with no additional new significant information being found. The sample size in the main fieldwork amounted to thirty tour guides in total, and altogether thirty-six, to include national tour guides interviewed during the pilot study and participant observation case.

Generally, the number of interviews with guides, amounting to 20-30, was within the range of common sample size of PhD studies, followed by 40 as explained by Mason (2010). The sample size was sufficient to attain insight into the diverse landscape of the researched subjects’ perceptions from the guide perspectives. As shown in Chapters Six and Seven, the appropriateness of sampling decisions is evident through the rich findings presented.

5.3.1.3 Data Collection

The main fieldwork was carried out from July to September 2012. This coincided with the era of the Arab uprising. The data collection process in this phase, accordingly, was both benefited and hindered by the political unrest in the region. For clarity, this phenomenon was experienced as impacting on many Jordanian tourism stakeholders, including guides, most notably in a decreased number of tourist visitors. On the one hand, this led to most guides approached finding that they had more free time, and relatively positive willingness, to take part. On the other hand, this unrest limited the opportunities to conduct participant observation, due to the drop in international tourists arriving in Jordan (explained further in section 5.3.2.1).

The majority of interviews took place in Amman, mainly in public places (e.g. cafes and JTGA meeting room). Each interview lasted on average 60-100 minutes. The interviews were conducted during the afternoon, when most café consumers are at work, leaving the cafes as relatively quiet, ideal settings for smoothly conducting interviews with minimal interference. Conversely, the use of the JTGA meeting room facilitated access to further participants, such as the official spokesman and other representative members of JTGA (working at the same time as the guides). These encounters allowed insight into the more internal activities of the association, as well as the JTGA aspirations and problems. At a personal level, this gave the researcher a chance to establish relationships with and promote her research to some policymakers in the association.

Toward the end of July, some other environmental challenges emerged to impact on the data collection process. The interviews were carried out during an unusually hot summer (about 35-40 °C). This coincided with the arrival in Jordan of 848,774 Jordanian expatriates and tourists from the Gulf region[2] (MOTA, 2012). Such an increase in visitors resulted in traffic jams, and impacted on the researcher's resources, necessitating one hour journeys in the afternoon to reach respondents, when the temperature and traffic were at their peak. Given that these conditions coincided with 'Ramadan' (the Islamic month of fasting), so that climate and traffic challenges were compounded by the effects of fasting, most of the approached guides were reluctant to take part. Such challenges led the researcher to reflect on the research design. Thereafter, through a sensitive approach, the researcher re-contacted some Christian guides who had been interviewed earlier during the main fieldwork, and were unaffected by fasting. These were informed about the researcher's wish to collect the views of further Christian informants. This tactic was also relevant to the intended aim of data collection in seeking to incorporate heterogeneous sample of interviewees (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). It should be noted that the majority of guide interviewees were Muslim, only because Muslims count for about 90% of the total population in Jordan (MOAT, 2012).

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[2] Regional tourism was active in Jordan due to unrest in other Middle Eastern countries and stability in Jordan.

The guides were then approached outside Amman. The researcher journeyed 300 KM south of Jordan, to the tourist capital of Jordan 'Petra'. The 'chief' of Petra's guides was approached at the visitor centre to suggest purposeful informants. Eight interviews were conducted at Petra, each lasting on average 60-90 minutes. Interviews took place at a café near the visitors' centre. Interviewing the informants close to the site had the advantage of helping the respondents to recall more accurately their experiences in escorting the tourists. Moreover, further field notes were taken as a result of observing the surrounding settings, where the researcher had the chance to communicate with others with whom the guides had direct contact, such as tourists, owners of souvenir shops, and tourism police. These notes and observations supplemented the researcher's understanding of the topic under study.

The interviews in Petra raised new issues, such as how guides addressed on-site tourists' questions relating to culturally sensitive issues such as child labour and the use of farm animals. These are growing phenomena exhibited by some local residents taking advantage of tourism. It was also noticed that the answers of Petra's guides were slightly more structured than those of other respondents. This might have been for two reasons: firstly, Jordan's golden triangle (Petra, Wadi Rum and Aqaba) would tend to attract short visit-groups coming mainly from Egypt and Palestine/Israel (see map 1.1), giving this region relatively higher number of visitors compared with other Jordanian regions even during low season, and permitting Petra's guides in particular to interact more frequently with tourists and to gain more experience than other Jordanian guides. Secondly, the very fact of being citizens living from childhood so close to an historical site would enhance guides' awareness of the importance of tourism, and of guiding as an inspirational livelihood to work towards.

The guides in Jerash were then approached. Adopting the same protocols as in Petra, the 'gatekeeper' was approached and potential respondents were proposed; consequently, three interviews were conducted in cafes near the visitors' centre, each lasting on average 45-60 minutes.

The interviews were conducted in a relatively systematic fashion. To set up the stage for every interview, the researcher introduced herself and offered an overview of the research aim. Ethical issues were then explained and permission sought to use either the audio-recorder or manual notes (section 5.7 details ethical issues). The utilised interview approach was 'the general interview guide' (Patton, 2002), or alternatively, 'semi-structured interviews' (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Adopting Patton's (2002) suggestions of question sequencing, the interview began with demographic enquiries (i.e. language(s) spoken, years of experience). Specific pre-designed questions were then introduced (see section 5.3.1.1), with transition announcements and introductory statements to alert the guides about each upcoming question (Creswell, 2003). The interviewees exhibited various response styles. Some answers were detailed and direct, whereas others were general. This was probably because each guide had their own personality and moods. In such scenarios, 'probing questions' (Patton, 2002) were raised to elaborate and seek further explanations (i.e. suggest examples? how and why?). Other statements were also expressed to encourage the interviewees to give more details (i.e. interesting points, could you please clarify more?).

It was noticed that some guides paused before responding, probably to recall and arrange their thoughts. Guides were allowed time to ponder as recommended by Veal (2006). The researcher in this process attempted to maintain neutrality and avoid expressive body language in order to pre-empt any potential risk of interrupting the respondent's train of thoughts, and accordingly, of altering their answers. In other words, this approach was used to mitigate any potential "bias in responses that might emerge due to the researcher presence" (Creswell, 2009:179). This formal but facilitative approach to the interview process resulted in fruitful relaxed discourses.

The duration of interviews with most tour guides took more time than expected. According to the research design, the time estimated for each interview was 60 minutes. This longer time can, however, be justified in that firstly, it was noticed that the tone of some respondents reflected feelings of aggravation, probably because the practices of some tour guides are subject to controversy in Jordan[3]. Thus, it appeared that some interviewees found the interview as an opportunity to voice their concerns with an independent researcher. Secondly, some tour guides commented explicitly upon their perceptions of the importance and sensitivity of this research, and as such were probably motivated to answer fully to each question. Finally, many tour guides were free, given the drop in tourist numbers at that time. In spite of this extended time, the researcher's willingness to apply listening skills to the guides' concerns, and the necessity of transcribing some interviews manually, led to the research benefitting from the rich input gained from more prolonged interviews.

5.3.1.4 Data Recording

A systematic approach for data recording was adopted. The recording processes were undertaken in three main scenarios. These included the scenario before the interviews, during, and after the interviews. For example, prior to each interview, when, where and with whom each interview would be conducted was recorded. These data were written up in the researcher's diary, and were used to better guide the fieldwork.

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[3] The central issue of this controversy relates to the commissions and tour guide relationships with other service providers such as owners of bazars.

During the course of the interviews, the data were recorded by using either audio-recorder or manually. However, both techniques of recording were frequently used as recommended by Creswell (2003) and Veal (2006). It was thought that the use of an audio-recorder could reduce the reliance on note taking, save time, and would allow the researcher to concentrate on the interviewee's words. On the other hand, note-taking was used as a precautionary measure in the event of technology failure or interference from background noise that might challenge the interpretation of the words. Furthermore, it is said that observed note-taking motivate interviewees to speak more, since they have the impression that their responses are worthy of being written down (Mason et al., 2010).

The method of recording was subject to the respondent's approval. With those who objected to the use of audio-recorder, the researcher adapted to manual data recording by applying triple attention (elaboration on "double attention", a notion proposed by Wengraf, 2001:194), which involved listening carefully to understand what the guide was trying to say, writing quickly and then concentrating on the next question that needed to be asked. Following a procedure of typing up on laptop each manually recorded interview on the day it was conducted, allowed the researcher to easily recall what was said and noted. To process the audio-recorded interviews, the researcher used a program installed into her touch screen-based Smartphone. The phone possessed a generous memory (16 GB), with a voice recording capacity of one hour. During the audio-recorded interviews, the full-battery charged phone was checked regularly to ascertain its functionality, particularly during those interviews lasting more than one hour. A notice was written in the diary, parallel to the name of each respondent, indicating the number of the sound clip. For example, guide (No 3) had sound clips (SC/No 3&4). Following the interviews, the researcher downloaded these clips into her laptop, and renamed each alongside the appropriate interviewee name.

After each interview, field notes were also taken which described the length of each interview, the surrounding setting, interpretation of particular sentences, and reflection about the quality of each interview. Those notes provided details on these issues which the recorder could not capture, thus supplementing the interview data. Additionally, such notes allowed the researcher to recall subjective memory of details; a process which prompted genuine data analysis.

5.3.2 Main Fieldwork: Participant Observation

Participant observation is described as a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, interactions and events of a group of people as a means of understanding explicit aspects of their life (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011). Participant observation was originally introduced into social ethnography by Malinowski (1922) in his study of the Trobriand Islands (Burgess, 2008). This method enables the researcher to understand the subjects' lived experiences in real life scenarios over a period of time (Bryman, 1984; Jorgensen, 1989). Thus, it provides clues to different layers of the complex reality of the context and generates rich descriptions (Silverman, 2001; Gill and Johnson, 2010).

Participant observation has been employed in the field of tourism research. For example, Seaton (2002) studied tourists' satisfaction and perceptions of battlefield tourism. Similarly, Bowen (2002) investigated tourists' satisfaction on a guided inclusive tour in Malaysia. Tucker (2005) explored the narratives of place and self as constructed by tour participants in the context of package tours in New Zealand. More recently, Salazar (2012) undertook long-term ethnographic study on tourism in Tanzania. A common assumption which links these studies is that participant observation is a travelling laboratory for understanding tourism phenomena in great depth.

Capitalising upon these attractive features, the second round of data collection during the main fieldwork involved participant observation conducted on November 2012. The researcher joined a group of twenty USA-originating tourists on eight days/seven nights guided tour of Jordan's cultural sights. The rationale of incorporating this method was to understand the dynamics of tour guide's image projections and the tourists' image construction over a time continuum. It was also used to capture a detailed account of tour guide's representations and tourists' verbal/non-verbal reactions in naturalistic settings. The following sections present explanations about access, selecting the tour, data collection and recording. The limitations of participant observation and how these limitations were addressed are also discussed.

5.3.2.1 Access

A number of studies report that a major challenge in conducting participant observation is the securing of acceptance from participants (Seaton, 2002; DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011). In this research, considerable time and effort were expended in gaining access to participant observation settings. During the first stage of the research design, the main intended focus was on tourist groups originating from the UK, since the UK is said to be Jordan's biggest European tourism export market, sending 61,682 tourists in 2012 (MOTA, 2012). This seems to reflect the success of JTB's annual participation in the London-based World Travel Market (WTM), to enhance Jordan's image and attract tourists. A primary focus on the UK tourist market was also relevant for this research design; the researcher's intention while resident in the UK was to conduct UK-based post-tour interviews.

In the event, however, the rationale for attempting to gain access to the UK tour setting was challenged on two counts. The first one revolved around the political unrest in the Middle East due to the Arab uprising, beginning in 2010 and continuing during the years 2011 and 2012. This unrest seemed to create a negative perceived image of the whole region and resulted in many UK tourists cancelling their trips to Jordan. This is evidenced in MOTA statistics showing that UK tourist arrivals to Jordan declined from 65,304 in 2011 to 61,682 in 2012. The second count related to access to those tourists who were still visiting Jordan; those approached refused to give their consent to be observed. Saunders (2012) claims that any potential refusal of access can be attributed to the participants' perceived image about the research as intrusive.

As a result, this turn of events considerably limited participant observation opportunities for accessing UK-origin tourist groups.

However, since this research was striving to enhance the rigor and consistency of the data, the participant observation technique was not excluded from the research design. The data derived from this was collected when the researcher travelled back to Jordan prior to the Christmas break (early Nov 2012), to engage other English speaking tourists (e.g. American or Australian). The first rationale for this was timing; although tourist demand can be unpredictable, due to the negative perceptions of the region, the holiday period was more likely to show an increase in Western tourist arrivals in Jordan. In fact, most travel agencies in Jordan tend to launch competitive programs prior to the holidays, promoting Jordan as ‘a quiet house in a noisy neighbourhood’. A second rationale was that the researcher’s English language proficiency would facilitate comprehensive in-situ observation of the phenomenon under investigation. In fact, DeWalt and DeWalt (2011) maintain that a researcher’s knowledge of the researched subjects’ language is a prerequisite to conducting effective participant observation.

Thus the endeavours to gain access shifted specifically to USA tour groups (the rationale is presented in the subsequent section). Since the local travel agencies were envisaged as the main gatekeepers, the researcher approached JTB to obtain a list of Jordanian travel agencies specialising in the USA market. The researcher’s relationships with some Jordanian tourism stakeholders and policymakers also played a significant role in gaining access to such agencies. Following this, a number of Jordanian travel agencies were approached by phone and access was negotiated.

The access process was very time-consuming, firstly, because participant observation had to be overt in order to maintain the ethical considerations of this research. The ethical dilemma that exists between overt and covert participant observation is addressed in a number of books (see Jorgensen, 1989; Saunders et al., 2009; DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011). Secondly, the decisions surrounding access had to be confirmed with more than one party, including the Jordanian travel agency, the USA tour operator, the tourists themselves and the tour guide. It is clear that the complexity of such a tourism system makes access a very challenging task, which requires researchers to develop persuading skills and work on trust, particularly with the gatekeepers. Explanations about the value of the research to such gatekeepers were also found useful, as suggested by Saunders (2012).

Eventually, consent was confirmed with all concerned. The researcher then directly met the manager of the travel agency to discuss the tour arrangements. The phone number of the designated guide was also provided. Prior to the tourists' arrival, this guide was contacted to ascertain the final arrangements.

5.3.2.2 The Selected Tour

Theoretical sampling within the purposive strategy was employed to select the research setting (Patton, 2002). This involved careful selection of a tour that would add depth to the patterns of destination image constructed by the researched subjects as derived from the tour guide interviewees' data. The core theoretical criteria which addressed this aim included selecting a guided inclusive tour of Jordan, subscribed to by a group of tourists who had agreed to being observed. Other criteria, in terms of tourist nationalities, group size, average age, tour activities, and length of stay, were also taken into consideration.

The majority of package groups to Jordan are composed of tourists originating in Western countries (MOTA reports, 2011). This fact served as a baseline for selecting tourists' nationality for this research. Non-Western package groups were excluded from the research design for several reasons. Arab tourists, for example, tend to travel individually, and due to their shared cultural roots with Jordan, have no need to rely on guides to reduce cultural and language barriers whilst in Jordan. Package groups from Asia, the Pacific and particularly from Africa were also excluded from the research design due to relatively low numbers of visitors from these regions, and the researcher's inability to communicate in their languages. Such tourists, moreover, are normally accompanied by two escorts, their tour leader and a Jordanian guide, whose role is to provide information to the tour leader in English, who then translates this information into the tourists' language. It was believed that the language barriers and multi-processes of image construction in such package groups would hinder the power of participant observation available to the researcher.

As explained in the former section, challenges were encountered in accessing a UK tour setting and therefore the research focus shifted to the USA market. The rationale for selecting this Western market was that the USA is the biggest exporter of 'Western' tourists to Jordan, sending more than 156,600 tourists in 2012 (MOTA, 2012). In addition, UNWTO reports that USA tourists are the second top spenders in international tourism after Germans, spending more than 84 US$ billion in 2011 (UNWTO, 2012). The American market seemed promising not only for this research, but also for Jordan's tourism industry and revenues. It was thought that exploring this market could provide means to increase the US visitor numbers/expenditures that might ease the country's budget deficit, recorded at that time at 16 JD billion (Central Bank of Jordan CBJ, 2012).

It might be argued that the findings emerging from the UK tourists and the US tourists could be different. Although a plausible assumption, it can be offset by the argument that the close culture between the UK and the US would make it likely that tourists to Jordan from these countries would share relatively more similar ideas with each other than with tourist groups from non-Western cultures. It is also notable that these two groups visit the same Jordanian destinations and are subject relatively to the same Jordanian guides' representations.

The US-origin group size comprised twenty tourists, excluding the researcher, driver, guide and tourism police officer[4]. The size of the selected tour was relevant to this research. Having twenty tourists allowed the gathering of a sufficient diversity of participants' views, further enhanced in that the tourists came from different states and environments in the US. Having such a group size also enhanced interaction opportunities during the tour. In the event, each of the twenty tourists had questions for the guide, and some of the tourists shared further comments with the group and with the researcher. This prompted the collection of rich data.

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[4] The Jordanian tourism law requires a tourist police officer to accompany tour groups for the need for monitoring and as security measure (MOTA regulations, 1998).

Moreover, while one of the disadvantages of participant observation is seen to be the limited opportunity for repeating observations once an event has ended (Seaton, 2002), this research claims that it may be possible in certain contexts to do otherwise. It was envisaged that joining a group as large as the US tour group would enhance the probability of repeating the observations, capturing many reactions and complementing any loss of data. Indeed, some of the visits within this setting permitted a certain dynamic of tourist behaviour, in that tourists were free to move about in open and loosely organised ways, such as walking at their own pace, to pause or take photographs, the only proviso being that they should reach the point by a certain time where the guide would be waiting. Finally, this group size also relatively reduced the intensity of overt observation of each tourist, which otherwise might have resulted in discomfort and unspontaneous behaviour.

The group was composed of males and females aged between 30 to 60 years of age, although around half were of a similar age to the guide and the researcher. This was critical for the establishment of rapport, which facilitated mentalising of tourists' experiences during the visit. Moreover, while the group was largely young enough to respond energetically to the tour, allowing a dynamic mood and smooth running of visits, they were equally sufficiently mature and rich in life experiences to engage confidently in relaxed discourse during the course of the tour. This was important because the tourists posed many sensitive questions relating to religion, US policies in the Middle East, and Muslim relations with the USA after September 11, 2001 attacks as well as the notion of 'Jihad'. In dealing with these topics, the group's relative maturity allowed diverse data to emerge without prejudice.

The selected tour was drawn from a catalogue of cultural/historical packages. This was relevant to this research, given that Jordan is dense with historical sites, and thus, the cultural/historical packages are the most popular form of inclusive tour (JTB, 2012). Moreover, in terms of customer demand, this type of inclusive tour was seen by the USA tourists as preferable in their quest for local authenticity. Notably, the tour not only included cultural sites such as ruins in Amman, Jerash and Petra, but also offered adventure activities such as 4X4 jeep experience in Wadi-Rum. Other relaxation activities included mud baths, swimming, and floating in the Dead Sea (see table 5.2). This variety of diversified sights/activities gave rise to very rich narratives presented by the guide. In turn, the tourists were able to have what Bowen (2002:9) described as "passive and active involvement" in a wide Jordanian experience. These levels of involvement evoked different feelings of joy, pleasure, and surprise within the tourists, which is of particular relevance for understating destination image, given the significance of the affective component in this construct (see Beerli and Martin, 2004a; Boo and Busser, 2005).

The choice of observation time-period is critical to understand the variations in tourists' behaviours (Veal, 2006). The duration of the selected tour was relevant to this research, in that a package of eight days and seven nights is a typical time span for classical guided tours in Jordan (JTB, 2012). This ensured that USA tourists saw most of the country's major attractions, and allowed them to form relatively comprehensive perceptions of Jordan. From the researcher perspective, this time was not only adequate to observe what was happening, but also to experience the feelings arising from the tour (adapted from Gill and Johnson, 2010). Thus, the researcher was able to attain understanding of the way in which guide-tourist relationships might occur and develop, as well as to observe tour guide image projection and tourists' image formation during the visit.

To conclude, in line with the tenets of participant observation, the selected tour allowed immersion in the research setting and enabled good understanding of the phenomenon under investigation over a period of time, as originally suggested by Jorgensen (1989), Silverman (2001) and Cole (2005).

5.3.2.3 Data Collection and Recording

The group arrived in Jordan on the 19 November, 2012. The researcher entered into the life of the group at the beginning of the second day, when the tourists were met in the hotel lobby at Amman, and remained with them until their departure. This entry decision was made based on two reasons: firstly, since it takes more than 15 hours to fly from Dulles International Airport to Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA), excluding the time allocated for cross-borders procedures, with a flight arrival time of 23:00, the priority was to take the tourists from the airport to the hotel, rather than to discuss at that time any significant information about the tour. Given flight fatigue, such information might be overlooked. Secondly, it had been agreed that the guide would double-check on any tourist concerns regarding the researcher presence on the tour in the sequence of conveying the tourists from QAIA to their hotel. This gave the group time to voice any concerns privately.

Potential tourist ‘reactivity’ to the researcher’s presence was a critical issue that had to be handled right at the beginning of the tour. Reactivity is defined as “the researched subjects’ reactions to the researcher’s presence and the research process” (Gill and Johnson, 2010:81). Although participant observation should be non-intrusive with minimum interference (Bowen, 2002; Veal, 2006), in terms of this research, it was noticed that the researcher in some cases was observed by the tourists, probably due to their curiosity about how she was observing them. On the other hand, Jorgensen (1989) asserts that the researcher’s personality and approach are key instruments in successful participant observation. Having this in mind, certain tactics were adopted in the field: firstly, explaining for those interested that the researcher would be focusing on particular factors but also trying to enjoy the tour as a participant herself. Secondly, no notes were recorded in front of the tourists. Thirdly, the researcher acted spontaneously, and avoided steering or following specific tourists. Fourthly, the researcher avoided leading conversations during the tour so as not to alter what might be said. Finally, any tourists questioning the researcher were politely advised to direct their enquiries to the guide, due to the researcher's interest in recording what and how the guide might respond.

These tactics somewhat eased the potential risk of self-consciousness. It was also useful to build rapport with the group members, an essential element for understanding others' experiences within a given setting and collecting dependable data (Jorgensen, 1989; Patton, 2002; DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011). Accordingly, the researcher became accepted as one of the travelling party, becoming an "outsider among outsiders who later becomes an insider, through membership of the package tour" (Seaton, 2002:312).

Participant observation requires a particular approach to the recording of data, since the gap between observation and recording can hinder the data rigor (Patton, 2002; Seaton, 2002). These processes in this research took place in different contexts over the tour (see table 5.2).

Table 5.2: The Itinerary of Participant Observation Tour

Day/Date	Places Visited
Day 1 (19 Nov 2012)	Arrival to QAIA- overnight in Amman.
Day 2 (20 Nov 2012)	Amman ruins- Desert Castles- overnight in Amman.
Day 3 (21 Nov 2012)	Um Qais- Ajlun Castle- Jerash- overnight in Amman.
Day 4 (22 Nov 2012)	Nebo- Madaba- Shoubak Castle-overnight in Petra.
Day 5 (23 Nov 2012)	Full day in Petra.
Day 6 (24 Nov 2012)	Petra- Wadi Rum- overnight at the Dead Sea.
Day 7 (25 Nov 2012)	Day at leisure by the Dead Sea.
Day 8 (26 Nov 2012)	Dead Sea- QAIA for departure.

The data were systematically recorded in English, either manually in notebooks, or by means of an audio-recorder. The recorded data were both descriptive and reflective as recommended by Spradley (1980) and Jorgensen (1989). To record descriptive data, the researcher employed Seaton's

(2002:311-312) dual conceptualisation of the participant observation context: the first referred to as ‘closed field’, designates a context where the researcher and research subjects coexist in temporal and spatial settings as co-actors bounded by the span of events in which they are participating. The second referred to as ‘open field’, designates a context where the researcher and research subjects are separate actors in partly overlapping time and spatial fields (see appendix D).

In terms of this research, in closed fields such as the coach, museums and restaurants it was easier to observe group members and to hear their voices. In such contexts, the researcher purposely sat or walked behind the tourists to ensure minimal interference. This positioning facilitated the writing of a series of notes, and in some cases, a full description about what was going on. The notes were used to record when the tour started, what stops took place, what and how things were said and happened, and details of the surrounding setting.

In open-field contexts such as historical sites, the researcher found it challenging to keep track of all group members so followed closely on the steps of the guide, reasoning that the guide as a leader and information giver (Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993) would be a focal point for the tourists and their main support in managing the effect of cultural barriers in Jordan. The guide in such scenarios was the gatekeeper to understanding the problem at hand. In between stops, the tourists focused on guide’s interpretations of the sightseeing. Following each stop, time for taking photographs was permitted. This short time-lag facilitated discreet audio-recording of the researcher’s notes on the researcher’s touch screen-based smart phone, with the researcher simulating phone calls. The notes taken in such contexts were used to reflect on the setting (time, place and atmosphere), the tourist(s) (impressions, questions and reactions) and the guide stops at a particular location (how long, why, what kind of information, the way of interpretation and how detailed). This approach to data recording was useful in saving time, and reflecting more accurately on what was going on because the researcher was able to recall details in timely fashion. Further notes were written in the notebook, indicating what stops took place and recording numbers of sound clips. For example, the temple of the winged lions in Petra was noted as sound clip (No. 36). Following this, the researcher downloaded these clips into her laptop, and renamed them according to the setting name.

To supplement any potential loss of data in unobserved contexts, at the end of each day the researcher engaged in conversations with the guide and the tourists. This allowed the emergence and recording of further notes describing those actors' feelings. These forms of daily field notes are commonly used in tourism-based participant observation studies (Bowen, 2000; Seaton, 2002; Tucker, 2005) to be expanded and transcribed to a notebook after each day.

In addition to these notes, Spradley (1980:71) advised observers to write a journal that "represents the personal side of fieldwork; it includes reactions to informants and the feelings one senses from others". Therefore, reflective notes were written separately in a diary, which reflected the researcher's feelings and interpretations of what had happened over the US tourist visit. These were written down immediately as they were experienced during the tour, as recommended by DeWalt and DeWalt (2011) (see appendix E).

There are multiple roles that researchers might assume following this method, depending on their degree of involvement. For example, Spradley (1980:58-62) identified four main role themes, ranging from; 'non-participation', which occurs when the researcher observes a phenomenon from outside the researched context (e.g. watching T.V), to 'passive participation' when the researcher acts purely as an observer in the researched context. The further two roles were 'moderate participation' when the researcher moderately participates and interacts with participants in the researched context; and finally, 'complete participation' when the researcher intensively interacts and participates in the phenomenon.

This researcher assumed the role of moderate participant, or alternatively, "participant as observer" (Gill and Johnson, 2010:167). This strategy encompassed “immersion and resurfacing” (Dalton, 1959 cited in Bowen, 2002:10). That is, the researcher participated in the tour events and interacted frequently with the group members and then stepped back to observe and record notes. The cutting-edge of being a participant was witnessing and engaging with impressions of events as these emerged, as suggested by Jorgensen (1989). This level of engagement was sought for two reasons: firstly, to experience the researched subjects’ feelings and attain insight into their lived experiences. Secondly, to maintain objectivity. This is important, given that objectivity can be easily lost if a participant observer ‘goes native’ in internalising the participants’ culture. Since this would erode the capacity for collecting reliable data (Seaton, 2002; Gill and Johnson, 2010), attention to objectivity in engagement would be crucial.

5.3.3 Main Fieldwork: Post-Tour Interviews

The final round of data collection was conducted in Jordan (Nov 2012). This stage involved interviews with twelve US tourists and the tour guide encountered during the participant observation. The purpose of this stage was geared toward refining the findings, mainly from the tourists’ perspectives. The processes through which these interviews were undertaken are discussed below.

5.3.3.1 Question Design

The interview questions and structure designed for use with the tourists were informed by data previously collected from the tour guides in the research, and also by initial ideations arising from participant observation notes. The key focus of the interview questions was on the tourists’ perceived images of the Middle East region and of Jordan, prior to and after their visit. Some questions sought to elicit any dichotomies between the overall regional image and the specific image of Jordan, as well as to unravel the tourist motivations for visiting the region and the country. Other questions were designed to elicit any negatively perceived images of Jordan, particularly those expressed at the end of the tour, and also to explore the tourists’ evaluations of the designated tour guide’s performance. Finally, the interviews invited suggestions from the tourists as to which factors might help Jordan to overcome any negatively perceived images of the region (see appendix C).

Given that participant observation allowed exploration of issues related to the guide's image projection, the interview with the guide aimed to ascertain the meanings behind his actions. This principally involved questions about the logic of presenting certain attributes as they appeared and the impressions that appeared to load his representations.

5.3.3.2 Sampling Strategy and Recruitment

Mixed sampling strategies and techniques were employed to interview the US tourists. Theoretical sampling within the purposive strategy was used. Respondents were selected based on the concepts/themes derived from the data formerly collected during the fieldwork. More specifically, the patterns of destination image as constructed by the tourists were explored from the tourist's perspectives. US tourists from contrasting milieus, age and gender within the group were recruited to refine and saturate this theory.

A voluntary self-selection sampling technique was also employed (Saunders, 2012). At the outset, the designated guide was informed about the researcher's intention to interview a number of US tourists. The guide then politely advertised the researcher's intensions en route to the Dead Sea. Five US tourists identified their desire to take part. Saunders (2012) clarified that self-select participants often respond because they consider the research as important or interesting, and are thus, more willing to devote their time. A snowball sampling technique was then used, with each US interviewee being asked to propose other tourist(s) from the group who might participate. The sample snowballed to seven further tourists.

The access and interview with the designated guide was straightforward. The interview was based on themes derived from data previously collected and analysed. More specifically, this interview was conducted to saturate the theoretical categories related to the patterns of destination image as projected by the tour guides.

5.3.3.3 Data Collection and Recording

The interviews were carried out on the final days of the tour. A number of logics underpinned this decision. First, the tourists would have consumed most of the tourism services offered on the program, and hence, would have formed relatively comprehensive images of the country/sites visited. Second, having only recently completed such visits, the tourists would be able to recall many details concerning their experiences. Third, any matches/mismatches between the tourists' expected image and the actual experience would be able to be reviewed. Considering these issues altogether generated rich data regarding the complexities of tourists' images.

The interviews took place in two main settings: the coach and a hotel lobby. On the journey from Wadi Rum to the Dead Sea, the guide said that the journey would take five hours, allowing a generous period for interviews to take place. It might be argued that such a setting would represent a drawback to the quality of discourse. But in the event, the coach setting offered ample scope for data collection for a number of reasons: firstly, although the coach capacity was roughly fifty passengers, the group comprised only twenty, allowing provision of a quiet space in the back seats where the interviews could be conducted. Moreover, the sightseeing from the coach during this stretch of the journey was mainly of desert, with only occasional items attracting tourist's attention, or requiring the guide's explanations. This left ample uninstructed time for interviews. Finally, given that the travel was part of a catalogue of cultural/recreational inclusive guided tours, the coach was the perfect setting for encroaching minimally on the tourists' leisure time.

The interviews appeared a welcome distraction for the tourists, to fill this time-lag. Two volunteers participated before the bus stopped at a highway rest house for half hour. Three more volunteers willingly took part when the bus proceeded to the Dead Sea. Interviews were recommenced at the Dead Sea.

The schedules were set in the coach at times convenient to the tourists. A notification list recording rescheduled or withdrawn appointments was left at the hotel reception. Eight further interviews (including the guide) were conducted in the Dead Sea hotel lobby.

Interviews were conducted in English, each lasting for 20-30 minutes. To set the stage for each interview, an overview about the research aim and the interview process were presented. The protocol used was the semi-structured interview. At the beginning, “ice-breakers questions” (Creswell, 2009:183) were introduced (e.g. how has your tour been?). This mood opened the floor smoothly to discussions about the interviewee’s impressions prior to and after the visitation. Other relevant questions and probes were raised to sensitise any assumptions (e.g. could you please explain more!). Interviewees were allowed time to ponder and to record responses. Each interviewee was encouraged to raise issues relevant to the research problem, or to elaborate on impressions. Contact details were eventually exchanged, should the need emerge. Generally, the interviewees enthusiastically expressed their thoughts and feelings about the tour. This may have been because the actual experience exceeded the tourists’ expectations and, accordingly, the interview became the pool to unload freshly evoked ideas and feelings. Interviews were recorded by using an audio-recorder or manually, subject to interviewee approval (section 5.3.1.4 details interviews recording).

In conclusion, the above sub-sections detailed the processes through which the primary data were collected through the pilot and main fieldwork. The semi-structured interviews and participant observation generated rich information about the topic under investigation, allowing the voices of the guides and the tourists to be heard. The following section discuses data analysis.

5.4 Data Analysis

Data collection and analysis were tandem processes, beginning with collection of the tour guide data, followed by participant observation notes and post-tour interviews. As recommended by Creswell (2003), this section blends generic qualitative analytical steps with this research's specific steps. The Straussian approach to grounded theory analytical tools was also used.

Step One- Preparing and Organising the Data

Researchers suggest that the first phase of the qualitative analytical process is preparing and organising the data (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2003). Therefore, the collected data were transcribed manually into the researcher's computer to understand their contents. This process was undertaken following each interview/observation where possible; the rationale being that the researcher's impressions of the information gained would be fresh, easily recalled and transcribed, to capture details which otherwise could have been forgotten.

The researcher then read the transcripts to develop initial ideas about their meanings, then wrote memos and engaged in the process of conceptual ordering. Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe conceptual ordering as a method of organising data into discrete categories by assessing the data's underlying meaning. This is an initial tentative logical structure for investigating phenomena based on certain criteria such as time, actors and stages (ibid). Data ordering in this research was based on different criteria such as 'types of actors' involved in shaping the topic under investigation, namely the guides and the tourists. The data were also ordered according to the 'explored phenomena' related to each actor, and specifically destination image as projected by the tour guides and as perceived by the tourists. These cruxes were selected due to their relevance to this research overarching aim.

Step Two- Analysing the Transcriptions

Microanalysis, a combination of open and axial coding, was then undertaken. As recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2008), open coding was firstly carried out to discover the main categories and their characteristics. The data during the open coding were reviewed in order to identify particular units for analysis. Every response to a particular question was reread, line by line. This stage took the form of fracturing the data, looking for words that stood for concepts, clustering similar concepts into category and defining a category. If the emergent data were not pertaining to any specific category, a new category was created. To name a category, the researcher adopted an “in vivo code” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:115), in which the code name was taken from the words of the respondents themselves. For example, ‘official image’ and ‘dressed up image’ labels were derived from the guides’ words themselves to mark these patterns of constructed image. In other cases, the researcher listed a set of words and selected a name that best captured the category meanings, as suggested by Creswell (2003). For instance, a number of words stood behind the ‘fuzzy image’ category perceived by the tourists such as: unclear, indistinct, undifferentiated and blurring perceptions.

Open coding was particularly useful in discovering three main scopes of the constructed destination image, namely the ‘regional image’, the ‘country image’ and the given ‘site image’. It was also valuable in categorising tour guides’ representations as loaded with certain impressions into different themes, including ‘official image’, ‘personal image’, ‘dressed up image’, ‘distorted image’, ‘poignant image’ and ‘relatively realistic image’. Moreover, this allowed tourists’ perceived images of the above entities to be clarified, which were then organised into theoretical categories, including ‘fuzzy image’, ‘relatively realistic image’, ‘dynamic image’, ‘static image’, ‘peculiar image’ and ‘deteriorated image’.

Axial coding was operationalised during the next level of the data analysis. This type of coding is said to be useful for connecting an identified category in the data with its subcategories, as well as to identify the flow of consequences and events associated with a category (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). In terms of this research, axial coding was used to identify image attributes in relation to a given entity and to contextualise the connections between a given type of image and a given entity. In other words, axial coding was useful in allowing data which had been fractured during open coding to be reintegrated. This in turn allowed the researcher to address questions as to how certain types of image had been constructed, and to explore the consequences of these constructed images on tourists' perceptions. For example, it was found that the guides' construction of official images tended to exert an idealistic influence upon the destination image and on tourists' perceptions (see section 6.5).

Constant comparisons at multiple levels of the data were also operationalised. This involved comparing pattern to pattern (e.g. distorted/deteriorated), actor to actor (tour guides/tourists) and method to method (interviews/participant observation). The logic of constant comparisons was threefold: 1) To maintain a balance between objectivity and sensitivity as a means to generate discoveries, as originally suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998). 2) To establish any underlying uniformity as well as varying conditions in the data. 3) To increase the theoretical elaboration.

After this, further memos were written down (see appendix F), which raised the conceptual level of the data. Possible explanations as to specific image constructed by the participants were developed at this phase. Further data collection to substantiate categories was undertaken where necessary (theoretical sampling). Any assumptions were checked against the incoming data. In other words, the analytical process became more focused on refining the categories, which is termed in grounded theory as 'selective coding' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). This process allowed the researcher to check the consistency of the findings and to saturate the categories.

When saturation appeared to have been reached, the data were integrated into larger theoretical schemes, explaining the patterns of destinations image as projected by the tour guide and patterns of destinations image as perceived by the tourists. Three main core categories were identified. These were regional image, country image and site image. As recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1998), the criteria for selecting these core categories were based on their frequencies in the data, their central relation to lower level categories, their implications for more sustentative research, and their capacity for embracing other potential variations (e.g. other image patterns).

To this end, Corbin and Strauss (2008:105) claim that having more than one central category means developing more than one theory. Indeed, image patterns projected by the tour guides or perceived by the tourists of each one entity might stand as a strand on their own. Integrating these schemes into larger theoretical frames was based on the complex and multidimensional nature of the researched subjects' images. The data indicated that the participants were unlikely to hold a simple image of only one entity. Thus, any exclusion was seen as misrepresentation and distortion of the phenomenon being studied, although data analyses and interpretations of all these themes were very challenging tasks.

Step Three- Displaying and Interpreting the Data

Data display was descriptive and interpretive as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994). Quotations from the interviews and field notes describing the participants' views and ideas were extracted, and presented in italicised font style. Respondents' names were replaced by numbers allocated according to the sequence of interview processes. Field notes were also assigned descriptive labels; specifically the day and the setting in which the field notes were recorded. Diagrams were also developed to visually explain the connections between different categories and sub-categories.

The researcher then engaged in linking and comparing the findings with the relevant literature, including destination image, tour guiding and other different secondary sources. These processes enhanced the researcher's theoretical sensitivity and increased the explanatory power of the categories, as promised by Strauss and Corbin (1998). This in turn enabled complete explanations to be pieced together about the phenomena under study, as presented in Chapters Six and Seven.

5.5 Trustworthiness

Interpretivists have created a set of trustworthiness criteria appropriate to their epistemology, including credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The following sub-sections explain how these evaluative criteria were incorporated into this research.

5.5.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to internal validity of how truthfully findings are represented (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this research, credibility was established through prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, and member checking.

Prolonged Engagement refers to the purposive investment of time in the field in order to understand issues such as culture, building trust, and bridging misinformation that may occur during the data collection (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Prolonged engagement in this research was achieved through immersion in the fieldwork. It took more than four months to interview the tour guides. Interviews themselves lasted over fifty hours. Moreover, the researcher invested eight days/seven nights to conduct participant observation. These time spans were long enough to go beyond a fleeting relationship and to establish trust and rapport with the participants. Additionally, the relationships with some of the researched subjects, which are still maintained, bridged any misinformation and reduced any research bias that might have resulted from the researcher imposing her own beliefs. Finally, the researcher as a Jordanian national with a BA and MA in tourism, and with years of work experience in Jordanian tourism-based organisations, was familiar with the country and culture. This prolonged engagement in the field, compounded with a systematic approach of data collection and recording allowed the researcher to supplement any potential loss of data and to attain emic insight into the interviewees' worldviews.

Persistent Observation refers to the process of identifying and focusing on relevant elements that best address the research problem (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this research, persistent observation was maintained through the use of interviews and of participant observation for data collection, these methods being considered the most relevant for addressing the central research aim and questions. In respect to the choice of respondents, the literature indicates that tour guides are chief amongst those service providers who can influence a destination’s reputation and image during the tourist consumption experience (Dahles, 2002; Zhang and Chow, 2004). Research in tourism also represents tour guides as front-line workers with whom tourists interact for considerable lengths of time (Geva and Goldman, 1991; Ap and Wong, 2001). Therefore, it can be argued that tour guides are in a particularly good position to read tourists’ perceived images of a given destination, and as such represent a rich source of information for analysing destination image construction during the real experiences of a tour. In order to investigate the reality of this, the researcher recruited guides from different backgrounds and experiences in different geographical regions of Jordan as a relevant strategy to resolve the research problem. This was to investigate emergent common patterns emerging and their variations in the phenomenon under investigation (adapted from Patton, 2002). Likewise, the contrasting socio-demographics reflected in the tourists’ views as encountered during the participant observation were also incorporated in this research to enhance the integrity of the findings.

Triangulation is broadly defined by Saunders et al. (2009) as the process of collecting data using different methods within one study. Different forms of triangulation were employed in this research, including data sources, methods, investigators, and theories (Decrop, 1999b). *Data triangulation* was employed by collecting data from secondary and primary sources. As explained in section (5.2), a review of secondary data not only involved studies in tourism such as destination image and tour guiding, but also some scholarly literacy in psychology, archaeology, religion, politics, international relations, communication and media that was deemed relevant to this research. These forms of *theoretical triangulation* allowed the researcher to compare emergent findings with existing literature and to generate more sound explanations and interpretations. However, the empirical data itself involved multiple perspectives of the tour guides and the tourists. These perspectives were collected through *“within method triangulation”* (Denzin, 1978:301), exemplified in semi-structured interviews and participant observation (see figure 5.1). These methods generated, in some instances, consistent data and, on other cases, divergent findings, which enhanced the findings authenticity. Finally, *investigator triangulation* was achieved by having regular meetings with the supervisor team who are experienced researchers in qualitative studies. The supervisors commented on the clarity of the findings and interpretations presented.

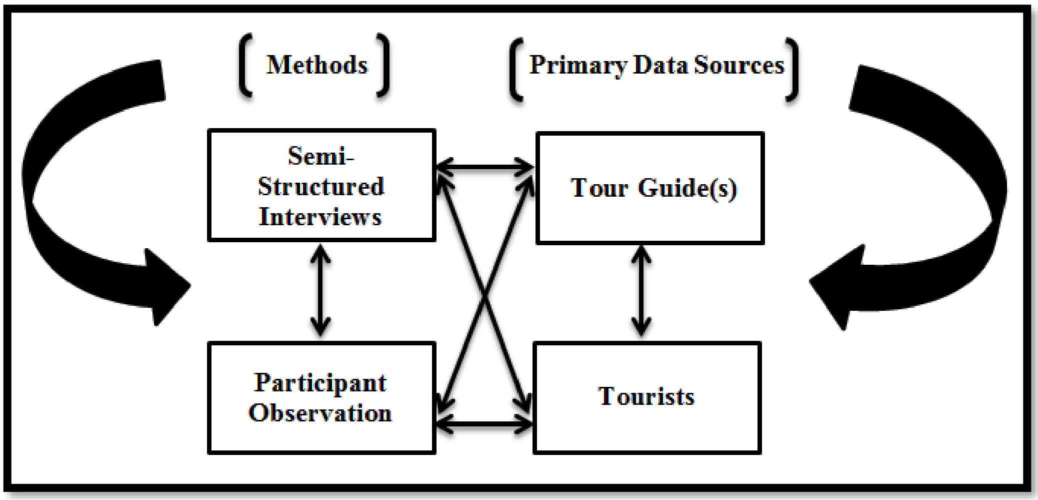

Figure 5.1: Methods and Data Sources Triangulation

Source: The researcher.

Member Checking refers to the process of checking whether the findings and the researcher's interpretations portray the research subjects' realities (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this research, a number of acts were undertaken to check the data and the findings. First, the respondents during the interview processes were asked probing questions, the responses to which were at times paraphrased to check the meaning of the answers. Second, a third round of data collection was conducted during the post-tour interviews with the tourists and the accompanied guide, in order to refine the findings from their perspectives. Third, triangulation processes showed that the data offered by different groups of interviewees were relatively consistent. This might indicate that the findings were true reflections of the researched subjects' lived experiences. Finally, some participants were re-contacted and were asked for feedback about the final findings and interpretations.

A tour guide contacted by telephone commented on the described briefs of chapter six:

'Yes, that is right and correct. What you described seems valid for me. About myself, I project realistic images, dressed up images and poignant images. But all these types exist, and other tour guides might indeed represent these types'.

A US tourist, who was sent a summary of chapter seven via email, commented:

'I read your paper and it's fascinating. It was interesting to see how you classified the different types of perceptions, and the examples that you gave seemed valid, and did seem to reflect my own experiences traveling to Jordan. It sounds well-researched, well thought out and accurate'.

5.5.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the findings of qualitative research can be generalised or transferred to other contexts (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Williams, 2000). A number of criteria have been employed to enhance the transferability of the findings from this research. First, the main category and sub-categories have been abstracted so that the findings could be applied to other destinations. Glaser (2002a) underpinned these assumptions in his arguments that limitless concepts can be achieved through abstracting a concept from time, place, and people. Second, the theoretical reasoning outlined in this research is based on studies conducted in many different countries. It was the context of Jordan which offered an arena for collecting fresh data. Third, detailed information of data collection and analysis are provided in order to make it easier for future researchers to replicate this research in other contexts, leading gradually to transferability of the findings. However, given that human behaviour changes over time and the current state of the Middle East is volatile, reflecting the multi-realties that shape the social world, the researcher believes that the findings of any study can only be partly rather than fully transferable.

5.5.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to reliability and replicability of the findings. Silverman (2001) argues that replicability is virtually impossible in social research due to the fact that an event follows a natural course; because of this, it is difficult to control the original conditions under which the data were gathered. However, Lincoln and Guba (1985) said that dependability is possible by acknowledging the processes adopted for data collection and analysis, so that it becomes possible to replicate a study and produce somewhat similar findings. Consequently, the rationale and procedures adopted to undertake the empirical investigation were discussed in detail in this chapter.

5.5.4 Conformability

Conformability refers to neutralising the findings or the degree to which the results could be confirmed by others (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Some strategies were used to enhance this research conformability. The interviews with USA-origin tourists encountered during the participant observation were carried out after collection of guides' views. This allowed flexible back and forth movement between 'insider' and 'outsider' perspectives with each group of interviewees. Moreover, an audit trail about the research context, data collection and analysis, examples of interviews transcriptions, observational notes and the researcher memos are all provided to allow assessment of the findings.

5.6 Grounded Theory Evaluative Criteria

Corbin and Strauss (2008) tailored specific criteria for judging the quality of grounded theory research findings. The authors argue that applying these criteria do not necessarily guarantee quality. It is rather the quality of the findings that speak for themselves. However, many of these criteria are similar to those discussed above. Therefore, these criteria are briefly outlined in the following table (5.3).

Table 5.3: Grounded Theory Quality Evaluation Criteria

Quality Criteria	Applicability in This Research
Fitness	Some participants were re-contacted and were asked for their feedback about the findings in order to verify an accurate fit between the findings as given and the participants' recalled experiences.
Usefulness	Recommendations are proposed in Chapter Eighth to reflect this research usefulness.
Well-Developed Concepts	Substantial data collection and analyses have been undertaken to develop the concepts/themes.
Contextualisation	The themes are interpreted in light of the characteristics and the influences of the research contexts.
Logical Flow of Ideas	Theoretical and methodological arguments are presented in this research to justify the logic of the decisions taken.
Depth of Description	Deep descriptions and interpretations of the findings are undertaken to make a difference in policy and practice.
Variations	Variety of methods and interviewees were incorporated to underhand the complexity of destination image.
Creativity	Contributions to knowledge are discussed in Chapter Eighth. The findings are presented on the creative capacity of the researcher in Chapters Six and Seven.
Sensitivity	Constant comparison and different forms of triangulation were undertaken to increase the researcher sensitivity.
Evidence of Memo	Presented in appendix F.

Source: adapted from Corbin and Strauss (2008:305-307).

5.7 Ethical Issues

This research complies with the Oxford Brookes University Research Ethics Committee requirements (see appendix A). As recommended by Saunders et al. (2009), research ethics were integrated into each stage of this research at the levels of question design, data collection and research writing.

At the level of question formulation, this research aimed to explore the patterns of destination image as commonly constructed by the researched subjects rather than certain individualised cases. Therefore, the research problem itself was not considered particularly sensitive. Even so, great care was also given to avoid very sensitive questions or discussions that might potentially arouse the participant's anxiety.

During data collection, a number of ethical issues were taken into consideration. This research was undertaken overtly, in that each participant was told about the purpose of the research and assured confidentiality. Prospective respondents were also informed that participation was voluntary. However, each interviewee who agreed to take part was handed the information sheet and asked to sign the consent from. These forms, copied on university headed paper, explained the research aim, dissemination of the findings and confidentiality issues in more detail. The researcher respected interviewees' rights not to take part, as well as the wishes of those informants who refused the audio-recording of the interviews, in which case only manual notes were taken. Moreover, the researcher avoided observing behaviours related to the participants' personal life (i.e. phone calls) and respected tourists' privacy and own spaces during participant observation. Subsequently, all collected data by means of interview and participant observation were kept in a locked cabinet, and electronic data were saved in the researcher's laptop and external memory that required a password to access.

During research writing, participants' names were replaced by numbers while presenting the data. Field notes were also assigned descriptive labels. This approach was employed to anonymise the participants as much as possible.

5.8 Limitations

Various limitations were encountered while carrying out this research. The first limitation relates to the intention to conduct participant observation with a UK-origin tour group. As explained in section (5.3.2.1), there were challenges in accessing a UK tour setting and therefore the research designed was altered. While participant observation was successfully conducted with a USA tour group, it might be argued that the findings might not have been exactly the same for both nationalities. However, these limitations may be seen as useful for triggering the agenda for future research relating to the nature of tourists' images in cross-cultural contexts.

Another methodological limitation might be related to the sampling strategy. Most of the guide interviewees were approached through gatekeepers. While this offered access to well-informed interviewees as elected by the guides' chiefs, this resulted occasionally in homogenous answers that reflected an orthodox side of tour guide views. However, the focus on any specific group who might share the same views was alleviated by interviewing tour guides from different backgrounds in different geographical regions in Jordan.

Additionally, it might have been relevant to incorporate the perspectives of Jordanian tourism policymakers. This might have provided more understanding of the images that Jordanian TMOs wish to convey of Jordan in the market place. Accordingly, identifying any potential gaps between images promoted by TMOs and images projected by guides or perceived by tourists might have been useful.

Another limitation might be the research context. Given that the Middle East region represents a variety of nations each with its specific qualities that may influence its image, the transferability of the findings to other contexts could be debated. Although a number of criteria have been employed to enhance the dependability of this research, cross-cultural applicability at least of the destination attributes are possibly compromised (Pike, 2007; Tasci et al., 2007; Assaker, 2014). The transferability of the findings, therefore, is an area for future research.

Finally, the experience of doing a PhD overseas is a profound if challenging experience, in that it demands adaptability to unexpected situations. For example, during the data collection process, the researcher had to travel from the UK to Jordan. The influence of travel followed by lengthy approaching, interviewing and observing interviewees was tiring. Another key issue was that the substantial primary data collected required considerable efforts to manage in a meaningful way. Such factors, on top of personal circumstances, time and budget constraints, impacted stressfully on the researcher and may have limited her effectiveness on some occasions. Nonetheless, time management, critical thinking and faith in what the researcher do were found to be useful strategies to mitigate such challenges.

5.9 Summary

This chapter discussed the use of empirical grounded theory in this research, and how it was tailored to address the research questions. Details about data collection and analysis processes were presented, and the incorporation of different criteria for evaluating the quality of the research findings were described. The main issues related to research ethics and limitations were also covered.

Secondary data were collected from technical (disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies) and non-technical (e.g. MOTA reports) literature. The empirical data were collected at different stages and involved a mixture of qualitative methods. At the first stage, a pilot study was conducted, involving semi-structured interviews with five tour guides. At the second stage, the main field work involved interviews with a further thirty tour guides. Following this, participant observation data were collected through the researcher involvement with a party of twenty USA-originating tourists. Concurrently, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the accompanied guide and twelve USA-origin tourists encountered during the tour. Following data collection, the incoming materials were analysed through open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Triangulation of theories, methods and data sources provided dependable answers to problem at hand. The next chapter presents the research findings, specifically the patterns of destination image as projected by the tour guides.

Chapter Six: Tour Guide Projections of Destination Image

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse and discuss the findings of this research in relation to the tour guides' projections of destination image during their tourists' consumption experience. This chapter's findings will report on observed patterns of projection grounded in the tour guide interviewees' data, supported by participant observation notes collected during the research. Where relevant, USA tourist interviewees' responses are occasionally cited for clarification purposes and as part of the primary data triangulation, undertaken in order to construct a matrix of identified patterns of projection. The matrix allowed where necessary some restatement of evidence for the purpose of reinforcing the validity of emerging concepts and categories. The data sets are also interpreted in the light of secondary sources, including those in the literature reviewed in Chapters Two and Three.

The data analysis suggests that tour guide projections arose in association with three main entities related to their work, namely the region, the country, and particular visited sites. Specific to the guides in this research were the Middle East region, the country of Jordan, and given sites within Jordan e.g. the Dead Sea (for a master list of the projected features of these entities, see Appendix G). The tour guides' commentaries of these entities were found to be loaded with a variety of ideas and feelings, which were categorised into different themes, including 'official image', 'personal image', 'dressed up image', 'distorted image', 'poignant image' and 'relatively realistic image'. Figure 6.1 below illustrates how these themes fit into the overarching structure of this chapter.

Findings of the analysis represent the data in three dimensions: the explicit dimension (tour guides' representations), the implicit dimension (patterns of image loaded with guides' representations) and the influential dimension (the tour guide's power to influence a destination's image and tourists' perceptions of the destination).

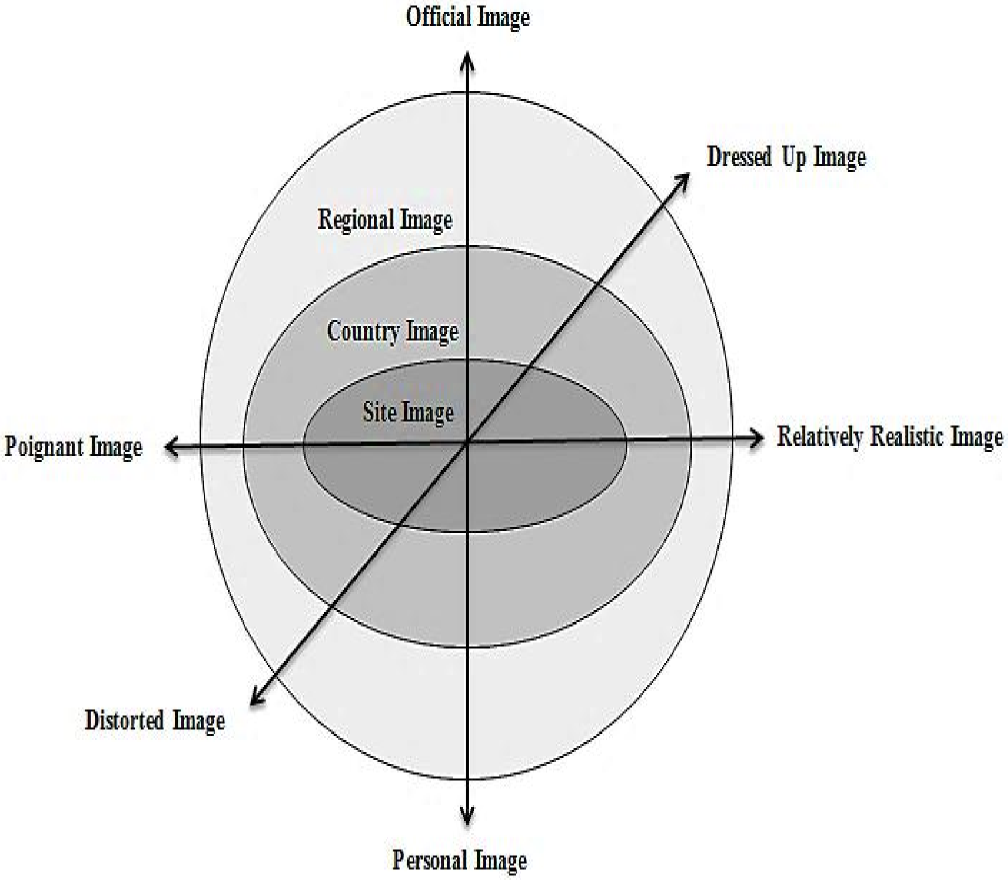
Official Image
Dressed Up Image
Regional Image
Country Image
Site Image
Poignant Image
Relatively Realistic Image
Distorted Image
Personal Image

Figure 6.1: Patterns of Destination Image as Projected by Tour Guides
Source: This figure, representing the findings of this chapter, was inspired by Echtner and Ritchie's (1991:40) model outline.

Following the above model, this chapter is divided into three sections, each addressing the tour guide constructions of 'regional image', 'country image' and 'site image', with an analysis of each of these representations where they occurred. Subsequent sections go on to explain various patterns of destination image projected by the tour guides in regard to these three entities. The final section presents a summary of the chapter.

6.2 Tour Guides' Construction of Regional Image

The empirical data suggested that the tour guides' commentaries were trans-boundaries, that is, extending their reference beyond the territorial spaces in which the guides were operating, to reflect a number of multi-contextual realities and changes taking place in the wider region at the time of the visit. Unlike previous studies focusing largely on the guides' interpretative responsibilities at country level (Cohen, 1985; Howard et al., 2001; Yu et al., 2002), this data suggested a wider tour guide mediation role in constructing the regional image. The findings also captured how a region's characteristics and time context might influence a tour guide's stories.

Tour guides' narratives during their tourists' Jordanian visits were found to encompass a wider Middle Eastern scope, to include Iraq, Palestinian/Israel, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and to less extent the United Arab Emirates. As such, the findings of this chapter may be useful for those interested in understanding how certain attributes of various Middle Eastern destinations might be projected by the guides local to one country. It was also found that even though the tour guide narratives might idiosyncratically vary as to language and sequence, it was possible to identify certain central themes threading through the guides' discourse, to include religion, politics, socio-cultural aspects, and issues surrounding tourism. The consistent focus on these specific themes suggests that the guides tended to identify them as the backbone of a Middle Eastern regional and historical identity, as well as having a place in contemporary world culture. The following sub-sections will discuss these findings in detail.

6.2.1 Religious Representations

Most of the tour guide interviewees identified Islam as the most frequently represented religious topic in their narratives, with reference to sub-attributes such as the position of women in Islam, the practice of polygamy, differences in the way that Sunni and Shia' sects view Islam, the concept of Jihad and Islamic associations with terrorism, and the 'pillars' of Islamic practices. Guides also reported commenting on the relationship of Islam and Christianity, for instance, the place of Jesus in Islam; and similarities between the Quran and the Bible. The following extracts exemplify these findings:

Guide (No 16): *'most [German] tourists ask about… prayers, inheritance, women's rights and why pork and alcohol are prohibited in Islam'.*

Guide (No 18): *'before the 11 September attacks and the war against Iraq, tourists' questions revolved around polygamy, women's rights and Hijab. However, now they ask about Jihad, differences between Sunni and Shia' and why a Muslim might commit suicide'.*

Guide (No 21): '*tourists also ask about Jesus in Islam… I explain that there are overlaps between the Quran and the New Testament'.*

Observational data collected by the researcher supported these reports. Also observed were lengthy narratives around extremism, Jihad, suicide bombers and the differences between Sunni and Shia' Muslim (observed on day six en route to the Dead Sea).

The preoccupation with religious issues in the commentaries, particularly around Islam, reflects the reality of the Middle East as largely if not exclusively Islamic. Although the region is also home to Christian and Jewish religions (Brown, 2006; Lust, 2013), Islam as the main religious belief system pervades the regional lifestyle and culture, affecting social and even business transactions (Usunier and Lee, 2009). It is therefore unsurprising that tour guides might lean on Islamic sources to interpret the meanings of social praxes in the area.

The tour guides' motivation for addressing religion as a topic in their commentaries might be two-fold. The first could be to bridge the gap between different religious groups, given that considerable numbers of tourists on guided tours to Jordan are of Western origin. Tour guides responding to tourist's questions around Islam may assume some tourist unfamiliarity with Islamic culture, and gear their commentaries to facilitate dialogue and promote understanding between different religious groups. Indeed, the empirical data suggested that guides in this research were striving to create a temporary common ground of interest by clarifying similarities or overlaps between different religions. In this they could be said to be engaging in "transcultural interpretation" (Cohen, 1985:15); that is, seeking to transform unfamiliar cultural aspects into idioms more familiar to their tourists. Such findings underpin the potential sub-role of a tour guide (Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985) as a cultural 'interfaith broker'.

The second motivation in referring to religion might be to manage tourists' possible misperceptions of Islam, for instance, that it is a religion promoting terrorism (see regional fuzzy image). Although world media coverage of ideological strife in some Arabian-Islamic countries (e.g. civil war in Iraq) might understandably lead to tourists questioning certain Islamic notions (e.g. Jihad and suicide bombers), equally understandably, the tour guides may feel that such perceptions need to be clarified by virtue of their professional responsibilities. Informed by Gunn's (1972) theory, it could be said that a tour guide would be acting as an image-compromising agent, proactive in reshaping organic images formed prior to the visit (see dynamic image).

6.2.2 Political Representations

Political focus identified in the guides' regional discourses was found to revolve around 'regional political conflicts' such as the Arab uprising, and around 'intra-regional political relationships' such as Arab-Israeli relations:

Guide (No 6): *'as a tour guide, I have to talk about Jordan and the Middle East. For example, once I am talking about Jordan's economy, inevitably I have to explain how the war against Iraq and Iraqi migration into Jordan has impacted on Jordan's economy and society'.*

Guide (No 11): *'I explain that there is a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel'.*

Guide (No 34): *'most tourists ask about… Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Arab spring and the current state of Syria'.*

Analogous findings were captured during the real tour observations. In reply to questions about the Gulf War, the guide alluded to political and economic tensions between pro-coalition Arab countries (those that opted to fight Iraq from Kuwait) and those of opposite alliance (day four in the coach to Shobak castle). When Arab-Israeli relations were raised, the guide outlined Arab endeavours to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (day three in the coach to Um Qais).

The subject of Palestinian-Israeli conflict over 'land rights' was the most salient regional political topic discussed between the guides and the tourists.

Briefly, this dispute sees Israel positioning itself as possessing historical and religious rights over the land on the premise; firstly that the Jews had lived there originally, and secondly that the land had been promised to the Jews by God (Smith, 2010; Tessler, 2013). Arabs opposing the Israeli position on somewhat similar grounds; firstly arguing equally valid historical association of Palestinian Arabs to the land, and secondly claim equally the country's Islamic significance as set forth by the Prophet Muhammad (Smith, 2010; Tessler, 2013). Such parallel and seemingly irreconcilable interests, causing long-standing hostility between the two parties and serving as the core element in the wider Arab-Israeli dispute, would not unexpectedly be a focus of interests for tourists visiting the region.

The findings suggested that reference to such issues was largely in response to tourists' demands for information to broaden their experience. The empirical data demonstrated that tourists interactively communicated with the tour guides, constantly raising questions about different political issues affecting the Middle East. Such information was perhaps raised by tourists to check any preconceived ideas formed through foreign mass media input prior to visiting the region, a process which scholarly studies in communication would label 'uncertainty reduction'. The theory serves to explain why individuals are motivated to reduce their uncertainty about other people and why they act in certain ways by seeking more information (Berger and Calabrese, 1975). These findings thus not only illustrate certain types of tourists-tour guides service encounters, but also evidence a claim in tourism literature that sophisticated and demanding tourists exist (Bowen and Clarke, 2002; Williams and Buswell, 2003).

However, another motivation for tourists' curiosity can be explained by their finding themselves in the context of unfamiliar regional events. The need to understand and interpret this context would serve as another potential catalyst for such commentaries. Indeed, analysis of the guides' data demonstrated that in explaining the causes and effects of regional changes on Jordan to their tourist groups, items such as the effects of the war in Iraq, the effects of the

Arab uprising on the Jordanian economy, and the effects on the fabric of Jordanian society seemed unavoidable. For the guides to satisfy their tourists' curiosity, and to give colour to their interpretations of a given country, it would have been inevitable not to engage with those aspects of history that were seen to contribute to the current state of that region.

6.2.3 Representations of other Attributes

Analysis of tour guides' macro-constructed regional images surrendered other salient themes such as socio-cultural Arab lifestyle, and issues surrounding tourism (e.g. historical tourist attractions):

Guide (No 7): *'some tourists comment that Jordan is friendlier than some other Arabian countries, so I point out that Jordanian people might be more educated and hospitable than elsewhere'.*

Guide (No 15): *'I talk about historical attractions in some regional countries, and I explain the similarities and differences between them and those in Jordan'.*

Observational notes mirrored these findings. For instance, when the Thamudic inscriptions in Wadi-Rum were being presented as a tourist attraction, the guide expounded further on similar sites such as Madain Saleh in Saudi Arabia, also inhabited by the Thamudis, and with architectural influences that echoed Jordanian Petra. This guide's story drew positive comments from some tourists (day six).

These findings would suggest that the tour guides took advantage of the region's relative historical and cultural homogeneity to render their commentaries interesting and informative. However, the findings also indicated that in constructing a holistic regional image, the tour guides were also able to sensitise their tourists to nuances of the region's sub-cultures. This flexibility of focus, from region, to country to site, was enhanced also by the tour guides' apparent ability to immerse themselves temporarily in the tourists' culture, to intuit and satisfy their focus on local information, and then when appropriate, switch back to a wider regional cultural focus to add colour to interpretations. In this the guides' key aim appeared to be to bring the richness of meanings embedded in the region’s ancient past and contemporary issues into the tourists’ lived touristic experience. This flexibility of interpretation appears consistent with observations in tourism literature, which report modern tour guides as having a cosmopolitan ability to move back and forth between multiple cultures (Salazar, 2005; Scherle and Nonnenmann, 2008).

The overall picture emerging from this section is of tour guides serving as a kind of ‘telescope’ for bringing distant regional spaces closer to the tourist, and rendering their history comprehensible in the present. This process would allow the guides to engage with the ‘seen’ of tourist experience in a given regional territory, whilst bringing in mental representations of the ‘unseen’, that is of unfamiliar regional features perhaps not yet experienced by the tourists.

6.3 Tour Guides’ Construction of Country Image

Tourism research has already suggested that tour guides can influence a country’s image and reputation in fundamental ways. As front-players, they not only influence the physical movements of tourists (Yu et al., 2001), but also facilitate their encounters with locals and with divers service providers (Christie and Mason, 2003; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006; Weiler and Walker, 2014). At the same time, tour guides are also recognised for providing meaningful stories about places visited and sights photographed, for the purpose of authenticity (Holloway, 1981; Leclerc and Martin, 2004). Such factors may result in countless variations in guides’ national discourses and as such, challenge any coherent research framework aimed at providing further understanding about the construction of a country’s overall image during a tour. Notwithstanding this, attempts have been made in this research to categorise actual tourism representations of a country, the findings being organised into main themes and sub-themes emerging from the data. Salient main themes appeared to revolve around the background of the country, the local culture, its politics, its economy, the local educational system and issues surrounding tourism. These themes are discussed in the following sub-sections.

6.3.1 Background Representations of the Country

The data showed that tour guides usually started a tour by providing elementary information about Jordan. This information involved the main characteristics of the country (e.g. official name), and some essential and practical travel tips (e.g. about the exchange rate):

Guide (No 13): *'after I welcome the tourists, I talk about general things, like Jordan's location, official language, currency and climate'.*

Participant observation notes were consistent with these findings, where the guide explained how the official names of country came about, to include the terms 'Hashemite', 'Kingdom' and 'Jordan'. In the same scenario, time differences between Jordan and the USA were noted, along with further information about Jordan's location, borders, population size and weather (day two en route to Deseret Castles).

This type of introductory commentary might be represented to set the stage for the tour, familiarise tourists with the local context and give them a generic overview of the country. A projected holistic image of Jordan might enable the guides to give tourists a sense of place so they would feel less disoriented. Another take on such representations may be that the tour guide, as a stranger among strangers, might through their role as information giver, directly or indirectly seek ways to control intergroup dynamics and to frame what next encounters might take form. The literature somewhat supports these interpretations, suggesting that tour guides can act as direct participants in tourists' moments of truth (Zhang and Chow, 2004). As such, they have to influence the tourists' first and positive impressions, in a way that will enhance the efficient running of the tour (Pond, 1993; Collins, 2000).

6.3.2 Cultural Representations

Culture as a broad notion consists of many different elements. Findings indicated that guides' interpretations of Jordanian culture included marriage traditions, local food, friendliness and hospitality, cleanliness and local coexistence. Other cultural communications emerged such as family bonds, daily life patterns, the fabric of society, local entertainment patterns, locals' entrepreneurship and architecture. The following quotations exemplify these findings:

Guide (No 8): *'some other stories include how Jordanian Muslims and Christians celebrate religious holidays together'.*

Guide (No 15): *'I talk about the local culture such as what we eat, what we do in the holidays and how some people establish successful businesses'.*

Guide (No 16): *'the tourists also love to hear stories about engagement and marriage traditions, family bonds and what the locals do daily'.*

Guide (No 34): *'tourists generally develop a positive image about Jordan, except about its uncleanliness, and they ask about recycling'.*

The first five cultural sub-features mentioned were represented also during the real tour. For example, in interpreting arranged marriage traditions in Jordan, the guide provided information about typical courting processes, the approach to marriage announcements and ceremonies, and why these prevailed in the local context (day four en route to Mount Nebo). However, the data arising from the observational notes uncovered further narratives in regard to local handicrafts, particularly those produced by the Madaba Institute for Mosaic Art. Promotional oriented commentaries were offered in relation to products such as the mosaics frames, Bedouin silver and the Dead Sea mud bath (day four en route to Madaba).

Thematic discrepancies were discerned between interview findings and observed data as to which national sub-cultural features were privileged in guide narratives. However, given the highly diversified nature of the country's characteristics and the complexity of the culture, it might have been the case that the guide for the observed tour found it unmanageable to represent every single sub-cultural feature of Jordan. Or perhaps this individual merely wanted to avoid a largely classroom environment on the tour.

The cultural mediation role of tour guides, as reflected in the above findings, has been extensively acknowledged (Holloway, 1981; Pond, 1993; Ap and

Wong, 2000; Yu et al., 2001; Dahles, 2002; Christie and Mason, 2003). Cultural mediation is obviously a goal-oriented process, aiming to promote understanding, foster acceptance and minimise cultural segregation during a tour. Fulfilment of such a role however requires wide knowledge and meaningful interpretations about various national cultural attributes.

Drawing upon secondary and the primary data, it would appear that effective cultural mediation in this research followed certain strategic steps, the first one being ‘selection’. This notion was first proposed by Cohen (1985) to define the generic process of pointing out objects of interest as a tour is conducted. In this research context however, ‘selection’ refers precisely to electing specific cultural mediatory topics and a venue for communication. Much of tourism literature alongside the current research implies that represented topics tend to be self-selected by tour guides, depending on different factors such as their personal preferences (Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993), and perhaps the ability to remember complex information. Wong (2013), however, observes that topics might be externally determined, e.g. by virtue of tourists’ questions and interests.

‘Venue’ refers to the setting where such cultural representations might take place. The data for this research indicated that tour guides typically selected the coach to deliver cultural information, perhaps first because the coach setting offered distraction-free space for communication, and also because the travel periods between destinations allowed some time for interpretations.

The second step can be labelled as ‘portraying’, referring to the process of introducing and describing specific cultural features to tourists (e.g. arranged marriage protocols). The final last step and main crux of mediation named by Cohen (1985) was interpretation, echoed in other researches (Christie and Mason, 2003; Ying and Simkin, 2009). Interpretation can be defined as an explanatory process aiming at revealing meanings about the host culture in informative and entertaining ways.

In this respect, the tour guide as projected by this research seemed to represent a key agent in offering a constructive reservoir of potential multidimensional social images of the host nation. In regard to Jordan, such multidimensional images could be attributed to the growth in cultural tourism. Certainly, interculturalism appeared to be an essential input topic for tourists' satisfaction.

6.3.3 Political Representations

The tour guides' political commentaries of Jordan crystallised into three sub-themes, including political development, interior affairs and the country's foreign policies:

Guide (No 7): *'I talk about the political transformation that has taken place in Transjordan since the Great Arab revolt against the Ottoman Turks, lasting until the independence of Jordan as a sovereign kingdom in 46 [1946]'.*

Guide (No 13): '*most tourists ask about Jordan's stability and safety... I explain that Jordanians, whether the people or the government, support Syrian refugees and we do not interfere with Syrian political affairs'.*

Participant observation notes partly supported these findings, identifying discourses on Jordan's interior policies, with reference to the regime, democratic life and elections processes. For instance, the guide reported that '*representatives are elected to serve for four years. There are 110 senators in house of parliament'* (day four in coach to Madaba). Jordan's peaceful regional relationship with Israel was also reported (day four in coach to Al-Sultani rest house). However, narratives about the political development of Jordan as a modern country were largely neglected during the tour, perhaps because tourists voiced a greater interest in the current political system of the country than its historical development.

Although a number of studies have been undertaken to explain the various roles of guides (Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Salazar, 2005; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006; Ying and Simkin, 2009), any specific reference to the political dimension of tour guide performance seems to be missing. The findings of this research, however, shed some light on the role of tour guides as political reporters, capable of addressing a wide range of sensitive issues relating to the country's sovereignty and its political system.

Political research defines a political system as a framework of "interaction to be found in all independent societies, which performs the functions of integration and adaption both internally and vis-à-vis other socialites" (Almond, 1960 cited in Johari, 2008:65). Under such a definition, tour guide commentaries on national politics might be intended to foster tourists' understanding of structural relationships between the government and local society in a given territorial space and beyond. The guide might also choose to deliver information about the early political emergence of Jordan as a state, on the assumption that Western tourists coming from the developed political systems of Europe and America would need to understand Jordan as a developing political system.

Another potential intention of such political commentaries appeared to highlight Jordan's political stability and intra-regional relationships. The guides seemed to engage in these topics not just in order to address tourists' questions, but also directly and indirectly to allay any implicit preconceptions or fears around perceived political instability in neighbouring countries such as Syria and Iraq. Guides may have found it necessary to check tourists' assumptions and to reduce any uncertainties about Jordan also being unsafe (see country fuzzy image). Such ideas would have led to the guides seeking to construct an alternative image of Jordan as a stable, sovereign nation with good diplomatic regional relationships and a low profile in political interference.

6.3.4 Economic Representations

Tour guides' representations of Jordan's economy took in sources of income, income per capita population, and the employment rate as well as price levels:

Guide (No 7): *'well, I say that average income per person is 300 JD when being asked. Tourists also ask about the employment rate'.*

Guide (No 15): *'I have to allude to price levels in Jordan because when tourists experience the expensive prices in souvenir shops or in the hotels they are really shocked'.*

Method triangulation supports these findings, although a different illustrative example is derived from observational data to avoid duplication. In referring to generators of national income, the tour guide included information technology, taxes, the mining industry, and tourism as well as medical services (day four en route to Al-Sultani rest house).

Data analysis indicated that sources of income were among the most represented topics within this theme, possibly in response to tourists noting discrepancies between their preconceptions of Jordan as an undeveloped country, and their actual experience of Jordan as a country of unexpectedly high prices. Tour guides may also have wanted to frame tourists' expectations about the country's average price levels to help them compare costs of different services/goods, and select what best suited their budget. These findings reflect tour guide endeavours to represent a wide range of information about the country, asserting the complexity of their work in the 'mentor or teacher role' (Cohen, 1985).

6.3.5 Representations of other Attributes

Commentaries on national issues also embraced valuable information about the local educational system and issues surrounding tourism such as diversity:

Guide (No 7): *'I talk about education, the number of universities, the percentage of educated women and the courses on offer'.*

Guide (No 4): *'I tell the tourists that in a few KMs they will see a diversified range of landscapes, climates, civilisations and topographies'.*

Field observation noted the guide focusing on education, through talk of national examinations, university entry requirements, and qualification equivalencies in Jordan (day three en route to Um Qais). His comments on the quality of university graduates seemed designed to reflect the quality of educational services in Jordan. The guide said: '*every day in the newspapers* *they ask for Jordanians to work in the Gulf; about half million Jordanians work in the Gulf countries. They like us and they trust the quality of our education'* (day four en route to Al-Sultani rest house). Other field comments supported interviewees' claims that Jordan's diverse history was also represented, the guide on different occasions pointed out the ruins of different civilisations that had settled in Jordan (e.g. Nabatean, Greek and Roman).

Education appeared to emerge as a theme serving to deconstruct potential tourist misconceptions of Jordan as backward (see country fuzzy image), and instead to reconstruct positive images of Jordan as a country investing in human resources. On the other hand, comments on diversity seemed framed to enhance tourists' 'overall or holistic impressions' (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003) about the country, or alternatively, to highlight special features of Jordan which could arouse their interest. Although the literature recommends that tour guides should have knowledge about geography, history and culture (Pond, 1993; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006), these findings suggest that the guides needed a far wider knowledge base in order to facilitate tourists' understanding of the country's overall characteristics.

To summarise, this section has discussed the guide's role in the actual construction of a country's image for tourists, through presentation and interpretation of diverse national characteristics. The findings demonstrated that the Jordanian tour guides had the capacity to offer a rich information package, illustrated by colourful representations which not only had the effect of facilitating tourists' understanding of the visited country, but also of reforming any potential tourists' misconceptions. As such, they might be described as 'image mediators', whose skill was to reconcile and harmonise the available flood of images at demand and supply levels.

6.4 Tour Guides' Constructions of Site Image

Tourism literature has little to say on the role of tour guides in constructing microcosmic site images, even though the proposed segmentation of 'site tour guide' does exist (Pond, 1993; Collins, 2000). Analysis and findings in this research however demonstrated salient themes in tour guides' site commentaries, related to local attractions, tourism services and site actors. Even though some of the attributes mentioned in the site commentaries might overlap with the country's overall characteristics, such as for instance common socio-cultural practices at local and national levels, it is acknowledged that even at site level, a single destination's image can contain components ranging from holistic to more attribute-based dimensions (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003). Given also the distinct conditions of each site, the tour guides reported adapting their professional responsibilities to interpret these attributes discretely within their unique environmental and social contexts. The following sub-sections explain further these results.

6.4.1 Representations of Attractions

Mainstream Jordanian tourist attractions appeared to be the dominant focus in this representational theme, including cultural archaeological sites, religious archaeological sites and therapeutic sites:

Guide (No 6): *'at the baptism site [where it is believed that Jesus was baptised], I talk about Jesus and Johan the Baptist'.*

Guide (No 24): *'in Petra, I talk about the universal significance of Petra, followed by historical information about the social life of the Nabateans, their kings and their economy. I also talk about the movies that have been shot in Petra'.*

Guide (No 32): *'at the Dead Sea, I talk about its healing significance as well as religious stories associated with the place'.*

Observational data abounded with similar stories. For example, at Um-Qais historical explanations were offered about the influences of ancient civilisations e.g. Greek, Roman and Turkish, on the site's architecture and ruins. Typically, delivery of specific historical information was given in front of each monument. At Um-Qais, this was given at three main points, the first being the Roman Theatre, where the guide talked about the theatre design, the acoustic system, the VIP seats, and the ancient Roman plays. The second stop was the Octagon Church, where the tourists were informed about the church's design, the apses and the basalt stone Corinthian columns. At the final stop, an explanation was given about Turkish house design (day three). In similar mode at Mount Nebo, a religious site, the guide was noted as speaking of the River Jordan as holy, and the site of Jesus' baptism. Further narratives were given about Moses (day four).

In general, such narratives seemed to be constructed to include the site's ancient name, when and by whom the site/monument was built, the architecture and function of monuments, the succession and rediscovery of civilisations, excavations and other activities taking place on a given site. Each narrative also appeared to involve a sequence from generic to narrower information, probably with a view to giving tourists a flow of logical and comprehensive information. However, it was found that certain accounts diverged to the extent that they might emphasise the cultural, religious or therapeutic significance of a site, depending on its nature. This reflects the vital role played by guides in providing meaningful stories relevant to the places visited (Pond, 1993; Yu et al., 2002; Scherle and Nonnenmann, 2008). The findings also suggest that one of the tour guides' communication responsibilities was to interpret silent sites holding the secrets of past times and past people, a process to make meaning of "petrified and fossilised stones" (adapted from Van der Vaart, 1998 cited in Gorp, 2012:18).

6.4.2 Representations of Tourism Services

Tour guides' representations of tourism services included available shopping centres, entertainment facilities, and other similar tourism superstructure elements at each visited place:

Guide (No 26): *'wherever we go I give brief information about shopping malls and souvenir shops'*.

The recorded observations support these findings. For instance, Carrefour Mall and Amman Mall were recommended whilst touring in the Jordanian capital (day two); likewise Petra's Kitchen and Petra's Turkish bath at Wadi-Musa (day five).

This representational strand appeared to be largely promotional, that is providing tourist access to a range of local services. In this respect, the tour guides appeared to have a direct beneficial impact on the local economy. They also were seen to play a notable role in familiarising tourists with the local facilities, which could enhance their visits. Unlike other tourism studies, which represent the tour guide's role of mentor (tutor) as more important than that of pathfinder (Cohen, 1985; Dahles, 2002; Randall and Rollins, 2009), this research argues that these roles can be of equal importance. The intangibility of tourism may give rise to considerable uncertainty in tourists, unless they can avail themselves of clear recommendations to experience fully the destinations they are visiting. Nevertheless, the subjectivity of tour guides in suggesting certain activities is likely to be understood by tourists as objective, and as such, it is likely that tourists experience the visited places in a way that is partly constructed and filtered by the tour guides (Yu et al., 2002).

6.4.3 Representations of Local Site Actors

On-site discourses normally make frequent reference to local site actors, interpreting indigenous people's contemporary lives and service providers' practices:

Guide (No 15): *'at the Dead Sea, tourists can see entertainment patterns of middle-class people. These might look everyday activities until I tell the tourists that services in most hotels are expensive and far from affordable by middle-class people. Even so, this could be the only way to entertain themselves and their families'.*

Guide (No 16): *'I justify the poor services provided by some hotels in Petra, by saying that some employees might not be well-experienced, but only working there because tourism provides job opportunities and income for them'.*

Similar topics were found to be covered during the observed tour. For instance, the Jordanian Bedouins' lifestyle, particularly those residing in Wadi Rum, was represented as distinctive in its sense of honour, hospitality and protection of guests. It was also reported that Bedouin judges are normally chosen for their integrity and wisdom (day six in Wadi Rum).

These findings interestingly reflect a different representation of local behaviour. In some cases, the guides appeared to intuit that tourists might see certain behaviours among home site actors as unusual. As such, the guides would seek to offset potential misunderstandings or anxiety by clarification. In this the tour guide would be functioning in the role of 'cultural buffer' (Holloway, 1981), that is as taking on the responsibility of reducing tourist cultural shock. The findings of this research also underpin the salient role of guides as 'cultural mediators' (Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993), given their willingness to interpret and transform local social practices into stories that would be meaningful to tourists and add to the authenticity of their tour.

To sum up, this section has shed light on the various microcosmic representational responsibilities of tour guides as observed in this research, and how they contributed to the formation of a given site image, and generatively to the country's overall image. In this respect, the tour guide may be regarded as an actor among actors, with a capacity to assume multifaceted roles toward tourists at a site, towards the site itself, and towards other actors linked to the site. However, in the last three sections, attempts have been made to establish frameworks for how tour guides will represent destinations. These frameworks are used as bases to explain the patterns of constructed image of a region, country and site, as discussed below.

6.5 Images of an Official Nature

An official image is a type of image projected by tour guides in regard to given features of a region, country or site, designed to reflect their policymakers' worldview. A variety of stakeholders may be involved in delivering a destination image, and this may lead to tensions in maintaining purity of desired images (Camprubi et al., 2009; Daye, 2010). But such tensions are not necessarily insurmountable, and the findings of this research suggested that some tour guides projected certain features in a way consistent with official policy, and which would influence how such entities were perceived.

Analysis of the guides' regional commentary data indicated that an official stance was generally adopted on political relationships in the Middle East. In this, Arab-Israeli relationships were most represented:

Guide (No 22): *'when tourists ask about Arab-Israeli relationships. I explain that there are peace negotiations and peace agreements with Egypt'.*

Recorded observations encapsulated detailed accounts of such peace negotiations, for instance, when the guide specifically referred to the Beirut summit undertaken by Arab leaders to steer the peace process in the region. The guide explained that the summit had resulted in a proposition to naturalise the relations between Arabs and Israelis, in exchange for a declaration of Palestine as an independent country. On lines drawn up in 1967, this included the return of refugees and withdrawal from the occupied Golan Heights (day three en route to Um Qais).

In order to theorise how far such commentaries resonated with official Arab policymakers' foreign policies, some investigations were carried out. It was noted that the website of the Council League of Arab States, for example, highlighted a variety of summits undertaken by Arab leaders to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. A majority of Arab peace plans referred to the Arab league summit held in the Lebanese capital Beirut in 2002, calling for "*full Israeli withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied since June 1967, and Israel's acceptance of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. In return, there would be an establishment of normal relations in the context of a comprehensive peace with Israel*" (www.arableagueonline.org, 2013). A second source investigated was the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which reflects the state's desire to build up diplomatic relations along the lines of the peace treaty signed with Israel at Camp David in 1979 (www.mfa,gov.eg, 2013). Information about Israel's foreign relations and stances toward peace process are available at www.mfa.gov.il.

The tour guides' data regarding their presentations of regional policymakers' views were rationalised as exercising sensitivity in accommodating tourists from diverse backgrounds and political beliefs. Rather than risk imposing the guide's personal beliefs about Israeli land rights which might be contested by some tourists, it was thought more diplomatic to reproduce the official perspective, for the sake of a 'peaceful tour'. In other words, some guides perceived occupying an official stance to be a zone of safety, from which position they would be protected in any potential disputes with tourist's opinions.

Three main assumptions can be derived from these findings. First, a "safe" and official political approach arguably creates an idealised image of the region, portrayed as devoid of hostilities, and with active peace negotiations in process. This seems to overlook conflict escalation in the Middle East, and to avoid the real complexity of Arab-Israel relationships (see section 6.2.2 for further discussion). Second, the tourism context seems understood as a potential ground for ideological confrontations between some tourists' and local guides' divergent views on sensitive issues. Third, the tour guides' role as ambassador seems not confined to the country in which they function as proposed by Holloway (1981), but also to extend to affect the wider region. In this tour guides could be said to act within the political paradigm as informal diplomats, who may exercise delicacy in representing 'regional power' in the context of Arab policies.

A number of guide interviewees emphasised their aim to project Jordan nationally along the lines that they believed their policymakers would wish, particularly with regard to Jordan's interior affairs and foreign policies:

Guide (No 16): *'I think any guide should consistently represent the image of Jordan as a modern, democratic and safe country, and should underline that currently there are positive changes and political reforms in Jordanian society'.*

Guide (No 33): *'the officials might wish to project Jordan as having diplomatic relationships at regional and international levels such as we have peaceful relations with Israel'.*

Analysis of observational notes echoed these findings. For example, commentaries about the Gulf War abounded with reports of the political mediating role of Jordan in the region. The guide said: '*Saddam Hussein attempted to invade Kuwait. Iraq was strong and powerful. Jordan told Saddam not to do this, to leave Kuwait alone. The further influence of the Gulf region and USA were not enough, so it was necessary to send troops to fight in Iraq. However, Jordan had good relations with Iraq… So we told them we could not fight them'* (day four in the coach to Shobak castle).

Such constructed images follow those favoured by Jordanian policymakers. The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, for instance, portrays the country as one of the most moderate and secure countries in the region, with a goal to develop at a steady pace (www.mfa.gov.jo, 2013). Further investigation of the same website confirmed that Jordan was being officially projected as diplomatic, and wanting peaceful relations with Israel, signing peace agreements such as that of Wadi-Araba in 1994. Another source reported the mediating role of Jordan during the Gulf war, as well as the constructive role of King Abdullah II in managing the Middle Eastern regional conflicts (www.kingabdullah.jo, 2014).

Scholarly studies in tourism have already indicated that tour guides may represent certain objects in accordance with directions received from the authorities (Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993). These assumptions have been explored deeply by Dahles (2002), who found that in Indonesia, tour guides were specifically hired to disseminate polished images prescribed by the local government. This research sustains these views; it appears for instance that MOTA involvement in Jordanian guide accreditation process might have influenced guides' representational styles and have resulted in commentaries modelled along official lines. But a "safe" political approach might also stem from the nature of the represented topic itself. That is to say, given that the nature of political topics tends to be tied up with a given country's sense of sovereignty and prestige, adopting an official stance in line with what is represented would avoid the risk of a guide imposing mono-perspectives and potentially having a biased influence.

The empirical data interestingly seem to suggest that this type of constructed images, as convergent with policymakers' inspirations, had a desirable influence on tourists' perceptions. For example, a US tourist (No 7) said: *'I got the impression that they [Jordan]… are trying to maintain stability and to be successful and stable in this area, and trying to function as a mediator in the region'.* This positions the tour guide as a powerful 'induced agent', following on from Gartner's (1993) model of the guide as contributing to the formation of favoured images in the minds of tourists. Such assumptions, it should be noted however, contradict Banyai's (2010) view of the tour guide as an organic image formation agent.

Certain sites, particularly those with political associations, were also represented according to official lines. For instance, the Al-Baqaa' site, located north of Amman, houses one of the largest Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan. Data analyses revealed that if the coach passed by this site, commentaries delivered by the guides would include information about Jordanian-Palestinian coexistence:

Among others, guide (No 11): *'when we pass by Al-Baqaa', I talk about how Palestinians are treated as equals to Jordanians'.*

The appointed guide of the observed tour similarly said: '*Palestinians in Jordan are granted Jordanian passports, except those from the Gaza strip, and enjoy rights equal to Jordanians. Some Palestinians are very rich. They have established successful businesses, along with schools and universities'* (day three en route to Um Qais).

These representations do indeed correspond to the official discourses portrayed on the Jordanian Ministry of the Interior website, reflecting Jordan's full support of Palestinians refugees since the Arab-Israeli war in 1948. Most Palestinians in Jordan are naturalised (www.moi.gov.jo, 2013), following moves from the Royal Family to unify citizens from different ethnic backgrounds, and to create unity over critical national issues and involvement of the local communities in national development. Example of these initiatives includes the ‘We Are All Jordanian’ move launched in 2006 (see www.kingabdullah.jo). Despite such efforts, some researchers report Jordan as challenges in their creation of a hybrid national identify, because of ideological and structural diversity (Brand, 1995; Frisch, 2002). More recently, Massad (2013) has observed that both Palestinians and Jordanians have sought to maintain their distinct identities in local settings, maintaining different clothing, accents and sporting affiliation. Such differences at times create social tensions and reflect the sub-cultural divide (ibid).

Such evidence reflects some interesting difference between the relative reality of local social practices and the tour guides’ politically oriented representations of the same. As such, it can be claimed that while the adoption of policymakers’ views by tour guides serves to portray front-stage realities, or to construct a unified set of idealised national images, any potential local backstage social fragmentation is largely ignored. This is perhaps due in part to the nature of local politics itself. Tour guides may perceive these as representing subtle differences from the wider national picture, rather than as individualised or divergent examples. In fact, Dahles’s (2002) study supports somewhat this interpretation, claiming that tour guide provision of representations according to the politically correct edicts of local government, plays a key role in constructing the desired national identity.

6.6 Images of a Personal Nature

Personal image can be defined as a pattern of constructed images that corresponds to a tour guide’s personal perspective when representing given features of a region, country or site. To take this point further, variations in guides’ reported perceptions and meanings as they construct their complex social world for the tourists may well arise from what might be called a ‘personalised perceived image’ on the part of each guide. The data suggested that such personal worldview did at times become the interpretive platform from which the multi-contextual realities of visited destinations were communicated to tourists.

Guides' subjective images of the Middle East appeared to be associated with representations of certain socio-cultural practices, such as Arab women veiling, or covering the whole face:

Guide (No 18): *'they [tourists] typically ask why women veil their faces. I explain that women in the past tended to live in the desert and started wearing veils to protect their faces from the dust and sunrays. Gradually it has become a tradition'.*

Data recorded during the real tour mirrored these findings. When questions were raised about the fashion practices of some Muslim women such as: '*if a Muslim woman wears Hijab [covering hair only] to protect herself, why does she put on makeup?'*(from a female tourist), the guide answered*: 'I think because she wants to look beautiful'* (day four in the coach to Mount Nebo).

The tour guides' subjectivity at times seemed to emerge from the nature of the represented phenomenon, particularly if surrounded by uncertainty. To clarify, the veil as an item of women's clothing is often an unresolved subject for debate in Islamic communities. In this context, Gabriel and Hannan (2011) observe disagreements among Islamic followers as to whether the veil should be compulsory or permissible. This is because no Quranic verses explicitly command Muslim women to veil their faces, although they are religiously required to guard their modesty (see verses 24:30-31). The discrepancies between the Islamic rules, largely observed in that region, and the personal practices of some women therefore might give rise to uncertainty in the tour guides. Accordingly, they might have experienced the necessity to explain these societal phenomena based on their own understanding, as demonstrated above.

Subjective commentaries on Jordanian lifestyle seemed also to be interwoven with socio-cultural characteristics:

Guide (No 1): *'I explain that Mansaf [the national dish] is eaten by hand by Jordanians as an expression of equality'.*

Among many, guide (No 22): *'there is a variety of topics to fill in the tourists' time such as what Jordanians do daily and what they eat'.*

Participant observation notes showed that the personal beliefs of the tour guide did appear to lead to some interposed political discourses about Jordan's interior affairs. For example, the guide stated: *'the people are protesting because the government has cut down on the fuel subsidies, which has resulted in a price increase... personally I support these protests; there is only one life to live and it should be dignified'* (day four in the coach to Mount Nebo).

These findings could be interpreted in different ways. For instance, Mansaf might be eaten by hand for multiple cultural reasons. One is that spoons did not exist in the country in the past, so that eating by hand gradually became a tradition. Another is that some people believe their hands to be cleaner than a restaurant's spoons, and therefore, it is safer to eat by hand. However, guide (No 1) above appears to have represented the Mansaf practice from a more unique symbolic personal understanding of its meaning. Similarly, the guide (No 22) would have been giving a personal perspective on Jordanian eating habits. This is because there is no generalisation, given that Jordan consists of diverse social classes, each with a distinct lifestyle, socio-cultural system and dietary practices. Those of the upper-class would tend to be different from those of the middle and lower classes. As such, a description of what people eat may be somewhat rooted in the guide's own socially constructed understanding, rather than on his/her capacity to know or to explain exactly what all Jordanians do or eat on a daily basis.

Field notes in this respect reflected the usefulness of participant observation as a research process, in that it enabled the researcher to make inferences about the guide interviewees' unvoiced personal opinions as well as those they voiced. The conclusion derived from these notes was that the nature of guide projections will depend on the situations encountered during the tour. For instance, while talking about political protest in Jordan, as actually eye-witnessed by the tourists, the designated guide might have revealed his personal stance on the phenomenon, probably to justify or represent the protesters' voices. As a guideline, it seemed that the more rapport and friendship were established between guide and tourists, the fewer formalities were likely to be observed, and the more likely the guide would project his/her personal opinions.

Research in tourism suggests that tour guide's interpretations include the art of selecting messages and information (Pond, 1993; Poudel and Nyaupane, 2013), in such a way as to contribute to the construction of a 'true' story about a country. This would offset the likelihood that tourists would travel home with their own conclusions (Howard et al., 2001). However, the implication arising from this research is that the guide's cultural mediation process may at times boil down to a representation of the guide's own worldviews. Thus tourists might travel home influenced, at least partly, by the guides' conclusions.

On-site construction of subjective images appeared to be associated with representations of certain historical monuments. That is, ancient past identities and performance might be interpreted based on the guides' own theories:

Guide (5): '*there is no definite evidence about what the Great Temple in Petra was used for. So seriously, I do not know what to say about it, when we [the tour group] pass by the Temple. I explain that the monument could be the parliament of the old Nabatean city; because some of the main leaders' and general officers' names are mentioned there'.*

Another guide (No 29): *'once in the girls' palace in Petra, I tell tourists that a beautiful Nabatean girl owned the palace and that she had many marriage proposals; however, she required her lovers to bring water into her palace before she would accept anyone, and that started a competition'.*

These results are reiterated in the observational notes, which produced the guide's representation of Jerash accompanied by fabricated myths. While the group was walking in the oval forum, the guide focused on the pavement, commenting: *'even though the Greeks didn't pave some streets properly, when the Romans came in, they left it like that. Maybe they aimed to reflect for later* *generations that Roman crafters were more professional than the Greeks'* (day three).

Some studies in archaeology have been reviewed to check these findings. In this context, Joukowsky (2001) points out that only five per-cent of Petra has been excavated and modern investigations continue to uncover the mysteries of the city. However, scientific excavations that have explored the hydraulic system of Petra found that the Nabataens possessed high engineering capability and cognitive skills in solving complex hydraulic problems to ensure a stable water supply to Petra. This is speculated as a key reason behind the many centuries of flourishing city life (Ortloff, 2005). In terms of Jerash, it appeared that a violent earthquake rocked the site in 749 AD and destroyed large parts of the city (JTB, 2014). Later generations perhaps erratically patched the ancient displaced pavements, which might explain the cause of Jerash's current pavement layout.

Two inferences arise from these findings. First, imaginatively recounted tales are more likely to occur in guides' accounts when there is no immediate concrete evidence to draw on, as in the example of the Great Temple in Petra. Second, such representations might at times be no more than a reflection of the guides' limited knowledge, which they supplement with accounts based on their own imaginations of ancient pasts, as exemplified above in relation to the girls' palace in Petra, and the paving in Jerash. The tour guides might have adopted this route to waylay suspicions about their credibility as information givers, rather than risk failing to give any real account. Such situations might also distort the guides' 'ideal social self-image' (adapted from Sirgy and Su, 2000) and eventually undermine their authority for tourists. This research thus supports Ying and Simkin's (2009) conclusions that the guides might consciously allow personal issues to impinge on their behaviours, particularly, when they feel that their self-esteem is challenged.

These findings overall reflect how unique contributions based on each designated guide's worldview might contribute to humanising a tour. After all, tour guides are not expected to function like robots or to bracket their worldviews before proceeding to a tour[5]. The complexity and spontaneity of human interactions, particularly in environments such as tourist itineraries which may involve extended interaction between different parties over hours, days or even weeks, may render it difficult for guides entirely to suppress their personal opinions during their representations. In fact, some research claims that it benefits tourists when guides contribute a personal touch to their commentaries, as they act as a major contact point for tourists getting to know a country and its citizens (Pond, 1993). However, it could be also argued that too wide variations in guides' personal perceptions and backgrounds might result in inaccurate bias, that is, if personal interpretations were over-extensively projected. This poses a risk of building up a series of incorrect images in tourists' minds, resulting in distorted mental representations of a destination. This is risky when tourists may already harbour personal images containing bias and unchecked assumptions (Tasci and Gartner, 2007). It would seem a prudent guideline to guides, therefore, to acknowledge the truths of a context where possible to avoid any potential distortions of the social world being represented.

6.7 Images of a Dressed Up Nature

A dressed up image is defined as a tour guide's attempt to adorn negative aspects of a region, country and site in such a way as to make them appear less unpleasant. For instance, when tourists are accidentally exposed to backstage not normally visible to foreigners, guides may feel obliged to justify and embellish what is being observed. The impressions associated with such commentaries have been labelled images of a 'dressed up' nature.

Dressed up interpretations of the Middle East region were found to be associated with street vendors' practices. Although the guide on the observed tour constructed understanding of this feature in a different way (see section 6.8), the data offered below from guide interviewees' exemplify these findings:

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[5] The researcher borrowed the idea of bracketing from research method in phenomenology.

Guide (No 4): '*some tourists comment that vendors in Egypt are pushy. I explain that can be true everywhere tourists go and that people are trying to make a living'.*

Similarly, guide (No 30): *'I dress up the practices of vendors in some regional countries by explaining that the unemployment rate might be high and some people cannot find a job so they are trying to make a living'.*

The primary data showed that some guide interviewees engaged in causal inferences as a way of dressing up an observed practice. These findings overlap somewhat with the attribution theory proposed by Weiner et al. (1971) to explain how individuals interpret events, and attribute causes to behavior. This theory has been applied in tourism literature to understand tourists' dissatisfaction constructs (Yuksel, 2008). In terms of this research, some tourists may already have formed negative images about vendors' practices through prior travel experiences in the Middle East, or from exposure to negative word of mouth dissemination. Such incidents might have created inconvenient homogenised images of all vendors in the region. When subsequently such tourists visiting Jordan experienced a more friendly approach on the part of the vendors, the discrepancy they experienced from their previous associations with vendors' practices may have provoked questions about the difference. As shown above, a dressed up route was chosen by the guides, by attributing the causes of negative behaviors as factors external to the vendors' self.

The strategy of explaining regional differences without denigrating individual's practices has been referred to as 'external attribution', or 'situational attribution' (adapted from Weiner el al., 197), where the blame for certain acts is attributed to external factors beyond the immediate control of the actors. Alongside this attribution to external causes is a 'stability of causes' (Weiner el al., 1971); in that the attributed act is portrayed as temporary, unstable and likely to diminish in the near future.

The interview data suggest that the tour guides in this research did resort to strategies which appeared to correlate with Weiner's et al. (1971) theory. Their use of dressed up images of Jordan appeared in response to perceptions of dirtiness and poor quality of services. A considerable number of guide interviewees reported making efforts to justifying these conditions:

Guide (No 8): *'to dress up the state of poor services such as coach break down, I tell the tourists that it is high season and most coaches are fully booked, so you are lucky to find an empty one'.*

Guide (No 10): *'the most negative image of Jordan come from uncleanness. So, I soften the dirtiness by saying that the street cleaners have not started work yet! Or that some children have thrown around rubbish after the cleaner has finished work'.*

In these extracts, the blame for dirtiness and breakdowns was attributed to agents outside of the cleaner's or the travel agency's control, while reference to stability of causes (ibid) was also evident.

The tour guides appeared to use these strategies to create positive images far from the reality of the situation may in part be attributable to their cultural identity. In cross-cultural research, Arab culture has been described as collectivist, in that individuals tend to empathise self-identify with one or more collectives i.e. tribe, country and region (Kafaji, 2011). As Jordanians in the Arab world, these tour guides may have felt connected through various cultural factors beyond the self to a wider cultural identity, which might in turn influence the guide's performance (Ying and Simkin, 2009). Such a collectivist identity might motivate tour guides to dress up undesirable regional and local events in order to mitigate any loss of face arising from negative perceived images, and to buffer any further unfavorable reports.

A parallel interpretation of guides' use of dressed up images may be attributed to the perceptions of guides and tourists of tourism as a largely service-based industry, with an expectation that services will be provided to a standard compatible with tourists' inputs (e.g. money). The guides might have anticipated that actual service provision that fell below tourists' expectations would lead to anxiety and diminish tourist satisfaction. This would impact in turn on the guides' job security. Given that travel agencies depend on guides for managing tourist complaints, and ensuring continuous quality control of the tourist experience (Geva and Goldman, 1991; Scherle and Nonnenmann, 2008), any unexpected incidents altering the smooth running of the program would almost certainly fall to the guides as performance pressure. To offset this risk, and to readjust the tone of the tour without discomfiture for all concerned parties, some tour guides might have resorted to the identified dressing up strategies.

Observational data supports such assumptions. For instance, the quality of services was noted as poor when the tour coach broke down en route to the Dead Sea. The guide directly apologised and asked the tourists to remove their luggage from the coach. Emergency services arrived shortly and were concerned about the tourists' safety. Thereafter, a new coach picked up the tourists. These safety measures probably eased any potential tourist anxiety and shaped their perceptions that it was an unusual event in the course of their travel. Tourist (No 11), for instance, said: *'everything was great, even our bus breaking down was great because it is was a different experience than what I am used to anyway'.* Given various other positive contextual factors, the designated guide might have found it unnecessary to ornament the incident.

However, zooming in at site level, the guide interviewees also identified efforts devoted to soften undesirable images, this time arising from the practices of some local people:

> Guide (No 4): *'in the tour, I talk positively about the educational system in Jordan. However, once in Petra, the tourists observe some children selling souvenirs and enquire whether they go to school or not! This is really embarrassing, and forces me to dress up the situation by saying that those children do go to school, but they are working during national holidays'.*
>
> Guide (No 25): *'tourists get annoyed by farm animals being used inside Petra, so I dress it up by saying that they are being used as transportation for disabled or elderly tourists who can't walk for long'.*

Participant observation notes on site conversely showed no attempts to dress up such features. Instead the phenomenon of child labour in Petra was seen to be projected in a more objective manner (sees section 6.10), thus illustrating a different expression of tour guide responsibility toward site actors.

Arguably, the use of child labour and farm animals in Petra could be seen as objectionable, and as forms of 'social pollution' (Hunter, 2008) created by the tourism industry inside Petra. To clarify, a group of local inhabitants offer horses and donkeys rides to the site as a means of profiting from tourists' cash money (Mustafa and Abu-Tayeh, 2011). This financial interest extends to very young children who leave school to sell souvenirs, post cards and tour books (ibid). Even though the Jordanian government has developed managerial plans to reduce the negative impacts of tourism on the local society (ibid), these practices apparently still exist. The guide interviewees in this research described such irrepressible praxes as creating unfortunate congestion, frustrating tourists and distracting tour guides from their commentaries.

At site level, dressing up Petra's image is understandable, given that it is seen as the jewel in the crown of Jordan's attractions. Thus, the guide interviewees would be particularly motivated to conceal any potentially negative images that might impact harmfully on the site's reputation, such as attributing the use of farm animals to factors outside the interests of the local people themselves, and instead following the interests of tourists. Additionally, use of the stability of cause's strategy can be observed in the guides' depiction of child labour as temporary and occasional. In other words, by constructing images of 'normative non-existence realities' of the phenomenon, the guides may have been hoping to reduce negative inferences amongst tourists.

However, in terms of tourism ethics, these findings could give rise to an argument that metaphorical dressed up images as a kind of cosmetic repair, similar to cosmetic surgery. That is, it might promise a positive superficial outcome, but at the same time carry the risk of negative side effects unless professionally and responsibly managed. It could be thus argued that dressing up the practices of Petra's child labour risks creating social 'lies', which in the longer term may impact harmfully on the fabric of the local community. False guides' commentaries might lead tourists to think it acceptable to trade with children, unknowingly reinforcing their motivation to leave school. The parallel implication is that the tour guides in supporting this fantasy may unintentionally increase the tourists' negative cultural impact on the society.

However, this contrasts with the traditional role of the tour guide in tourism research, which is to ensure tourists are destination friendly (Howard et al., 2001; Christie and Mason, 2003). Ironically, this might well be achieved by introducing dressed up commentaries; although less real, they serve to buffer cultural shock, mitigate tourists' anxiety and thus promote understanding of a given feature from different perspectives.

To this end, it is interesting to consider 'official image' (section 6.5) and 'dressed up image' as having a common motivational route in promoting a positive image of a destination. However, there are certain differences between the two notions in terms of their nature and their association with given features. While 'official image' refers to the guides' adoption of policymakers' worldviews when representing the political attributes of a given entity, in contrast, a dressed up image is used as a way of reducing the intensity of actual negatively perceived phenomena, when tourists encounter undesirable situations.

Another key difference between dressed up and personal images (section 6.6) is that the latter is at best a reflection of guides' attempts to project their own ideas, without justifying negative features or practices, whereas the former includes some attempts at justification. For example, a guide might engage in the process of dressing up poor services provided by a specific hotel, although at the same time personally believing that the quality of the hotel is poor.

6.8 Images of a Distorted Nature

Distorted image in this research refers to tour guide's misrepresentations of features of a region, country or given site. The findings in regard to this factor suggested that while some tour guides attempted to dress up negative aspects of a given destination, this was not a universal practice. Instead, some tour guides appeared to have recourse to other narratives as a means to manipulate tourists' perceived images of a given entity's attributes. Below are listed a number of practices amongst certain tour guides which might serve to distort the image of the represented destinations.

A first example of distorted image as reported by the guide interviewees was the practice of highlighting regional discrepancies. A number of tour guides commonly used this approach to represent street vendors' practise, education and other regional attributes:

Guide (No 5): '*I tended to explain that the education in Jordan is more powerful and advanced than other Arabian countries. However, once some tourists in a group commented derisively: education in Jordan seems like studying in Oxford University at Britain. I truly felt ashamed because it is not, and I was trying to create positive image of Jordan'.*

Guide (No 16): '*some tourists observe that there is less harassment from street vendors in Jordan than in Egypt and Syria, so my role as a guide is to explain that Jordanians are more educated and friendlier'.*

Observational notes were no exceptions to such commentaries. For example, the guide explained that: '*unlike the situation in other regional countries, Palestinians in Jordan are granted Jordanian passports… and enjoy rights equal to Jordanians'* (day three en route to Um Qais). This may have unintentionally taken as a negative reference to other countries' policies or capacities to take in refugees. The guide also interposed commentaries about Egyptians street vendors when the tourists commented negatively about some Jordanian vendors. The guide said: '*you should see their practices in Egypt then'*. Tourist (No 4) responded: *'yeah, I heard that the situation in Egypt is worse than here'* (day five in Petra).

These findings reflect the ways the perceived image of neighbouring regional countries might be distorted. The impressions inferred from the quotations above are that some regional countries might be less educated or concerned with human rights than Jordan. Indeed, the guide's comments above (No 5) illustrate that negative, or distorted representation of one regional country over another can be a risky strategy, especially if it leads to tourists' negative reactions. However, this negative inference appeared also to be the case in terms of street vendors, when it appeared that some tour guides resorted to amplifying regional discrepancies as a strategy for reducing tourists' negative perceived images of Jordanian vendors' practices. This was even at the risk of evoking negative inferences or intensifying negative images already held by tourists, as recorded observations show.

Various interpretations are available of such strategies. For instance, it might be argued that inexperienced or poorly trained guides lacked the degree of sophistication necessary to exercise diplomacy in differentiating Jordan from other countries in the region. Conversely, it could be claimed that extensive immersion in the field might have made it difficult for guides to maintain moderation of their personal views and feelings; for instance, strong feelings of patriotism might override regional loyalty. In fact, Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe (2009) observe that the national pride across the Jordanian society is striking. Such pride might have coloured some guides' attitudes to other regional countries, and subsequently, impinged on their performance and defeated the presumed professional purposes of regional interpretations.

These findings imply that while some tour guides might endeavour to reflect regional unity, others might unconsciously and indirectly promote fragmentation. A more appropriate strategy for guides would be to confine themselves simply to informing tourists that each nation had its own system. Another promising strategy would be to engage in positive regional comparisons, as suggested by guide (No 5): *'it is important to reflect on clever examples to promote a positive image of Jordan. For example, mentioning that the best health care services in the region are offered by the Medical City in Jordan and by Hadassah in Israel, or that Jordan and the U.A.E are both taking a leading role in the telecommunication industry in the region. This is more objective'*.

A second type of distorted image reported by some guides was that other guides might occasionally give tourists false ideas about the Jordanian economy and concerns of human rights:

Guide (No 11): *'I've heard about some tour guides who have misrepresented Jordan to enhance their income or for ideological reasons… some guides represent Jordan as undemocratic because they are looking for a way to emigrate'.*

Guide (No 16): *'a tour guide's financial concerns might influence what he might say and do… some guides fabricate stories about poverty and corruption in Jordan to gain more tips'.*

Participant observation notes on the other hand did not support these findings. This could have been firstly, that this designated guide's sense of professionalism was not distorted by any cultural bias, so that he had no interest in distorting Jordan's image or in deceiving tourists. Secondly, it is possible that the overt presence of the researcher made the guide more self-conscious about what he said, whereas he might have spoken more naturally on other tours.

These extracts reflect the interviewees' clear understanding that unprofessional practices are perpetrated by certain tour guides, as well as their inferences as to the motivation behind such guides' unprofessional practices. For instance, some interviewees inferred that the desire to emigrate might have been the motivation behind some guides representing Jordan as undemocratic and unconcerned about human rights. It was also inferred that such guides might have hoped to gain Western tourist support in achieving their desire for emigration, once they had put forward their case.

If tour guides were engaged in adopting critical discourses about the economic situation in Jordan, this may invite another reading. That is, they may have had goal-oriented intentions for eliciting tourist sympathies and gaining more tips. That they should resort to such a pretext might be explained by a study conducted by JTGA, which found economic instability, fluctuating job opportunities, and a shift to lower income as perceived hardships among the guiding profession (JTGA business plan, 2004-2006).

But whatever the motivation for the guides negatively projecting their country for financial reasons, Jordan is not alone in suffering from poor professional practice amongst tour guides. Other studies in tourism have found tour guides in other countries such as China to have fabricated damaging representations of their country's image (Ap and Wong, 2001). Guides have been found to commercialise their communication especially if they are money-oriented or have low salaries (Cohen, 1985; Dahles, 2002; Zhang and Chow, 2003; Bowie and Chang, 2005; Ying and Simkin, 2009). Such evidence suggests that Jordan is no exception in employing some tour guides who are commonly motivated to prioritise their personal interests over their job responsibilities for extra financial gain.

At site level, there also appeared to be evidence that some guides distorted images for financial gain. For example, interviewees reported that some guides might play upon tourists' need for safety and security in order to financially benefit their own pockets:

Among others, guide (No 22): *'I have heard of some guides who try to direct the tourists away from Elbalad [Amman down town], because the prices are inexpensive there. If the tourists' went there, they would discover the commission game played by these guides, and how they up the prices. These guides tell the tourists that Elbalad is not safe and the tourists should not go there'.*

Indeed, the recorded observations captured an incident when the observed guide gave a somewhat 'soft or covert' distortion of image around food in order to gain someone financially. Emphasising the foods' quality provided by X restaurant in Y city, the guide literally said: *'they are clean and I trust their food'*. This might have indirectly evoked negative inferences about other restaurants in the area as unhygienic. The tourists were taken again to the same restaurant in the way back to the Dead Sea, wherein it was observed that the guide was in fact the restaurant's owner friend and was benefitting from commission (day four). Thus although the guide was not overtly falsifying information, he was implying misleading information in less lineal and perceptible ways.

This in itself might seem trivial, were it not that tourism literature identifies tour guides being looked up to as pathfinders and mentors (Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985). As such, tourists rely on them to avoid topographical disorientations and interaction difficulties while at a foreign destination (Zhang and Chow, 2004; Ying and Simkin, 2009). If the guide is not living up to this expectation, this suggests that they and their commentaries have a disproportionate and unmerited degree of authority and power. The empirical data demonstrated that some guides for their own personal gain misused their occupational position not only to restrict tourists' movements to those sites or bazaars where they could earn commission, but also to keep the tourists away from other front-stages in order to prevent them from knowing that they had been manipulated. As such, they could be said to have abused their role as pathfinders and undermined their authoritative voice as mentors.

Such poor professional practices exist among certain tour guides may reflect possible deficits in the employment process, such as inefficient recruitment strategies, inadequately developed codes of practice, and/or inefficiency in the monitoring system for guides. This in turn could stem from poor recruitment of adequately trained tourist police officer. For example, even though Jordanian tourism law requires a tourist police officer to accompany tourist groups and submit a report for his or her superintendent (MOTA, 1998), it seems that the police officers are not very fluent in English or in other languages. This means that they would not be able fully to understand what a guide is telling tourists, and therefore, allow poor practice inadvertently to slip past them. This would also allow tour guides to manipulate their groups in less perceptible ways, as the above observational data uncovered.

Irrespective of the personal reasons underpinning poor guides' practices, their potential impact on the profession and the destination image cannot be ignored. For instance, some authors contend that destination image formed during the actual tourist experience tends not just to be long lasting (Beerli and Martin, 2004a), but that it will go on to be shared with various social groups in the tourists' home countries (Gunn, 1972). That is to say, there is a potential risk of distorted images being maintained by tourists but also widely disseminated to others.

A further implication of poor practices is their potential to constrain the quality of the tourist consumption experience. It cannot be ignored that many tourists only have a single life opportunity to visit a particular destination, and as such, deserve to maximise their opportunities for a rich and diverse experience. If, on the other hand, their experience is narrowed only to those phenomena which will maximise their guide's personal gain, this not only risks undermining tourists' good faith, but threatens tourism itself. Given the opportunity to discover via the internet what might have been seen, and what have been missed, because of a guide's poor practices, tourists might understandably be provoked to share their dissatisfaction within their home community, with exponentially undesirable consequences. These might include regret about using a particular travel company, or negative associations with the destination, or a lack of future confidence in the professionalism of tour guides.

6.9 Images of a Poignant Nature

Poignant image has been used to define a type of tour guides' representation that aims to evoke a blended spectrum of tourists' emotions in regard to given features of a region, country or given site. The emotional dimension of guides' performance has received only fleeting attention in the literature (Holloway, 1981; Pond, 1993; Ying and Simkin, 2009). The findings in this research offer insight into the impact of emotionally loaded tour guide's commentaries during tourists' visits.

Emotions are complex states of feeling. Studies in psychology distinguish between different emotional dimensions, which include a positive category (e.g. interest, joy, excitement and relief), a negative category (e.g. anger, disgust, contempt, distress, fear, shame and guilt) and a neutral category such as surprise (Izard, 1977; Ekman, 2003). The empirical data of this research indicated that tour guides used their persuasive skills at times to arouse positive emotions amongst tourists such as joy, to reduce negative emotions such as stress, and on occasion to induce negative emotions such as guilt.

Regional representations of the historical attractions and at times the political conflicts were found to be loaded with poignant images:

> Guide (No 21): *'some tourists argue that why we do not let the Palestinians immigrate to Jordan and live in the desert? I answer: imagine that you are sitting in the restaurant enjoying your food with your family, and someone comes and forces you at gun point to move to another table or outside the restaurant, how would you feel? Do you think this is fair?'.*
>
> Guide (No 27): *'a guide should offer information about the region's historical attractions to better accommodate tourists' demands. For me, when I talk about the Nabataeans [the ancient Arab people who built Petra], I explain how their kingdom expanded to Syria, their trade routes to ancient Egypt and how these cross-cultural connections influenced their civilisation'.*

Participant observation notes supported these findings. Certain delivered information about the Gulf War was loaded with emotional evoking stimuli. The guide said in a firm and sad tone: '*Saddam tended to give Jordan free oil every year... However, Saddam was killed by the USA and the newly elected government stopped the free oil to Jordan. Now we are paying the full price again'* (day four in the coach to Shobak castle). Example about the guide's commentaries of regional historical attraction is presented in section (6.2.3).

The way in which regional historical attractions were represented seemed designed to excite tourist curiosity, or otherwise satisfy tourists' emotional expectations of the visit. It is one thing to dryly recount facts, for instance, that the Middle East is the birthplace of the world's three major monotheistic religions, including Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Hazbun, 2008; Lust, 2013), or that many of the world's oldest civilisations such as Greek and Roman have also settled in the wider region. But that the hallmarks of such civilisations are still extant in Jordan and elsewhere, such as Egypt and

Palestine/Israel is not just a matter for factual truth. Instead, the guides may understand that tourists from the West may enjoy being intrigued by the unfamiliar world perspectives of the orient, and make the most of bringing colour to the region's historical value and civilisations. By connecting different past regional civilisations to modern times in rich descriptions, guides may satisfy the tourists' expectations of an exciting and interesting experience. This finding reflects a potentially significant role for tour guides in regional tourism development, that of 'mentor' (Cohen, 1985). In this, they would appear to promote packages of imagined regional attractions as a means of translating remote unseen sights into meaningful stories for tourists and to enhance their experience.

On the other hand, data analysis of the findings also indicated that guide's commentaries might at times lean towards inducing negative emotions amongst tourists. For example, commentaries on regional political conflicts seemed sometimes geared to arouse tourists' feelings of guilt. Interpreting this, it is generally recognised that parts of the Arab world hold negative perceptions and express hostile attitudes towards Western policies in the Middle East. This gives rise to potential intercultural tensions, exemplified most significantly in the US policies toward the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iraq war (Talbot and Meyer, 2003; Corm, 2007). This state of tension might well influence the perceptions of certain tour guides, and emerged in the data as surfacing during the guides' work. It may have been that guides were not averse to arousing tourists' feelings of guilt in regard to the impact of US foreign policy on different groups of Arab people.

Data offered by the guide interviewees', for example, reflected their representations of how Palestinians in Jordan had been affected by the conflict. The data evidenced tragic images related to houses destroyed, children and people killed and injured, people threatened with weapons to leave their houses and country, and homesickness, coupled with the inability to go back. Similarly, participant observation notes revealed that the war against Iraq was represented as a topic for the tourists, with a negative focus in terms of its impact on economic recession and poverty. It appeared that the guides were inviting US tourists to take a broader worldview, to see that problems were not only to be found in conflicting countries, but in their harmful impact on surrounding nations. Such an overview might arouse tourists' feelings of sympathy, and curiosity, inviting them to reflect on the arguably invasive political role of the USA in the Middle East. While US tourists might have arrived in Jordan with a vague understanding that the USA waging war on Iraq was not necessarily beneficial, the guides may have wanted to widen tourist awareness of the impact of this war, that many people's lives were at stake, and that serious suffering was still prevalent.

Interestingly, the ways in which the guides reported constructing their image of regional political conflict seemed to diverge somewhat from the more diplomatic stance of official policy (see section 6.5). This divergence may be attributed in part to variations in Jordanian tour guides' background. Whilst Jordanian tourism regulations state that legal applicants for a tour guide licence can only be those with Jordanian nationality (MOTA, article No. 34/1998), this would also include many Palestinians who had fled to Jordan in 1948 and 1967, and been granted Jordanian passports. Thus, a considerable number of Palestinians might have become involved in the tourism sector, including those taking the profession of guide. The origin or identity of any one tour guide might therefore influence their representations. That is to say, some Palestinian-Jordanian guides might have found tourism as a medium to promote their political ideology by deploying emotive commentaries. It could also be true that a more general sentiment of Arab nationalism impinged on non-Palestinian tour guides' representations.

These findings generally imply that the tourist consumption experience can at times become a platform for tour guides to use their 'emotional intelligence' (adapted from Goleman, 1995), and as a means to stimulate Western tourists' sympathy, to promote understanding, and to invite a perspective on regional conflict which differs from the one the tourists might have held before the tour. In this sense, it can be said that the tour guide functioned not only as a mentor and pathfinder, but also as a disseminator of ideology and political beliefs- a sensitive issue that has received little attention in the literature.

Working at country level, the findings suggested that a considerable number of tour guides attempted to arouse tourists' favourable feelings by projecting, in a positive and sometimes entertaining way, various Jordanian attributes. Examples of topics chosen to this effect were the friendliness of the local people and cultural diversity:

Guide (No 13): *'I explain that Jordanian people are very friendly; they might use sign language to communicate with the tourists, so I facilitate their interactions with local people to allow them to experience this connection. I also serve them some fruit to reflect Jordanian hospitality'.*

Guide (No 15): '*at the beginning of the tour, I inform the tourists that in Jordanian land you will observe diversified landscapes, climates, sights, different social classes and even different political parties'.*

Another group of guides reflected on their attempts to reduce tourists' negative feelings by presenting other positive features, such as informative tour briefing and stability:

Among many, guide (No 3): *'we cannot blame the tourists if they are stressed. These are normal feelings whilst in a foreign country. Thus, I find it is important to brief the whole programme on the first day, and every day I remind them about daily tours. Tourists like to know what will be going on'.*

Guide (No 21): *'I allude to Jordan's safety to ease any fears or concerns of the tourists'.*

Data recorded during the real tour were consistent with these findings. For example, the guide used his sense of humour to reflect on the high quality of Jordanian olive oil. He said: *'my grandfather tends to drink a cup of olive oil daily. At the age of 93, he wanted to marry again but we talked him out of it! [Tourists laughed loudly]'* (day three in coach to Um Qais). Tour briefs were also constantly represented. The guide commented: '*in the rest of the programme we will see Madaba, Shobak Castle, Petra, Wadi Rum and the Dead Sea… In Madaba, we will stop at the parking lot and then we will walk* *for 15 minutes to Saint George church, and then we will see there the oldest map of the holy lands... The way to Shobak will take quite while about 3:30 hours. We will have a break on the way for lunch'* (day four in the coach to Madaba city).

The data demonstrated that positive commentaries were used to arouse positive emotions. Thus local people, who might initially be perceived as strangers in the tourists' eyes, were represented by positive cues to their friendliness, hospitability and openness to communication. Such interventions might serve to trigger favourable feelings such as curiosity, or relief that locals had recognisably positive human characteristics even though functioning in an unfamiliar cultural context. The diversity of the Jordanian landscape, climate, history, and tourism practices was also represented as a rich and exotic experience to arouse the tourists' excitement. To enhance these emotional responses, the guides reported where possible that they used humour and fun as a strategy, to evoke tourists' feelings of cheerfulness and enjoyment and to avoid presenting information in a lifeless and detached way. Some other research has notably placed considerable value on the tour guide's sense of humour as a means to create enjoyable experiences (Howard et al., 2001).

The guides also reported using positively valenced commentaries as a means to reduce negatively valenced emotions, for instance, in regard to topics such as safety and tour briefing. On a national level, the tour guides focused on safety as a fear-reduction strategy, in order to accommodate any anticipated tourist concerns about political instability in the region or/and to mitigate their uncertainty about being in foreign territory. To achieve this, the guides reported frequent use of mind-maps, outlining the future experiences that the tourists would encounter, as a means of easing any anxiety or disorientation. This included familiarising the tourists about where they were standing, where they were heading, where they were going to stop, when and where they were going to proceed again. This practice also extended to informing the tourists about what they would experience specifically at a given site (discussed subsequently). These findings support tourism literature on the pathfinder role of tour guides, including giving tourists a sense of security (Cohen, 1985; McDonnell, 2001).

On-site experiences and representations were also found to embrace emotive language and topics to interest the tourists. For example, the territory of the Bedouins and their culture were represented in an informative and colourful way, the guide offering firstly a poetic mind map: *'we will be driving the entire desert highway to Wadi Rum… beautiful desert of Wadi Rum, magical desert of Wadi Rum. It is also called the moon valley; because it is similar to Mars'.* The guide went on to explain what made the Bedouins so distinctive. This included information on their sense of honour, their hospitality and their protectiveness of guests (day six). Moreover, a mind map of the experiences to be undertaken at each visited site was constantly created. For instance, the guide said: *'our tour tomorrow will go from A to B to C to D and go back the same way. In A, we will get out of the bus and you will not see the bus until 5 PM... In A, we will buy tickets. From A to B, we will walk for two miles… there are a couple of things to show you and to talk about… Then we will walk from B to C. The treasury is in C, where Indiana Jones was captured. It is a beautiful monument. In D, most of the rest of the monuments stand, including the tombs, celebration hall, theatre and the roman section of Petra. After D point, we will have a lunch break and then you will be free'* (day four en route to Petra).

The findings reflect the tour guide's willingness to exercise concern about the tourists' emotional comfort at most stages of their visit. As the tourists started exploring a new defined area, the guide might anticipate some feelings such as uncertainty of what to expect, and offset this by resorting to colourful emotive language (e.g. *magical and beautiful*) and exotic stories (e.g. *Wadi Rum*) to intensify tourists' feelings of excitement and safe adventure. In turn, mind-mapping allowed some predictions of what the tourists could expect to see and do at each visited place. This mind-mapping was designed to help them feel safe and contained. Extracts from tour guide literature refer to this process as 'shepherding and marshalling' (Holloway, 1981).

The tour guides apparently have the ability not just to lead tourists physically from place to place, but also to lead and accommodate them emotionally from experience to experience. These views are supported in the interviews with US tourists. For example, tourist (No 8) commented: *'I think he [the guide] was very pleasing, with all the information he gave and I think that he was very settling because everywhere we go, he has a lot to tell us'.* Another tourist (No 10) articulated: *'the guide made me feel, number one, comfortable that I would not get lost on the tour, and number two, if we did not know where to go or what to do, we had somebody there who would know what to do and where to go. So I think that was a great thing'.*

It appears evident from the data that images of a poignant nature were distinguishable from other categories of image in being more loaded with emotional stimuli, and designed to manage different emotional dimensions for tourists. That the guides seemed to use such strategies deliberately is open to some explanations. Firstly, even if the guides were not always consciously aware that input of affective components could have a strong influence on a tourist's overall global image (Beerli and Martin, 2004a; Castro el al., 2007), it is entirely possible that such emotive commentaries were represented by guides in order to increase tourists' emotional attachment to visited destinations, and that in this they self-perceived their role as promoter. Secondly, some research in tourist's behaviours suggests that tourist satisfaction with tourism services comprises both cognitive and emotional judgmental components (Bowen and Clarke, 2002; Yuksel, 2008). It can be argued thus that tourists might hold both cognitive and emotional expectations of services (e.g. clean hotel room vs. joy and safety), so that it would appear appropriate for tour guides, as part of their professional responsibilities, to adopt emotive commentaries as a means of satisfying tourists' emotional expectations of the visit. It does however also imply that the success of a tourist's emotional experiences very much depends on a competent guide.

A number of tourism contributors have recognised that part of guide's competences are necessary positive personal qualities such as enthusiasm, proactivity and a sense of humour (Pond, 1993; Zhang and Chow, 2004; Bowie and Chang, 2005; Hunag et al., 2010). The findings of this research further assert why such qualities appear to be needed. Tourism is a service-based industry in which service providers' attitudes and communication can influence the tourists' overall impressions. Therefore, it becomes very important for front-line workers, including tour guides, to develop a persuasive ability or 'interpersonal emotional intelligence' (discussed further in section 8.4), which will ensure positive emotional experiences that lead to a memorable tour.

6.10 Images of a Relatively Realistic Nature

In regard to projecting images of a relatively realistic nature, the primary data suggested that tour guides often represented what they believed to be the reality behind a given entity's attributes. Such particular worldviews can be held in common with others who share the same cultural beliefs and community. The constructed impression of such type of representations was therefore labelled as 'relatively realistic image' with reference to being held by specific cultural groups.

Relatively realistic images of the region as projected by the guides seemed to be associated with religious commentaries. The tour guides' religious interpretations revolve around many different sub-themes (see section 6.2.1), with discussions centring on polygamy and Islamic stances of terrorism. These are explained in detail, due to their extensive salience in the raw data:

Guide (No 15): *'the stereotypical image about Arabic men is having four wives. To correct this idea, I explain that Islam indeed authorises men to marry up to four wives when there is good reason to do so, and, if the man chooses that route, he must treat the wives equally, otherwise he should only marry one'.*

Guide (No 18): *'I try to clear up misconceptions about Islam by telling some stories about the Prophet Mohammad's life, for example, that during wartime he cautioned his companions not to kill women or children, not to destroy churches and not to cut down trees; his teaching was that if people have faith in you, then return their faith'.*

These findings were reiterated in recorded observations, when the observed tour guide interpreted the permissible conditions and circumstances of polygamy in a similar way to guide (No 15) quoted above (day three en route to Um Qais). Islamic stances of terrorism were also discussed. The guide stated: *'it is mentioned in the Quran that if you kill an innocent human, it is as if you killed all humankind, it is not that you will be condemned if you only killed Muslims'*. The guide went on to allude to the Prophet Mohammed's choice to marry a Jew and a Christian in order to establish peaceful coexistence with other believers (day six en route to the Dead Sea).

These data were compared against secondary sources to verify that such commentaries were loaded with realistic ideas, for instance around polygamy. Investigation of religious sources shows that Islam has put a limit on polygamy, unlike the era of Arab pagans in which polygamy was limitless. Polygamy was also common in Judaism e.g. Solomon had many wives (Brown, 1769). The idea of polygamy is clearly clarified in the Holy Quran. Verse (4:3) states: *'And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three, or four but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one'*. The denial of the capacity of men to be impartial amongst their wives is also acknowledged (see verses 4:129), but even so it is implied that polygamy is salutary in certain cases (e.g. sterility). These teachings are consistent with tour guides' representations of the conditions and circumstances surrounding polygamy. Similarly, the guides' commentaries regarding the Islamic stance on terrorism corresponded to teachings prescribed in the Holy Quran (see 5:32 and 4:3 respectively); while their commentaries on the Prophet Mohammad's deeds and words also were similar to those found in the literature (see Kalby, 2005).

Use of relatively realistic images appeared in some cases to be an efficient means of deconstructing negative images, and reconstructing positive images in the tourists' minds. To take this point further, the data indicated that some tourists had come on to the tour with unfavourable ideas about Islam, as a religion promoting terrorism (see fuzzy image for clarifications). The guides' response to deconstructing this idea may have led them to cite from real and verifiable Islamic sources that killing and barbaric actions were prohibited during wars. In addition, attempts were noted on the part of the guides to construct positive images about Islam as a peaceful religion, quoting texts which portrayed Muslims as seekers of peaceful coexistence. A proposition can be drawn from these findings, that the tour guides sought to consolidate their representations with proof, derived realistically from certain official sources. In this, they could be said to be creating an argument-defensive approach, which was deemed useful for correcting any potential misconceptions.

At country level, it appeared also that the tour guides referred to realistic information in clarifying knowledge of Jordanian characteristics, such as sources of income and education:

Guide (No 12): *'I explain that Jordan's economy depends on medical services, tax, foreign investment and tourism services'.*

Guide (No 2): *'when I talk about education in Jordan, I present information about the number of state and private schools and universities, as well as the educational system in Jordan'.*

The real tour data were consistent with these findings, the guide representing information about sources of income: *'the economy of Jordan depends on, number one, tourism. Number two is information technology and communication. Number three is tax. Number four is the mining industry for things like copper, potash, phosphate… and after that there are medical and health services... we also get financial aid from the Gulf region'* (day four en route to Al-Sultani rest house). Descriptive commentaries about the educational system, the quality of education and the number of educational bodies in Jordan were also reported. For example, the guide said: *'in Jordan there are 6 million inhabitants. We have 34 universities. We have 1.9 million students in Jordan. Education here is compulsory'* (day four en route to Al-Sultani rest house).

Review of the World Bank reports show that the Jordanian economy depends on trade, remittances, foreign investment, tourism, and links to the Gulf countries' economies. The reports also reflect Jordanian policymakers' endeavours to use the demographic opportunity of well-educated citizens to build a dynamic, knowledge-based economy (world Bank-Jordan, 2014). National realistic representations might thus have been employed to give the tourists a convincing picture of the current state of Jordan. It can be also argued that tour guides are aware that tourists are currently well informed, with possibly fair knowledge about the country even before their visit. Accordingly, fabrication and unreliable information might negatively affect the guide's credibility as the main source of information as well as the creator of group rapport.

Relatively realistic images of given sites appeared to have been constructed in relation to certain historical attractions and at times the practices of the local people (e.g. child labour in Petra):

Guide (No 15)*: 'in Machaerus, I allude to the story of how John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod. That there was a dancer pleased the king and his guests at his birthday party. Herod said he would reward the dancer with anything up to half his kingdom. However, she asked for John's head on a platter, which was then presented for her. This story drew typical question from the tourists, such as what that dancer had done to make the king offer her half of his kingdom'.*

Among others, guide (No 16): *'I prefer to be direct with the tourists, especially in relation to child labour in Petra; I ask the tourists not to buy anything from them. I tell them that if the child earned lot of money, they might not listen to or respect their parents because they might overestimate their power, which can destroy family bonds'.*

Observational notes echoed these findings. In the religious context of Mount Nebo, the guide said: '*the bible said nobody knows where Moses' burial spot is! Although I am not supposed to tell you this, we did not find any settlement, any remains dating back to the time of Moses. All the settlements are Roman, dating more than 1700 years after Moses'* (day four). Moreover, the guide openly commented on child labour phenomenon in Petra. The US tourists were informed that: '*these children erode the site, chase the tourists and try to* *sell souvenirs. We want to make Petra a better place… If you do not want them to stay, do not do any business with them. They are supposed to be at school tomorrow, but you will see them'* (day four in the coach to Petra).

Notably here, and in contrast to earlier accounts of guides recounting fabricated myths about archaeological sites or monuments surrounded by uncertainty (see image of personal nature), these findings indicate that a number of tour guides preferred to base their information about sites of religious significance on realistic extracts from the Old and New Testaments. For example, the commentaries of Machaerus, about how John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod, contest the accounts of Biblical sources (see Mark 6:14-29). Similarly, representations about Mount Nebo match Old Testament texts, which indicate that the exact spot of Moses' grave is unknown (see 'Deuteronomy 34:6' cited in Brown, 1769:121).

These findings suggest that tour guide's objectivity tends to be derived from the nature of represented topic itself. For example, religious topics, whether about Islam, Christianity and Judaism, might be perceived to be of a holy nature and therefore deserving of respectful and objective treatment. This implies that certain characteristics of the represented destinations are culturally accepted as fact-based knowledge that should not be manipulated. From the tourism demand perspective, this approach seemed to be admired by some tourists with specific preferences, and in turn fulfilled their quest for understanding. For instance, a US tourist (No 3) commented: *'when he [the guide] talked about religion, he mentioned what the Quran says and what the bible says, you know it is more factual. For me, I think this is trustworthy and I feel better'.*

In contrast to the guides mentioned earlier, who adopted a dressed up route in relation to the child labour practices in Petra, it was also noted that another group of guides dealt with the phenomenon in more objective ways. This included explanations about some children's tendencies to leave their schools to sell souvenirs, the destructive effects of this on Petra, and the harmful consequences of this phenomenon on the society. The stance of this group of guides can be rationalised as based on two assumptions. Firstly, such phenomenon might be perceived by some guides as inappropriate tourism practice and potentially outside their zone of tolerance. Therefore, they would prefer to deal with this phenomenon objectively in an attempt to rationalise and minimise its impact. Secondly, such views could be potentially interpreted as expressions of a sense of belonging and responsibility toward the site and the tourists. That is to say, the guide could be seen as acting as a resource management motivator and educational agent (Howard el al., 2001; Christie and Mason, 2003; Randall and Rollins, 2009). In this role, guides can indeed raise tourists' awareness as well as contributing to a reduction in negative cultural impacts on Jordanian society.

Ultimately, this chapter has discussed different patterns of image projected by the guides. Whilst some images seemed to have been based on multi-constructed realities that could shape any entity, other images were based on a single reality where the phenomena merited being treated objectively, with minimum scope for manipulation or imaginative intervention. The tour guides in such scenarios could thus be said to function as 'objective mediators' by contributing to the construction of realistic images of the represented destinations.

6.11 Summary

The aim of this chapter has been to provide meaningful understanding about a number of image patterns as projected by tour guides during the tourist consumption experiences. The data analysis indicated that guides' representations involved projections arising from the region, the country and specific sites. While most tour guides appeared to conceive of themselves as mediators between the tourists and these areas, each one brought to the tour an individual repertoire of ideas and feelings about these entities' features. This led to variations in the ways that these destinations' image could be constructed. Such ways were categorised into different themes, including ‘official image’, ‘personal image’, ‘dressed up image’, ‘distorted image’, ‘poignant image’ and ‘relatively realistic image’.

The term ‘official image’ was used to refer to the tour guides’ perceived inclination to construct images as compliant with policymaker stances on the ideal projection of a given region, country and site. Representations of regional official views were associated with Arab-Israeli relationships. Nationally, official opinions were represented in relation to Jordan’s interior affairs and foreign policies. The political attribute of the Al-Baqaa site was projected according to the official lines.

Personal image was identified as a type of constructed image loaded with the tour guides’ own worldviews while representing a given entity’s features. Regionally, this was associated with certain socio-cultural practices such as veiled Arabian women. Certain other Jordanian socio-cultural sub-features were also subjectively represented. Imaginatively recounted tales were linked to some historical sites/monuments.

Dressed up image was identified as a type of constructed image which revealed tour guides’ attempts to adorn negative aspects of a region, country and site in order to make them appear less negative. Dressed up representations of the Middle East were associated with street vendors’ practices. Dressed up commentaries of Jordan revolved around dirtiness and poor services. The practices of site actors e.g. child labour and the usage of farm animals in Petra, were also ornamented.

Distorted image was identified as a type of constructed image which revealed tour guides’ misrepresentations of given features of the region, country and a given site. Misrepresentations of the Middle East revolved around street vendors’ practises, education and at times human rights. Falsified commentaries of Jordan included those referring to democracy and economic attributes. Invented representations of given sites seemed to be associated with safety and restaurant hygiene.

Poignant image was identified as a type of constructed image based on tour guides' emotive commentaries, intended to evoke different emotional dimensions in the tourists' experience of a given entity's features. In terms of the Middle East, historical attractions were projected to evoke tourists' excitement, and the political conflicts in some regional countries were at times interpreted to evoke empathic negative feelings. A number of Jordanian features such as friendliness of the local people, diversity and jokes were represented to arouse tourists' feelings of happiness. On the other hand, safety and tour briefing were projected to reduce the tourists' feelings of fear and stress. Bedouin culture and tour briefing were communicated to amplify tourists' feelings of enjoyment as a result of reduced stress whilst at a given Jordanian site.

Relatively realistic image was identified as a type of constructed image to reflect the tour guides' fair representations of the actual states of given features in the region, country or site. Realistic information of the Middle East was projected in relation to religion on topics such as, but not restricted to, polygamy and terrorism statues in Islamic sources. Relatively realistic ideas of Jordan were associated with sources of income and education. Finally, sites of a religious nature were presented as based on information derived realistically from the Old and New Testaments. This approach was also at times used to comment on the child labour phenomenon in Petra.

The findings generally indicated that multiple patterns of image had the potential to be projected simultaneously within each tour. This reflects the complex and at times paradoxical collection of images that this group of stakeholders might represent. As discussed in this chapter, the projection of a given type of image depended on a number of factors, including a given entity's characteristics, the topic represented, the focus of tourists' interests, the range of their reactions, the guide's background and representational styles, or the circumstances encountered during the tour. The following chapter analyses and discusses the patterns of tourists' perceived image.

Chapter Seven: Destination Image as Perceived by Tourists

7.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to evaluate perceived image patterns arising from the consumption experiences of tourists during the course of this research. This chapter's findings are grounded on two sets of data: firstly on the views of US tourists interviewees which were collected during the participant observation phase, and secondly on the views of tour guide interviewees in regard to tourists' perceived images observed during the course of their work. These two sets of data were analysed and triangulated to reflect an overview of the tourists' beliefs and feelings as constructed during the tour. This overview is based on a notion of the total consumption experience of the tourists, derived by reference to three main stages of their itinerary; the beginning of the tour, the end, and the period of travel in between. The empirical evidence was then interpreted in the light of secondary sources, including reviewed literature dealing with destination image and tour guiding.

In regard firstly to the tour guides' understanding of tourists' perceived images, the findings identified a number of contributory factors. First, these guides were accustomed to elaborating topics of interest as arising from tourists' explicit questions, following up with more information on request once rapport was established. Secondly, these guides normally spent a considerable time in the company of tourists, and this seemed to enhance their ability to read tourist's body language as a means to pre-empt and resolve any concerns. Thirdly, whilst the guides did not appear consciously to link the travel agencies' information sheets on socio-demographic characteristics, such as nationality and gender, to their tourists' perceived images (Beerli and Martin, 2004a; Tasci el al., 2007), the guides seemed able naturalistically to capitalise on such factors in seeking to understand tourists' perceptions. Finally, the guides perceived some differences in tourists' constructed views, depending on their point of entry to Jordan from their previous destination; the tour guide informants commented that tourists travelling on a regional package tended to construct different images from those whose first destination was Jordan. That is, the guides thought that tourists travelling on a regional package would have been exposed to a broader range of experiences, and so might have been able to construct a somewhat truer image of the broader region as well as of specific countries. As such, cross-border meeting points were reported as a platform for better understanding of tourists' images (e.g. Aqaba for those coming from Egypt by sea).

To sum up the views of the tour guides, the primary data indicated that tour guide interactions with different tour groups were an invaluably rich source of insight into tourists' perceptions. More specifically, on the basis of such interactions, the guides were also able to indicate potential differences in the construction of various tourists' perceived images, depending on the nationality of the tourist, or on their travelling experience, whether as Middle East package travellers, or Jordan alone tourists. On this basis, it can be claimed that data collected from tour guides can offer a framework for analysing tourists' perceived image of a given destination during their visit.

However, the analysis of the empirical data interestingly suggested that the emergent patterns of tourists' perceived image were far from homogenous. The data analyses showed that the tourists in this research derived a set of complex images from their consumption experience, associated variously with the Middle East as region, Jordan as country and given sites such as Petra (appendix H presents a master list of tourists' perceived image of these destinations' attributes). Pattern analysis of the tourists' ideas and feelings in regard to these destinations gave rise to a range of themed categories, to include 'fuzzy image', 'relatively realistic image', 'dynamic image', 'static image', 'peculiar image' and 'deteriorated image'. Figure 7.1 below demonstrates the overarching findings of this chapter.

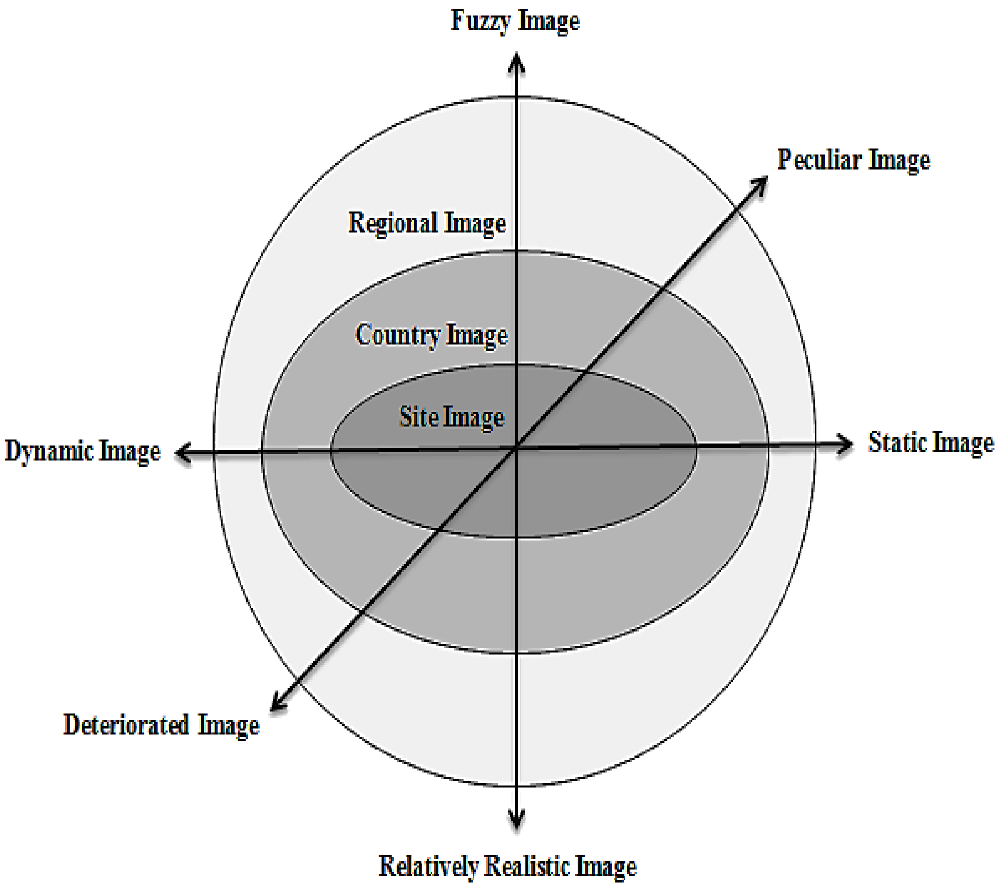
Fuzzy Image
Peculiar Image
Regional Image
Country Image
Site Image
Dynamic Image
Static Image
Deteriorated Image
Relatively Realistic Image

Figure 7.1: Patterns of Destination Image as Perceived by Tourists

Source: This figure, representing the findings of this chapter, was inspired by Echtner and Ritchie's (1991:40) model outline.

The rest of this chapter is divided into ten sections. The first three sections provide explanations of tourists' perceived image of the region, the country and given sites. Potential new agents that might influence the image formation process of those three entities are also identified. Although these influential agents appeared to be synergistically interwoven into the data, for clarity they have been discussed in this chapter according to their specific relevance to each destination. The subsequent six sections of the chapter then offer an analysis and interpretation of the various patterns of tourists' perceived image of these three destinations. The final section presents a summary of the chapter.

7.2 Tourists’ Regional Image

Tourists’ regional image can be defined as the sum of ideas, feelings and attitudes that tourist(s) construct of a given region’s multi-attributes (informed by Chon, 1990; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a). According to Gallarza et al. (2002), this line of enquiry commonly investigates a whole country as the destination focus (e.g. O’Leary and Deegan, 2002; Grosspietsch, 2006; Prebensen, 2007; Stepchenkova and Morrison, 2008). The findings of this research extend the literature to provide insight into tourists’ perceived cross-border images of the macro region.

Generally speaking, the data analysis indicated that the tourists’ perceived image of the Middle East region comprised a number of countries such as Egypt, Palestine/Israel, Tunisia, Morocco, Syria, Iraq, Turkey and some of the Gulf countries, to include Bahrain and United Arab Emirates. Some of the US tourist participants also included Iran. Accordingly, the findings of this chapter may be useful as a frame of reference for those interested in understanding how the attributes of the identified destinations in which they work might be perceived by the tourists.

The data offered by the guide interviewees’ indicated tourists as tending to envisage the Middle East in relation to a number of anticipated features, to include religion (e.g. Islam), political status (e.g. stability), socio-cultural norms (e.g. general lifestyles, gender status of Arabian men and women, friendliness of Arabs and others), urbanisation (e.g. development and literacy level), and tourist features (e.g. attractions and practices of tourism service providers in some regional countries). The following quotations illustrate these findings:

Guide (No 1): *‘some tourists’ imagine that every man has four wives, that all women are veiled, that all Arabs are alike, and that all are Muslim’.*

Guide (No 7): ‘*the Middle East is seen by some tourists as the cradle of civilisations; there are lot of historical and religious sites that they are interested to see’.*

Guide (No 9): *'the tourists see the region as a war zone, uncivilised and a place where women have no rights'.*

Guide (No 20): *'some tourists who had visited Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt thought that Jordan was similar. However, they commented that Jordan was cleaner, friendlier and that the language proficiency of the Jordanian guide's was better than the Egyptian guide's'.*

Interviews with the US tourists somewhat supported these findings. The tourists' images of the Middle East appeared to be constructed from the sum of their perceptions about generic regional characteristics such as location, predominant language and predominant religion. While these features collectively defined the region in the tourists' views, their mental representations of the region also involved attribute-based components in specific regional countries, related to phenomenon such as their political status, or their local attractions and vendor's practices, as exemplified below:

Tourist (No 9): *'I knew that the Middle East was an area located to the north east of Africa where Arabic is predominantly spoken and where the Islamic faith is predominantly observed'.*

Tourist (No 7): '*the issue is that the Middle East lies between Iran that tries to develop nuclear weapons and Israel that already has them, so you kind of feel sure that this is a fearful region'.*

Tourist (No 4): *'the multitude of fascinating historical sites, such as the pyramids in Egypt and sites in Israel will attract me back to the Middle East region… I heard that the situation in Egypt [the practices of some vendors] is worse than here'.*

The discrepancies between the guides' and the tourists' responses in terms of other regional features can be rationalised on the basis of their having different assumptions about certain references. For example, the US tourists probably assumed that talking about certain topics such as religion was sensitive, so they might have chosen not to openly discuss this issue during the interviews. And yet in contrast, during the course of the tour it was observed that the tourists were interested to know about Islam, asking many questions about phenomena such as Jihad, Hijab and polygamy. For example, tourist (No 11) commented that the guide: '*answered all our questions about history, culture and even about today's culture, and he seemed not offended by these questions* *and he was okay to talk about anything even religion, which was nice'*. To stay open to such assumptions, the researcher did not attempt to prompt talk on specific topics in the course of the interviews which might lead to potential contamination of the answers. The interviewees, conversely, were encouraged to raise any issues from their perspective.

In contrast to the tourists in this respect, the guide interviewees were a rich source of information, probably due to their interaction with different tourist demographics. As such, they seemed better able to distil and describe a wider list of regional features. It was also noticed that guide interviewees were more ready to respond openly, probably due to sharing a cultural background with the researcher.

The empirical findings also suggested that the perceived image of a region considerably influenced the perceived image of a given country in that region. This can partially be explained by the geographical and cultural roots that exist between intra-regional countries, which serve to shape regional identity and profile. Accordingly, it was found that tourist's impressions of intraregional countries were at times undifferentiated; inexperienced travellers in particular appeared to envision them as largely alike. Indeed, this lack of differentiation is exemplified in the data regarding tourist impressions of Jordan. The findings suggested that Jordan's image had been considerably affected by the broader negative regional image related to political unrest in the Middle East. Such unfavourable images were not favourable to Jordan, since if they created negative word of mouth in the market place, this would place Jordan's tourism industry in a vulnerable situation, even though the country itself at present enjoys a high level of safety. The following quotations demonstrate these findings from the guide and tourist interviewees' perspectives:

Guide (No 30): *'Jordan suffers from the tourists' misperceptions and negative image of the region. Some tourists think of Jordan as a ball of flames, surrounded by political conflict. They told me that their families and friends cautioned them not to visit Jordan'.*

Tourist (No 11): *'before I came here, they [referees] said I should not go there because there is lot of unrest'.*

Tourism literature offers evidence to support these findings. For example, Beirman (2002) found that the media coverage of Israeli conflict in the Middle East had created unjustified fearful feelings among potential Western tourists to the neighbouring countries. More recently, Steiner (2007) labelled this phenomenon the 'neighbourhood effect', to explain why some countries in unstable regions suffer from a decrease of tourism demand, even if they are not involved in a crisis situation afflicting their neighbours. Based on this evidence, it is plausible to assume that if tourists develop an undifferentiated regional image around issues occurring in only one country, such as on-going political unrest, this can result in a decrease in the numbers of international tourist arrivals to an entire region. Upon reflection, it can be said that regionally perceived images may also create positive opportunities for intraregional countries. For instance, countries in less conflicted regions than the Middle East might well capitalise on a positive undifferentiated regional image to enhance their appeal and reputation.

7.2.1 The Regional Image Formation Process

The formation of a region's image refers to the process of constructing mental representations of a given region's attributes from the sum of the intra-regional countries' common features (e.g. shared lifestyles and general level of urbanisation). Data analyses of this research uncovered the following factors influencing this process.

Firstly, the emergence of any significant socio-economic or political activity in one regional country can indispensably influence the broader regional image. This is due to the intense coverage by autonomous agents such as mass media, which are characterised by high credibility and high market penetration capable of rapidly changing an area image (Gartner, 1993; Singh and Lee, 2009). In this context, the data indicated that the broader Middle East image was negatively influenced by the on-going political unrest in some regional countries, enacted variously as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict or the Arab uprising. These incidents appeared noticeably to shape the image of the Middle East in the tourists' minds, as manifest in the numbers of questions posed to the local guides about different political attributes of the region. From this, it can be inferred that if events in a region are negatively constructed, the more likely it is that the region will be portrayed negatively in autonomous sources; in turn, this will add to a more negative overall perceived image of that region, although vice versa is also true. The following evidences reflect these findings:

Guide (No 18): *'before the 11 September attacks and the war against Iraq, tourists' questions revolved around polygamy, women's rights and Hijab. However, now they ask about Jihad, differences between Sunni and Shia' and why a Muslim might commit suicide'.*

Tourist (No 7): '*I think several different levels of people from the USA are watching the television and paying lot of attention to the news, and those people generally know that Jordan is… surrounded by unstable governments'.*

Secondly, the practices of expatriates originating from a given regional country and living in a given host country may influence the region's image. The findings suggested that potential tourists' images of the Middle East, whether positive or negative, tended to be influenced to a certain degree by the lifestyle behaviours of Arab people studying or working in Western countries. Such sources may fall within the category of 'organic agents' proposed by Gunn (1972), or alternatively, of 'solicited organic' and 'unsolicited organic' agents coined by Gartner (1993). Accordingly, it can inferred that the more positive the behaviours of expatriates from a given region in a given host country, the more positive will be the overall perceived image of that region, and vice versa. The interviewees stated:

Guide (No 4): *'these images might result from interactions with Arabs who live, for example, in France and Britain'.*

Tourist (No 11): *'I knew a friend from Jordan in the college, so he told me about Jordan and the Arab culture'.*

Thirdly, tourists' exposure to commercial sources would seem to play a major role in constructing a region's image, particularly in terms of tourism attractions. These sources include materials displayed in travel shows, documentary films and brochures about regional package tours (adapted from Gunn, 1972; Gartner, 1993). As such, it can be inferred the more tourists are exposed to induced promotional agents, the more likely they will be open to the appeal of these attractions, and the construction of a positive image (or vice versa), as testified:

Guide (No 3): '*the tourists might be aware of other attractions in the region through travel agencies or documentary films'.*

Tourist (No 4): *'the more books and travel shows I watch, the more I learn about the region [Middle East], and the more I want to travel there'.*

Finally, actual visitations to multi-regional countries may influence the overall regional image. Various studies confirm that tourist visitation and participation in a given country will influence the image of that country (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991; Beerli and Martin, 2004a; Phillips and Jang, 2010), and result in a 'modified induced image' (Gunn, 1972). As a corollary, and based on primary findings, visitations to different regional countries can equally influence the construction of regional image. Accordingly, a greater frequency of actual visitations and participations in different regional countries is likely to result in a more crystallised regional image, as demonstrated:

Guide (No 28): *'I think some tourists have already visited some Arab countries, and have knowledge about the Middle East'.*

Tourist (No 10): '*I have spent some time in Bahrain and Dubai, Turkey and Egypt. I have been, kind of, in this area. My impressions about the Middle East are more positive now; the people are friendlier than I expected'.*

To summarise, this section focused on tourists' perceived image of the region. It appeared that the construction of tourists' images extended beyond a specific destination country to a macro imaging of the wider region in terms of different anticipated features. It was also found that the formation of mental representations of the region is influenced by a number of agents over which TMOs have various degrees of controllability.

7.3 Tourists' Image of Country as an Entity

Considerable scholarly interest has been brought to bear on tourists' perceived images of a country as a whole (Haahti and Yavas, 1983; Embacher and Buttle, 1989; Gartner, 1989; Borchgrvink and Knutson, 1997; Schneider and Sönmez, 1999; Grosspietsch, 2006; Yilmaz el al., 2009). This growing body of research can be attributed to an assumption that such perceived images of a whole country can significantly influence tourist behaviour and thinking, in terms of their decision-making process, their satisfaction and their loyalty (Gallarza et al., 2002). As such, assessing tourists' perceived image of a given country is seen as vital for informing the tourism industry of how to create competitive advantage and attract more tourists to a given country. The findings of this research add knowledge to this line of enquiry by providing new understanding in regard to image attributes associated with a specific country.

Data offered by the guide and the US tourist interviewees' indicated that Jordan was envisioned variously in terms of: 1) country profile (e.g. Islamic Middle Eastern country); 2) socio-cultural features including aboriginal cultures (e.g. Bedouin), lifestyles (e.g. moderate), hospitality and friendliness, local food, architecture and cleanliness; 3) economic attributes including degree of affluence and price levels; 4) political attributes including stability, political democracy and regime; 5) tourism attributes relating to tourism superstructure, service providers, diversity of attractions, landscape and the quality of services; and finally 6) attributes associated with the degree of urbanisation such as infrastructure, level of literacy and information technologies. The following quotations reflect these findings:

Guide (No 17): *'some French tourists imagine Jordan as being all desert and camels, as an unsafe, underdeveloped poor country, with a weak infrastructure and technologies… once tourists experience Jordan and see the desert, highlands, agricultural lands and paved roads… their perceptions change dramatically and they begin to perceive Jordan as a safe country, with diversified traditions and attractions'.*

Another guide (No 20): *'Jordan is perceived as one of third world countries, underdeveloped, with poor infrastructure, poor hotels and guides with poor* *language skills. However, Spanish tourists have a positive image about the [Jordanian] Royal Family… images do change during the tour; tourists get surprised by the quality of services and luxurious buildings in some areas of Jordan. They have begun to perceive Jordan as developing, with friendly people'.*

Interviews with the US tourists correlated more or less with the guides' responses. Tourist (No 7): '*it is a growing country, it is really developing… the people all were nice… Jordan sure seems to be a pretty moderate country; Jordanians have the right to protest and they are trying to get more democracy'.*

Tourist (No 8): *'I was concerned with the tour in Jordan… I was nervous because of the political things, but safety was the biggest concern. I have felt more than just being safe. It was a wonderful trip, with a fantastic guide, and good places to stay'.*

Research into destination image largely supports these results. Some authors have developed master lists of image attributes, which have been previously adopted by different researchers in assessing the perceived image of many different countries (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Assaker, 2014). Nonetheless, the findings of this research suggest some fresh attributes that are potentially underrepresented in previous researches. These include images associated with the country's background or profile, lifestyle, political democracy, regime, service providers, diversity, level of literacy and technology (see table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Attribute List of Jordan's Image Compared to Previous Research

Attributes Used by Previous Research	**Attributes List of Jordan's Image**
Scenery/Natural Attractions	**Country profile**
Costs/Price Levels	**Socio-cultural attributes**
Climate	aboriginal cultures
Tourist Sites/Activities	lifestyles
Nightlife and Entertainment	hospitality and friendliness
Sports Facilities/Activities	local food
National Parks/Wilderness Activities	architecture
Local Infrastructure/Transportation	cleanliness/hygiene
Architecture/Buildings	**Economic attributes**
Historic Sites/Museums	affluence (e.g. poverty)
Beaches	price levels
Shopping Facilities	**Political attributes**
Accommodation Facilities	Stability
Cities	political democracy
Fairs, Exhibits, Festivals	regime
Facilities for Information and Tours	**Tourism attributes**
Crowdedness/ Cleanliness	tourism superstructure
Personal Safety	service providers
Economic Development/Affluence	diversity of attractions
Accessibility	landscape
Degree of Urbanisation	the quality of services
Extent of Commercialisation	**Degree of urbanisation**
Political Stability	infrastructure
Hospitality/Friendliness/Receptiveness	level of literacy
Different Customs/Culture	information technologies
Different Cuisine/Food and Drink	
Restful/Relaxing	
Atmosphere (Familiar versus Exotic)	
Opportunity for Adventure	
Opportunity to Increase Knowledge	
Family or Adult Oriented	
Quality of Service	
Fame/Reputation	
Source: Echtner and Ritchie (2003:45), and Assaker (2014:207).	Source: the researcher.

This innovative list of features contributes to better assessment and greater understanding about the country's perceived image in tourism, and might potentially support the identification of fundamental components of other countries' images. For example, the profile of a country can be defined and imagined as developed, as in the case of Germany in Europe, or as developing such as in Thailand in East Asia. In terms of general lifestyle, a given country might be envisioned as liberal, moderate or conservative. In terms of political democracy, a country might be envisioned as democratic and equitable, or in contrast, repressive and dictatorial. In terms of regime, a given nation can be defined in tourists' minds as a kingdom or a republic, strongly associated with a Royal Family or a President.

Interestingly, tourism service providers are seen to be involved in promoting destination image (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; Dahles, 2002; Zehrer el al., 2007), but also to be part of the tourists' overall mental representation of the country. As such, the service providers can be envisioned as competent and professional, or incompetent and pushy, according to their perceived interaction with tourists over a period of time. Accordingly, it can be claimed that the way in which such service providers treat tourists can positively enhance, or detract from tourists' experiences, and hence, influence the country's perceived image in different ways.

In terms of diversity, a given country can be imagined as diversified or classical. In terms of literacy, a nation can be perceived as educationally developed with well-informed citizens, or underdeveloped with illiterate or ignorant citizens. Technology also significantly contributes to a country's perceived image, in that the daily use of smartphones, laptops and other technological devices will extend to holidays and tourist experiences. As such, the degree of accessibility to information technology in a given nation may influence how far it is perceived as advanced or not.

7.3.1 The Country Image Formation Process

As detailed in section (2.6), numerous studies across the field have emphasised the importance of identifying factors that influence the image formation process of a destination (Gunn, 1972; Gartner, 1993; Tasci and Gartner, 2007). Understanding such factors will underpin the development of effective managerial and promotional strategies for managing image (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a). The empirical findings of this research revealed the following new factors that were found to influence the process of constructing mental representations of a given country's various characteristics in the tourists' eyes.

First, the perceived image of the host region seemed to correlate positively or negatively with the overall country perceived image (for details see section 7.2). This would explain why considerable attention is paid by TMOs to build networks with media and journalists (e.g. Custodio and Gouveia, 2007; Mestre et al., 2008; Singh and Lee, 2009) to promote a differentiated view of their country's image over that of their neighbours.

Second, the literature reports on a variety of tourist characteristics which might influence destination image construction, including country of origin, religious orientation, age, gender, income, class standing, household status, previous visits, and other variables such as exposure to media. These variables have been tested in previous studies and have been found to have an influence on tourists' images (Beerli and Martin, 2004b; Tasci et al., 2007). Data analyses of this research suggested that tourists' characteristics also included personal interests, and the size of the group in which they were travelling. It appeared that these two factors had a direct effect on tour guide performance. This means that the perceived overall image of the country went on to have a retrospective effect on on-going perceptions. The following extracts reflect these findings from the guide and the US tourist interviewees' perspectives:

In terms of tourists' interests, guide (No 26): *'a guide should understand tourists' interests and demands; some of them like to hear brief information, whereas some others seek more explanations'.*

One tourist (No 7) reflected how his interest in history influenced his perceived image of Jordan: '*I went to history lessons in the past, about two years ago, but the tour guide tried to teach us more about modern Jordan than just historical information... so I was surprised how much history is here'.*

In terms of tourists' perceptions, guide (No 35): *'I reassure the tourists that Jordan is a safe country and there are tourism police in most places for any emergency'.*

Tourist (No 4) implied that mental representations of Jordan might be selectively reconstructed based on the tourist's previous perceptions: '*my mom was like 'OMG', this is in the Middle East. Some people asked: is Jordan a safe country [before the visit]… we saw tourism police everywhere to protect the sites, but also I realise that nobody is going to cause any serious problem when there are tourism police already there. So it gives you the feeling it is a safe country'.*

In terms of group size, guide (No 22): *'I present more information when the group size is small, whereas with a larger number of tourists I present less information; to open the floor for tourists' questions'.*

Tourist (No 8) reflected the influence of group size on the tourists' participation and image construction: *'we were in the group and we got the chance to learn new things and to do things we enjoyed, it was fast'.*

The above extracts imply that the more tourists appear to be interested and willing to listen to guide presentations, the better the quality and amount of information presented. Accordingly, it could be said that the more they had the chance to understand the country's characteristics, the more crystallised their image was likely to be. It was additionally interesting to note the influence of tourists' perceptions on their guide's representations and then retrospectively, the influence of the guide's commentaries on the tourists' perceptions. It appeared that the guide often responded to assumed group perceptions by seeking to deconstruct any tourist misperceptions, or conversely to reconstruct and enhance positive images held by the tourists. For example, the empirical evidence suggested that the tour guides commonly engaged in representing Jordan's political stability, partly to allay any preconceptions or fears arising from perceived political instability in the region. Such responsive reconstructions appeared to influence the country's image.

Moreover, it seemed that the smaller the group size, the better the opportunities for the guide to present an in-depth level of information which served to enhance the tourists' perceptions of the country. On the basis of such findings, it might be speculated that guides accompanying large numbers of tourists would tend to present less but more varied information, and might rush the tour in order to satisfy the widest range of group demands. In this respect, group size could be claimed as an important variable in influencing the perceived image of a country, particularly in guided tours.

To sum up, this section reflects the potentially diverse perception landscape constructed variously by tourists visiting a country; which represent a variety of features other than mere perceptions of tourism services and attractions. It was also found that the country's perceived image was influenced by the perceived image of the host region, and by various tourist characteristics such as personal interests, individual perceptions and group size.

7.4 Tourists' Site Image

Tourists' site image refers to the sum of tourists' ideas, feelings and attitudes about a given site at a given stage of their experience. Researches in destination image suggest that studies at site or city level are an emerging line of enquiry, probably with a view to differentiating the images of known touristic places. Examples include Dubai (Govers and Go, 2005) and New York (Phillips and Jang, 2010). This section thus intends to provide meaningful understanding about tourists' perceived image of given sites in Jordan.

The primary data indicated that a given site could be imagined in terms of varying attributes revolving around the site's functional or observable characteristics (e.g. monuments, site size, location and surrounding setting), and symbolic characteristics (e.g. historical or therapeutic). Another attribute contributing to the capital of a site image involved the practices of home site actors, including the local people and service providers. The tour guide interviewees stated:

Guide (No 5): *'most tourists imagine that Petra is only the 'treasury' [one of main monuments in Petra]… they are surprised by the city size'.*

Guide (No 16): *'tourists might forget about the history and who built Petra, but the experiences with the host society form a long lasting experience'.*

Guide (No 18): *'when tourists saw Jerash they said that they had been to Rome but they had not seen such a breath-taking historical Roman city as Jerash'.*

Data offered by the US tourists were consistent with these results. Tourist (No 4): *'there is one thing that is not positive in Petra; when you walk and somebody tries to sell you something they can be very pushy'.*

Another tourist (No 5): '*the ruins are amazing. I have been to Rome and here it was like 'oh' the ruins are in much better shape than they are in Rome [referring to Jerash]'.*

A given site's observable characteristics echo Echtner and Ritchie's (2003) model of destination image components, namely the 'functional dimension' (see section 2.5.2). However, here there appears some to be dissimilarity between the 'symbolic characteristic' and the 'psychological dimension' proposed by Echtner and Ritchie (2003). The symbolic characteristic is defined in this research as the intangible significance of the site (e.g. historical), whereas the psychological dimension generally refers to less measurable attributes such as the friendliness of the host. Therefore, it can be said that the symbolic significance is a dimension of the psychological component of a given site, one that can evoke certain emotional states in the tourist.

The functional and symbolic characteristics seem to be important elements in the construction of a site's image, especially considering that each tour group will have different preferences and needs which would accordingly influence the way in which the site is envisioned by each group. For example, a tour group visiting Jordan for religious and spiritual purposes might perceive the Baptism site and the Jordan River differently from those visiting the same sites for cultural purposes. In other words, the perceived image of such sites would tend to be selectively constructed based on each tourist's needs and associations. On this basis, it can be said that the stronger the association between tourists' needs and the site's functional and symbolic characteristics, the more likely it would be to attractively appeal to tourists.

The attitude of home site actors is a second psychological dimension which seems to influence tourists' specific perceptions about a particular site, and consequently their broader impressions about the country. The data suggested that a given site was not envisioned as a discrete, inanimate or salient entity; rather the home actors were seen as an influential part of the image. That is to say, the tourists' images tended to be vibrant and lively, if local actors were given a space in the mental construction of their experience. Thus it could be said that when local actors' attitudes were seen as positive, then tourists would be more likely to construct a positive image of the site.

7.4.1 The Site Image Formation Process

Data analyses uncovered a number of agents and forces that could influence the mental representations of a given site's various characteristics discussed above. First, popular culture portrayed via films appeared to have an impact on a site's perceived image. Indeed, a number of tourism studies have found that images disseminated through movies contribute to destination image formation process, and influence tourists' behaviours, perhaps even increase their numbers (Frost, 2006; Lee et al., 2008). This is due to the high credibility and high market penetration of such autonomous agents, which have the capacity to change images over a short period (Gartner, 1993). Accordingly, it could be claimed that the larger the amount of resources devoted to positively promote and portray a given site, the greater the enthusiasm likely to be generated towards that site and its image. The interviewees said:

Guide (No 28): *'most tourists associate Petra with Indiana Jones'.*

Tourist (No 4): '*some people… might think about the treasury [in Petra] because of Indiana Jones. The things that have relation to pop-culture are the best way to reach people in a way that makes sense to them. Movies help a lot more than commercial and books'.*

Another tourist (No 9): *'I didn't bother about Kerak, because I hadn't heard of it. If it were something really that I wanted to see, it would have been a big issue'.*

A further factor leading to the construction of images was the form of the itinerary. It appeared that the numbers of sights visited and the time allocated to each site influenced the site's perceived image. While some overlap in salience was found between the tourists' purpose for visiting, and the overall length of trip, both factors influencing image (Tasci et al., 2007), there appeared here to be some dissimilarity of impact. The tourists' purpose for visiting was directly correlated with the sites to be visited in the country, but not necessarily the number of those sights (e.g. eco-tourists might fulfil their needs by visiting natural reserves but irrespective of the number). Moreover, the length of the tourists' trip was not necessarily consistent with the time allocated to visiting a given site (e.g. a tourist might spend three days of their holiday in Petra, whereas others might only stay for one). As such, it could be inferred that the greater the number of seen sights and the longer the time allocated per site, the more the tourists would benefit from engagement or exposure to the site's features, leading to a more crystallised image. The following extracts exemplify these findings:

Guide (No 11): *'pressed itineraries do influence our performance and tourists' activities within the site'.*

Tourist (No 4): *'in Jerash we needed more time. We came once and we just want to enjoy what we saw. Jerash is just too big too beautiful; we needed at least three hours'.*

Various features appeared to contribute to forming microcosmic site images in the tourists' mind. The crystallisation of a given site's image seemingly depended on the resources devoted to promoting the site's characteristics and the nature of the itinerary. The interaction of these factors at site level would collectively influence the overall perceived image of the country. The following sections of this chapter explore the patterns of tourists' perceived image of these three entities.

7.5 Fuzzy Image

Fuzzy image refers to specific zones of tourists' imaginations in which perplexed perceptions are formed around certain features of a visited region, country or site. The empirical data suggested that a fuzzy image tended to be perceived by tourists, particularly at the initial stages of their consumption experiences. In fact, tourism researchers have commented that even if tourists' images might be inaccurate and subjective rather than objective (Hunt, 1975; Jenkins, 1999; Tasci and Gartner, 2007), those images still influence the behaviour of the tourists (Crompton, 1979a; Assaker et al., 2010). This section moves beyond these common explanations to provide insight into the kinds of fuzzy perceptions that actual tourists might bring to a tour.

At regional level, data offered from the tour guides' indicated that some tourists held indistinct images of religion, namely Islam, as well as of the nature of the Arab temperament, the level of safety and the cultural fabric of the region:

Guide (No 6): *'the typical idea about the Middle East is Islam associated with terrorism, men with four wives, women all veiled and oppressed, tourists think all Arabs are alike, and that all are Muslim'.*

Similarly, guide (No 9): *'some tourists perceive the Middle East as dangerous and a war zone... they believe that Arabian women have no rights, Islam is terrorism and Arabs are aggressive'.*

Interviews with the US tourists supported partly these findings. It appeared that some of the US participants and participants' referees had fuzzily envisioned the whole region as unstable:

Tourist (No 7): *'there is a group [of Americans] that think that Jordanians are like everybody else; they think that all the Arab Middle Eastern countries are the same'.*

Another tourist (No 10): *'lot of my friends were saying: what! why are you going there right now! are you kidding! what are you doing! For me, it was why not. For them, they were nervous; they heard the news and about political clashes and something like that'.*

The discrepancies between guide and tourist data in terms of other regional features are explained in section (7.2). However, interpretations and clarifications about these macro perceived ideas, and how they might deviate from the reality of these attributes, are presented below.

Data analyses suggested that some tourists held compound misperceptions of Arabs as aggressive and of Islam as a religion of terrorism; possibly because of ideological strife taking place in Arabian Islamic countries, or incidents launched by Arabian extremists in the name of Islam (e.g. attacks of 11 Sept 2001). However, a review of Islamic sources shows that Islam is not a religion of terrorism. On the contrary, Islam strictly prohibits murder and instructs Muslims not to kill innocent people, regardless of their backgrounds or faiths (see verses 5:32 and 4:93). Moreover, some other Quranic verses instruct Muslims to repel evil deeds with good deeds (see verse 41:34), and to give preference to peaceful coexistence. The Quran states: *'if they should be inclined to make peace, make peace with them'* (8:61). While such teachings reflect the theoretical tenets of Islam as anti-terrorist, some studies have investigated these issues pragmatically.

For example, Paper (2003) explored 188 cases of suicide incidents from 1981 to 2001, and found little connection between suicide terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism, or indeed any other world religion. Rather, it is argued that suicide terrorists follow a strategic logic specifically designed to coerce modern liberal democracies into change, such as motivating people to withdraw from regions that the terrorists believe are their own mandate (ibid). Data triangulation of different sources implied that tourists insufficiently informed of Islam might fuzzily construe Islam as a religion condoning terrorism rather than as a religion prohibiting murder and calling for peace. It could be argued that both kinds of Arabs exist, those who enact their beliefs of forbearance and forgiveness, and who resist extremist ideologies and those who only too well match the tourists' fuzzy image of Arabs as extremists. It is impossible to generalise either way.

The empirical data also showed that tourists tended to harbour misconceptions of the whole region as unstable and strife-ridden. This comes as no surprise, given the political armed conflict in some regional countries, such as Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the civil war in Iraq. The 'effect of neighbourhood' (Steiner, 2007), or more accurately, of 'regional fuzzy image' reflects meaningfully the negative effects of Jordan’s being in a violent neighbourhood even though safe in itself. Such effects explain the dramatic decrease in international tourists’ arrivals in some regional countries such as Jordan, evidenced in statistical indicators. For instance, MOTA (2015) figures show that since the beginning of the Arab uprising the number of package groups to Jordan has dropped from 707,735 in 2010 to 323,144 in 2014.

This associative neighbourhood effect extends to fuelling misconceptions of phenomena in the cultural fabric of the region. For instance, veiled Arabian women appeared to be stereotypically envisioned as oppressed and dominated by men, although this is not the normally held Arabic cultural construction of the veil. In this region, wearing Hijab is seen as a personal response to Quranic teaching (see verse 33:59), that is the woman wishes to show obedience to God. Misconceptions of this go towards forming an equally fuzzy perception of Arabian women’s rights, which seemed to be perceived by the tourists as static and regionally homogenous. In contrast to this, the current reality is that gender norms and roles in the Middle East, like so many other socio-cultural phenomena, are undergoing major changes, even to the point of being incorporated into new legal codes enhancing the status of Arabian women in some regional countries (Moghadam and Decker, 2013).

A final fuzzy image was found to be held in respect to polygamy amongst Arabs as common or universal. The reality is that Muslim man can theoretically have up to four wives, but also that this is subject to specific religious conditions and circumstances, not to mention the considerable social and economic responsibilities that polygamy might entail. This means that having more than one wife is not really encouraged without some real justification such as childlessness (see section 6.10 for more explanations).

The findings thus demonstrated that indistinct tourists’ perceptions of certain regional features appeared to have led to homogenised stereotypes, although these were generally at some remove from the real diversity of Arab lifestyles and practices. Such cultural misperceptions are inevitable amongst world travellers, and open to change. However, more serious implications of such misperceptions arise when all Muslims begin to be stereotyped as war-mongers or terrorists. As reported by some research in international relations, such negative beliefs may lead to increasing isolation and victimisation of Arabs (Donovan, 2011), and possibly to outright cross-cultural avoidance, particularly in Western cultures. Recent hate crimes, such as the Chapel Hill shooting of three Muslim students in North Carolina USA, exemplify these assumptions (BBC news, 2015).

At country level, a number of tour guide interviewees reported some perceived images of Jordan's stability and socio-economic features as warped with fuzziness:

Guide (No 11): *'some tourists stereotypically imagined Jordanians as Bedouins living in the desert, uneducated, uncultured and devoid of technology'.*

Another guide (No 20) shared the same observations: *'some tourists imagined Jordan as a risky destination, with no infrastructure, moving around by camel, undeveloped and with poor services'.*

Interviews with the US tourists relatively supported these findings. For example, tourist (No 7): '*I got the impressions that it [Jordan] was undeveloped'.*

Tourist (No 8): *'I was concerned with the tour in Jordan… I was nervous because of the political things, but safety was the biggest concern'.*

The above evidence reflects that Jordan's stability was the most salient concern among these tourists, an understandable view given the political unrest in some regional countries. On the other hand, in spite of the tourists' indistinct images at regional Middle East level, at country level the tourists must have been aware of Jordan as a stable country (otherwise why would they have visited it). At worst, they might have held negatively anticipated images of Jordan as potentially infected by the unpredictable situation in the region at the time. This reflects some inconsistency in the tourists' perceived images. However, data analysis also revealed that there was a tendency to envision Jordan as a stereotypical Bedouin society, with people homed in tents, travelling on camels, and of Jordan as a country with poor services, and an undeveloped infrastructure with poor housing, illiteracy and lack of technology.

The relative reality of Jordanian society is quite other. In this context, Marcovitz (2009:10) offers a fair description of the current state of the country, particularly around Amman:

> "*By the dawn of the twenty first century, Amman had grown into a bustling metropolis of more than two million people. Jordan's capital is widely recognised as one of the leading commercial and banking centres in the Middle East. Hussein and later Abdullah II have encouraged investment by Western corporations and financiers, which are drawn to Amman because of Jordan's stability and its reputation for peaceful coexistence with its neighbours".*

More secondary evidence of educational institutions, communication technology and transport infrastructure challenges further the fuzziness of some tourists' perceived images of Jordan. For example, the Department of Statistics (Dos) reported that in 2013 there were 6007 state and private schools, 34 state and private universities and 51 community colleges. These data reflect the country's initiatives to reduce illiteracy. In terms of communication technologies and internet services, Jordan is reported to be taking a leading role in the Middle East and North Africa region (Aladwani, 2003). Recent statistical indicators underpin this claim, evidencing 87.5% of the population as registered computer users, and 36.8% as internet users (Internet World States, 2013). Similarly, out of 6 million inhabitants, the number of mobile phone subscribers was put recently at 8,984,000 (DoS, 2013). All these indicators suggest that Jordan's economy and infrastructure are taking an upturn direction, including the country's concern to enhance its telecommunication industry and transport systems, by road, rail, sea and air networks (Jordan Investment Bored JIB, 2013).

It becomes clear that Jordan's image as a stable and developing country is at some remove from the tourists' reported perceived images in this section. It seems likely then that the gap between tourists' perceptions and the real state of Jordan resulted in images of a fuzzy nature.

Such unclear ideas were equally manifest at site level, around the functional characteristics of given touristic sites (e.g. site location and size). The empirical data also indicated that a number of tourists, having heard only about Petra and the Dead Sea, did not expect to experience such diversity in Jordan's offerings to tourists. This implies that perceptions of some sites were at some stage subject to complete fuzziness. The following quotations reflect these findings from the tour guides' and the US tourists' perspectives:

Guide (No 14): '*some tourists thought that Petra was in Israel… tourists think they will only see Petra in Jordan'.*

Another guide (No 15): *'most tourists' thought that the treasury was the only monument in Petra; they were surprised by the city's size, colours and monuments… they also get really surprised when they see Jerash because it is not promoted properly, although it is a well-preserved Roman city'.*

Among others, tourist (No 11): *'I never knew about anything else other than the Dead Sea and Petra… I did not know that you had Roman ruins here'.*

Even though the tourists had in general been exposed to promotional materials and possibly copies of the itinerary, to help them at a minimum anticipate more realistically what they would see in Jordan, it was found nonetheless that some tourists held partly fuzzy images of Petra and the Dead Sea before arrival. These findings can be viewed through the lens of McGregor's (2000) study (cited in Gorp, 2012) of the relationship between tourists' held images and their guidebooks. McGregor (2000) classified sites into four realms: the known, the imagined, the unknown and the unseen. *Known sites* include 'must see' attracts that everyone would be aware of even before visitation. *Imagined sites* refer to places that tourists would be aware of but could only imagine, having no clear idea of what they looked like. The *unknown sites* refer to indifferent places only fleetingly mentioned in the guidebooks. Finally were *unseen sites*, not discussed in the guidebooks and not experienced by the tourists during the visit.

In terms of this research, some tourists seemingly held blurred images of the functional characteristics of ‘known sites’ such as Petra’s location and size. This was perhaps because, firstly, the promotional guidebooks might have focused on the treasury in Petra as the main attraction, ignoring the larger picture. Secondly, tourism literature suggests that regional itineraries may be subject to change, and impact on the way in which sites are conceived. For instance, after a change in Israeli diplomacy with neighbouring Arab countries, mediated by Jordan in 1994, Israel began to promote short visits to Petra and Amman (Beirman, 2002; Stein, 2008). Therefore, some tourists might have indistinctly associated the site with Israel. This fuzziness also extended to ‘unknown’ and ‘unseen’ sights such as Jerash and other local sites of which some tourists were quite unaware, probably because they only merited a brief mention in the guidebooks.

The above findings generally indicated that tourists held fuzzy images in regard to these three destinations, despite the revolution in telecommunication industry that might have promised more clarity of image. Counter to this is the reality that technology and mass media may, as powerful autonomous agents, serve to obscure or distort an area’s image over a short period (Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Singh and Lee, 2009). For instance, following the September 11th attacks on the US, the image of the Middle East as a whole came under fire from Western media which tended towards depicting Arabs and Islam in general as extremist, radical, terrorist, and as a threat to Western security (Dunn, 2001). It is possible therefore that media subjectivity, as promoting region stereotypes, had some agency in creating unclear and negative images of the Middle East. This latter assumption corresponds with Ritchie’s (2004) view, that the media reports of a given crisis might be at times hostile, lead to misinformation and result in decrease in tourism numbers.

A further contributor to the construction of fuzzy image might be argued as arising from the limited knowledge and inexperience of tourists themselves (Jenkins, 1999; Greaves and Skinner, 2009), as could the related factor of geographical distance from the tourists’ home country. It seems that tourists are likely to hold more realistic images of countries that neighbour the tourist's own country (Hunt, 1975; Jenkins, 1999), by the same token, greater distance or nonadjacent countries may promote fuzzy and less true images. To take geographical fuzziness a step further, it could be said that cultural distance might equally lead to fuzzy images. This would be all the more likely if the cultural practices of locals in a given country being visited were noticeably dissimilar from those familiar to tourists at home. That is, whether a Western visitor was visiting the Middle East or a Middle Eastern visitor was visiting the West, there might be an equal chance of fuzzy images arising from socio-cultural differences in lifestyles and systems.

An interesting question thrown up by such findings is why tourists would visit any destination with such an inaccurate state of perceptions. The explanation may lie in the assumption that preliminary images are not always based on real experiences. That is, even if tourists started actively searching for information from different sources, and developing relatively more positive or realistic perceptions before their visit, it would be impossible to generalise their reactions once on site. Some for instance might still hold on to their fuzzy images, whilst others might affirm completely new positive images after selective exposure to 'induced sources' (adapted from Gartner, 1993). The reality is more likely that due to incomplete certainty, many tourists initially select a destination based on its perceived uniquely attractive qualities (see 'peculiar image' for further interpretations), firming these up in due course. In this way, fuzzy images might be represented by an organic model, as being like bacterial zones that gradually respond to exposure from TMOs antibacterial or antibiotic campaigns. To extend the metaphor, a complete healing process might take some time; as more opportunities for consumption experiences result in a clarification of fuzzy images, a maximisation of positive experiences might result in a full cure of previous ignorance.

7.6 Relatively Realistic Image

Relatively realistic image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions that fairly match the actual status of given features of a region, country or site.

Interestingly, while the data upheld research as to some tourists' fuzzy images being most prevalent at the start of their consumption experience, the findings also indicated the opposite, that some tourists held relatively realistic images from the beginning. It appears then that a disparity of images may be contained within a single group or between different groups of tourists, reflecting the complexity of image packages that tourists might bring to a destination. However, this does not discount the possibility that this zone of true images extending to involve a wider list of features by the end of tourists' consumption experience, particularly in the case of package travellers to multi-regional countries. These assumptions have been well captured in Beerli and Martin (2004a), who claimed that destination image post-visit tends to be more realistic, complex and differentiated.

Relatively realistic perceptions of the region seemed to be associated with certain political features and background information of the Middle East. The interviewees stated:

Guide (No 34): *'most Italian tourists are interested to know more about Palestinian-Israeli relationships, Sunni and Shia, and the current state of Syria'.*

Tourist (No 4): *'people, particularly Americans, have perceptions that, you know, we have friendly relationship with Jordan and things are peaceful there. Unlike other places here that is little bit rocky and unpredictable, as lot of things have been changing lately'.*

Tourist (No 9): *'I knew that the Middle East was an area located to the north east of Africa where Arabic is predominately spoken and where the Islamic faith is predominantly observed'.*

These evidences indicate that tourists were aware from the outset of the reality of political conflict and lack of stability in the Middle East region. They might have been informed for example by media reports of the on-going peace negotiations between Arabs and Israelis. Although peace agreements in the region are not new, one being signed between Egypt-Israel in 1979, and another between Jordan-Israel in 1994, nonetheless Palestinian-Israeli relationships are constantly in the news as suspended in a state of hostility

(Tessler, 2013; MacQueen, 2013). Other images of the Middle East may have been formed for tourists in the context of Iraq, since a war waged on the country in 2003 by US forces was followed up by a civil war between Sunni and Shi'a troops in 2007. Thus the world has witnessed the Arab uprising and protest continuously overrunning different regional countries since 2010, beginning in Tunisia and Egypt and snowballing into other Arab countries (Al-Hamarneh, 2013). Such realistic perceptions of unrest in some regional countries contrasted, on the other hand, with tourists' specific perceptions of Jordan as regionally distinct, an island of stability surrounded by political unrest, a quiet house in a noisy neighbourhood.

Somewhat true images extended to the Middle East as sharing Arabic culture and Islam. Historically, the emergence of Islam in Saudi Arabia was followed by the spread of the Arabic language and Arabic culture to the majority of the Middle Eastern countries, creating a common identity which conventionally defined the region (Gasper, 2013). This unity was reflected in the tourists' relatively realistic images of the region.

Later findings however imply that while some of the perceived images were relatively true, they were also to a degree subjective, reflecting the multidimensionality of tourists' perceptions. For instance, while realistically the Middle East is largely Islamic, it is also home to individuals from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, not all of them Muslim (Brown, 2006; Lust, 2013). Given that the region incorporates a complex web of multiple identities, the tourists' perceptions of the Middle East as homogenous might be seen as rather simplistic. Whether their unawareness of sub-cultural diversity in the region was due to ignorance, or to individual mental tendency to filter or simplify information into easily remembered generalised images, is open to question. What is true is that these interpretations are consistent with observations in tourism literature, suggesting that tourists tend to use stereotype images of different destinations to minimise their mental load and thereby avoid complex analyses (Batra et al., 1996 cited in Andreu et al., 2001).

Relatively realistic perceptions of the country overlapped somewhat with the former findings. In addition to Jordan's stability discussed above, tourists' perceived images of other aspects of Jordan such as its Royal Family were to extent based on clear ideas, as illustrated from the guide and the US tourist interviewees' perspectives:

Guide (No 16): *'I think that some German tourists hold more positive or real images about Jordan… they knew that it is a developing Arabic-Islamic country, located in an unstable region'.*

Tourist (No 9): '*well, I got the impressions that there are poverty and I thought that 78% of Jordan was desert… I knew and had a good impression about the king'.*

Tourist (No 10): *'my mom was nervous to come here, and I told her here it is like the Switzerland of the Middle East; Jordan is very safe and friendly... All the same, culturally, this country is located in the Middle East and is dominated by Muslims, but that is what is real about it'.*

The country of Jordan is generally defined as a developing Middle Eastern, Arabian and predominantly Islamic country. Inevitably, Jordan is historically linked to bordering Middle Eastern countries which have helped to shape the country's identity. While this perception is holistically regional, the data suggested that realistic perceptions were associated with other attributes specific to Jordan. For instance, Jordan was envisioned by some tourists as an immense desert with a relatively poor economy. Although this is not the whole truth of Jordan, it is nonetheless a true reflection firstly of the country's historical struggle with desertification, and secondly with an ongoing heavy budget deficit that has led to poverty and a high national debt, recorded recently at about 17 billion JD (CBJ report, 2014).

Awareness of the Jordanian Royal Family as one of the regimes in the area was also found to be realistic; easily understandable in that the late King Hussein and the current King Abdullah II have both been renowned for contributing to Jordan's stability in the midst of surrounding ideological strife. Both kings have constantly endeavoured to achieve peace in the region, and to maintain friendly and diplomatic relationships with Western countries (www.kingabdullah.jo, 2014). Their achievements might have been reported in the Western mass media, thus perhaps arousing greater awareness in the part of tourists.

Such findings imply that a set of external symbols may have played a major role in constructing real mental images of the country. Given the complexity of the social world and thus the impossibility of holding absolute knowledge of it, such symbols may be associated with the main personality or characteristics of a country that distinguish it from neighbours.

Relatively realistic ideas of given sites were also associated with the functional characteristics and symbolic significances of Petra and the Dead Sea. The interviewees reported:

Guide (No 10): '*some tourists had good impressions about the Dead Sea; they said that they saw pictures of other tourists floating and having mud baths in the Dead Sea*'.

Guide (No 19): '*most tourists have a positive image about Petra, and some knew that it is a UNESCO world heritage site'.*

Tourist (No 9): *'I knew about the Dead Sea and I had heard about Petra'.*

Some tourists appeared to know about Petra's location and of Jordan's ownership of the site, and by extension, to have realistic impressions of the symbolic significance of Petra and the Dead Sea. This is in contrast to other tourists who mistakenly imagined Petra to be located in Egypt or Israel (see site fuzzy image). There are however plausible explanations for the formation of such fuzziness, arising in fact from the very uniqueness and renown of such tourist phenomena. For instance, the Dead Sea is famous for being the lowest sea on Earth and for having unique curing qualities (Smith and Puczko, 2014). Similarly, Petra's outstanding historical significance makes it a 'must see' among the cultural wonders of the world, and because of its status as a UNESCO world heritage (Joukowsky, 2007). But precisely because of these exceptional qualities, information about these sites is widely disseminated to different sources as globally rather than just locally relevant. Moreover, given that Israel shares part of the Western shores of the Dead Sea and sells tours to Petra, their promotional campaigns possibly contribute not just to the fame of these sites, but also to potential fuzziness.

Generally speaking, the empirical data suggested that this state of perceptions could be further rationalised. First, tourists are much more likely to be exposed these days to multiple sources of information, such as online, organic (e.g. word of mouth) and induced promotional sources (adapted from Gunn, 1972; Gartner, 1993; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). It would be rare for modern tourists to travel without some input or awareness of their destinations; at minimum, they might have common knowledge about the general features that predominantly characterise a given entity.

A second factor influencing the degree of tourist constructions of realistic images may involve their socio-demographic characteristics; for instance the tourist's country of origin might influence their perceived image (Hunt, 1975; Gallarza et al., 2002; Beerli and Martin, 2004a). In fact, the findings of this research indicated that some nationalities were more likely to have stronger realistic images than others; in this case, European originating tourists including British, French and Germans, had more realistic images than other nationalities. This might be partly due to the European continent's greater proximity to the Middle East, or that some Middle Eastern countries had been under British and French mandates (1916-1946). This also takes into consideration that some well-known British figures were once active in the region such as Lawrence of Arabia and Sir John Glubb (Yapp, 2003). Different groups of tourists might therefore have been exposed to different sources of information, according to different historical and political associations with the Middle East.

7.7 Dynamic Image

Dynamic image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions as formed about features of a visited region, country or given site that undergo a process of modification. The empirical evidence suggested that certain changes in tourists' mental representation tended to occur during and by the end of the visit. These findings support the literature on the dynamic nature of image (Gallarza et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2015), reflecting that the consumption experience often results in a modified induced image (Gunn, 1972; Beerli and Martin, 2004a). This section provides a clear conceptualisation of the concept of 'dynamic image' by explaining the processes through which previously held images might be reconstructed.

Regionally, a number of tour guide interviewees observed a tendency for tourists' perceptions about religion, the Arab temperament and Middle Eastern politics to be reconstructed over the tour:

Guide (No 6): *'there was a tourist who sent me an email thanking me for the information that I presented, which helped him to build modest perceptions about Islam'.*

Guide (No 21): *'the images of most tourists do change; they realise that Arabs are friendly and not aggressive… some tourists begin to sympathise with the Palestinian case'.*

The data suggested that the perceptions of the US tourists about the region did indeed change in terms of Arab friendliness and the workings of regional politics:

Tourist (No 7): '*I am really happy we got this guide on this tour, because he tried to teach us, or kind of, to be aware about some of the political changes going on in this area, to get really the flavour from other people'.*

Tourist (No 10): '*I have been, kind of, in this area. My impressions about the Middle East are more positive now; the people are friendlier than I expected'.*

The discrepancies between the guide's and the tourist's data in terms of religion are explained in section (7.2). However, the findings demonstrate that positive adjustment occurred in the tourists' perceptions of certain regional attributes. This adjustment can be interpreted via the notion of 'cognitive consistency' proposed by Festinger (1957). The author theorised that an individual faced with ambivalent situations would seek to achieve cognitive balance to relieve inner tensions created by external inconsistencies. Festinger

(1957) argued further that in such conditions an individual would be motivated to react in a three stage sequence; firstly, in a neutral state the individual would expect consistency from input; secondly, any inconsistencies would evoke a state of dissonance in the individual; and thirdly, this dissonance would motivate the individual to restore consistency.

In terms of this research, it appeared that some tourists initially held negative expectancies of certain Middle Eastern features, such as Arabs being aggressive and Islam being a religion of terrorism (see regional fuzzy image). Such mental representations of the region seemed to be constructed from exposure to different organic sources, such as T.V or newspapers (adapted from Gunn, 1972; Gartner, 1993). The accumulation of ideas from these sources throughout a tourist's life span might thus form what could be called 'image consistency'. However, during their consumption experiences in Jordan, these tourists appeared to be motivated to follow up new ideas such as those given by the local guides, or as those spontaneously aroused from the friendly attitudes of local people. These positive actual images might have contradicted tourists previously held ideas, causing image inconsistencies and accordingly evoked 'cognitive dissonance' (adapted from Festinger, 1957). If so, the tourists were perhaps motivated to reduce inner tension and to return to equilibrium by adopting certain mental tactics such as developing a rationalisation and understanding of Arab culture. Accordingly, new images were permitted to arise through which Islam was perceived more positively and Arabs as more friendly.

Data analyses showed a parallel process in the case of politics. Tourists' initial negative images, specifically in respect to the region political state and Palestinian-Israeli conflict, gradually shifted to a state of more informed understanding of recent political changes e.g. the Arab uprising as a means to demand a better life, and Palestinian perspectives as justified in regard to land rights.

At country level, the primary data suggested that the perceived image of Jordan underwent positive adjustment in terms of socio-cultural features, urbanisation and tourism service providers, as extracted from the tour guides' data:

Guide (No 9): *'tourists' misperceptions do change during the tour; they get surprised by the friendliness of the local people, the decent houses and that the country is the regional leader in information technology'.*

Guide (No 22): *'by the end of the tour, tourists begin to perceive Jordan as relatively developed, moderate, there is peace and love… and the guide is fluent and competent'.*

Interviews with the US tourists supported these findings. For example, tourist (No 7): '*Jordan sure seems to be a pretty moderate country… it is really developing. They, I think, due to stability, are attracting a lot of investment from other countries'.*

Tourist (No 9): '*the oral presentations given by the guide were incredible, the bus driver was just amazing and the people look very welcoming. Not bad experiences, it is much better than I expected'.*

The tourists' ideas about Jordan apparently adjusted upward compared to previously held images at the start of the tour. While, as mentioned earlier, some tourists had set out with negative expectations of Jordan as undeveloped, their lived and apparently positive consumption experience led them to give up their previously negative anticipated ideas. In later scenarios on the tour, new positive images of Jordan emerged. The tourists started to perceive the locals as very welcoming, the country as moderate and safe, relatively democratic and in state of development, with good architecture, with acceptable places to stay, competent service providers and relatively advanced technology. These findings imply that a positive actual experience can result in a positive modified induced image.

Micro perceived image of certain sites also changed to recognise the greater diversity of sights and the uniqueness of some attractions, as testified from the guide and the US tourist interviewees' perspectives:

Guide (No 18): *'once they [tourists] see Jerash and Wadi Rum, their images change regarding tourism diversity'.*

Tourist (No 7): '*the country has more significant historical places than I expected'.*

Another tourist (No 8): *'there are so many beautiful places other than Petra like Jerash, I only knew about Petra'.*

The empirical evidence indicated that some tourists started out with fuzzy ideas of Petra and the Dead Sea along with other sites promised in their itineraries. And it appeared that the mismatch they experienced between their expectations and the reality of the sites encountered evoked perhaps a state of 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger, 1957). In other words, the diversity of sites visited, compounded by new information from the tour guides, possibly aroused initial unease in the tourists' minds. The restoration of cognitive consistency became apparent in their voicing of new mental representations of the sites. This shift in tourists' perceptions of Petra and of the Dead Sea as mono-touristic sites extended to other attractions, not only in recognition of a greater diversity of sites, but also in understanding of the functional and symbolic characteristics of sites such as Jerash and Wadi Rum.

The overall message that stems from these findings is that the consumption experience, made up of multi-sensory encounters and enhanced by meaningful information represented by the tour guides, had the power to reform dynamically tourists' ideas and feelings. These new perceptions in turn would most likely be shared with family and friends in the tourists' home countries, leading to on-going image reproduction. The immediate process of image reconstruction, however, would still depend on variables in the demand and supply levels, and the nature of interaction among various agents.

In terms of demand, it was found that the state of tourists' perceptions were primarily influenced by their expectations, degree of tolerance and cognitive style, whether these remained static (see section 7.8), or were reformed according to the nature of the experience. In terms of supply, it appeared that the attitudes and interactions of the local community, the diversity of tourism activities and attractions, the competencies of service providers, and security measures were among the most influential agents in reformation of tourists' perceptions.

Capitalising on the image evaluative congruity theory (Chon, 1992) and cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), the above agents in this research appeared to be interactive. Assuming that tourists' openness to change is generally fact based, the processes through which dynamic images would form could be said to result from a match or a mismatch between tourists' expected images and those arising from their consumption experiences, impacted largely by the supply of influential agents mentioned above. For clarity, a tourist who starts off with a preliminary set of negative expectations, and who then encounters a positive consumption experience, might feel considerable dissonance and as a result undergo dramatically positive changes in perception in order to restore cognitive consistency. Conversely, a positive expected image followed by a positive consumption experience might result in less dissonance and only moderate positive changes. On the other hand, a negative expected image followed by a negative consumption experience might result in low dissonance and moderate negative changes. Finally, a positive expected image followed by a negative consumption experience might result in a great deal of dissonance and accordingly the most negative changes. This essentially indicates that image can be adjusted between negative and positive poles during a tourist visit. It also implies that the more positively the supply features are rated, the more positive changes are likely to be in the constructed image. Such a theory underpins the significance of ensuring tourists have satisfactory experiences which exceed their expectations.

However, an interesting question was raised about the durability of such images during the course of the interviews with guide informants. This durability seemed to depend on certain variables; firstly, it appeared that any negative socio-economic and political events encountered during a tour might result in a deteriorating positive image. Secondly, the tendency of mass media to focus only on stereotypical or negative information appeared to have a similar powerful impact. This indicates that TMOs need constantly to develop promotional strategies to sustain any newly constructed positive images in the face of social or mediatised change.

7.8 Static Image

Static image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions about certain features in a region, country or given site that resisted change and tended to remain stagnant. Some researchers claim that the act of experiencing the real destination modifies tourists' perceived image of that destination (Gunn, 1972; Beerli and Martin, 2004a). However, the findings of this research suggest that this is not always the case, that certain impressions may remain unadjusted even during or at the end of the tourists' visit. This section seeks to provide a meaningful analysis of why this might be so.

Data offered from the tour guide interviewees' indicated that static perceived images of the Middle East were associated with certain socio-religious features such as Islam:

Guide (No 17): *'not all of the tourists' negative impressions change, particularly in relation to Islam probably because it is an ideological issue'.*

Similarly, guide (No 20): '*some tourists adhere to their own ideas; I advise them to read about Islam not to convert, rather to help them not to be pre-judgmental'.*

Moreover, interviews with the US tourists showed that the perceived image of literacy level in the region was stagnant. For instance, tourist (No 9): *'no not really, I knew that a lot of the Middle East has extensive education. They go for higher education'.*

Tourists' static perceptions about certain regional features were apparently polarised between negative (e.g. Islam) and positive images (e.g. literacy level). These findings could be interpreted in two ways. Firstly, since image constructs are commonly defined as the sum of tourists' beliefs and feelings

(Chon, 1990; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a), it stands to reason that these images could have come from different organic sources (Gunn, 1972; Gartner, 1993) and accumulated over a considerable length of time, resulting in 'image consistency' in a tourist's cognition. As such, it also follows that tourist's exposure to new images might at times disaffirm previously held mental representations, resulting in mental states of discomfort, anxiety or unwanted pressure. Tourists might seek to alleviate this state of 'cognitive dissonance' (adapted from Festinger, 1957) by denying situations or dismissing information such as those presented by the tour guides during the visit. It is possible that reductionist mental strategies such as rejecting new dissonant images might result in static perceptions. This could particularly hold true in relation to religion; tourists' cognitive dissonance around unfamiliar ideological beliefs about, for example, Islam could block the emergence of fresh images. These interpretations reflect the power struggles between the tour guides' attempts to reconstruct new images and the tourists' position in this process.

Secondly, tourists might hold a set of expectations or ideas that approximated the actual states of given regional attributes. This process might arguably result in a zero dissonance and lead to shallow rather than deepening images. For example, some tourists were found to hold positive expectancies about the literacy level in the Middle East region. Indeed, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2013) reports that the rate of adult literacy in the Arab world is currently around 77%. In fact, these interpretations are consistent with Festinger's (1962) arguments that one of the causes of resistance to change of a cognitive element is the responsiveness of such elements to reality.

Static perceived images of Jordan appeared to be associated with women's rights and political representations in the Jordanian parliament. The tour guides commented:

Guide (No 16): *'some tourists' images do not change even after the real experience. Some tourists do not believe that there are quotas for women and Christians in parliament'.*

Guide (No 21)*: 'some tourists get a shock when they see women enjoying their lives and rights normally, and remain in denial'.*

However, there were no findings suggesting that the US tourists held meaningful static images of Jordanian features. It might have been that this particular set of tourists was open to change, ready to allow their lived experiences to accommodate fresh perceptions. On the other hand, since guides do indeed interact with many different kinds of tourists, probably with a variety of cognitive styles, they might still be able to distil information on specific features associated with the country's static image. This reflects the significance of the tour guides as a rich source of information in understanding the diversity of tourists' perceptions.

Data analyses indicated that some tourists held misperceptions of Jordan as an undeveloped country (see country fuzzy image), probably due partly to the subjectivity of the mass media, portraying indistinct stereotypes of Middle Eastern countries. Such messages might have been absorbed subconsciously and became part of an ingrained mental structure for perceiving their world. This in turn could have resulted in consistent mental representations among tourists' cognitions, although in fact in this research when the tourists were exposed to Jordanian stimuli which conflicted with their previous ideas, they apparently underwent a state of 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger, 1957). The inconsistencies of images perhaps caused inner conflicts on the part of tourists. Accordingly, rather than contrasting their inner images with what they were experiencing, or altering their existent mental structure, the tourists expressed an anti-realist position, adopting self-defence mechanisms such as disregarding dissonant images or conceiving them as untrue. A wish to avoid unwanted pressure might have led to negative stagnant ideas being formed around certain features in Jordan.

At site level, data triangulation indicated that Petra's symbolic significance was statically perceived as outstanding and exotic, as demonstrated below:

Among many, guide (No 4): *'some tourists might be surprised by Petra's size, but they would still perceive it as an astonishing site and they extend their stay there. Tourists' impressions about Petra are always positive'.*

Tourist (No 11): '*Petra was amazing and I thought it would be'.*

These findings imply that the site had lived up to tourists' expectations, although it seemed that some tourists had held positive images about Petra beforehand. The "responsiveness to reality" (Festinger, 1962:24), or the match between tourists' anticipated image to the actual state of what the site offered, probably resulted in zero dissonance and thus a positive static image. This might have further enhanced the site's appeal and reputation.

The overall picture suggested by these findings is that certain images already held by the tourists remained essentially unchanged, even by the end of their visit. This may be either because their images converged with reality, leading to zero dissonance, or because their images diverged from reality and did arouse dissonance. If so, this would have been alleviated by ignoring any information contradictory to the tourists' existing beliefs, and maintaining previously held images. The latter argument might explain why some tourists would not have varied their stance while others would have had their perceptions changed (see dynamic image).

The primary data also implied that other variables might come in to play in regard to the retention of stagnant images. One of these was time, specifically the duration of the tourist's stay in the country. This seemed to mediate how flexibly tourist images might be open to change. For instance, less change could be expected in a short tour, say more or less one week, than in a longer one. In fact, literature in destination image does confirm that length of trip as a variable effectively correlates with image reconstruction (Beerli and Martin, 2004b; Tasci el al., 2007). A second significant variable contributing to static image might be lack of adequate exposure to regional and national features, or an itinerary with insufficiently varied characteristics (e.g. paucity of sites visited or lack of possibilities of interaction with locals). A final variable might rest with the quality of the guide; if a guide was insufficiently convincing or informative about the entity being represented, this also could influence tourists' perceptions. On the other hand, it is inevitable that some guides may be nervous about representing topics such as religion, sport, politics and/or gender taboo, or as inviting dissonance, or as negatively influencing group rapport.

An interesting finding in regard to static images was how far these seemed to overlap with the notion of relatively realistic images. But it can be argued that these two kinds of image are sufficiently different to be discussed separately. While a static image can be defined as a rigid and unchanging state of perception, a relatively realistic image can be seen as a state of impressions matching the actual reality of a given destination's feature. As such, the matching process itself probably results in a static image, or alternatively, the relationships between the two concepts can be viewed as based on cause and effect.

These findings moreover suggest that static image can be also associated with other types of images. For example, it appeared that some of the tourists in this research held fuzzy images about certain features at regional level (e.g. misperceptions about Islam), and at country level (e.g. women's rights). Even though these were indistinct images, it does not signify that they were realistic, only that they might have remained unaltered because of cognitive dissonance. Thus the static image might correlate with other types of image, irrespective of whether they match with reality or not.

7.9 Peculiar Image

Peculiar image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions that are triggered by the unique pull qualities of a given region, country and site. In this research, peculiar images seemed to have been constructed prior to tourists' visitation, probably due to their exposure to induced promotional sources. The consumption experience appeared also to refine mental representations on impact. These images resulted in actual visitations and potential intention to re-visit, to satisfy specific push forces, as discussed below.

The findings correlated somewhat with Dann's (1981) model of push-pull motivational factors, and Echtner and Ritchie's (2003) framework of destination image components, specifically the unique dimension. However, peculiar image is a notion used in this research to establish meaningful links between these constructs. To take this point further, push factors refer to internal needs or emotional forces that motivate tourists to go on holiday (Dann, 1981; Prayag and Ryan, 2011). Conversely, pull factors refer to attributes that attract tourists to select a given destination to satisfy specific motives (Dann, 1981). The empirical data suggested that unique attributes were the main pull factors persuading tourists to select one destination over another. This implies that a given destination's features should not be considered unique just because they are singular or outstanding, but because they have the potential capacity to trigger desirable images in tourists' minds and to fulfil their psychological push forces.

Regionally, data offered by the tour guide interviewees' uncovered a set of unique attributes that seemed to attract/re-attract tourists to visit the Middle East:

Guide (No 7): '*the Middle East is the cradle of civilisations; there are lot of historical and religious sites that the tourists might be interested to see'*.

Guide (No 16): *'some tourists may travel to the region because they are interested in knowing how and why eastern and western cultures are different'*.

Interviews with the US tourists were consistent with these findings. For instance, tourist (No 1): *'I like going to new places, and I have never been to this region... I learnt a lot more about civilisations and realised that this is part of the cradle of civilisations'*.

Tourist (No 4): *'the multitude of fascinating historical sites, such as the pyramids in Egypt and sites in Israel will attract me back to the Middle East region'*.

The first unique pull forces of the Middle East appeared to be its cultures, which probably evoked desirable images in the tourists' minds as new and exotic, belonging to an unfamiliar social and geographical setting. Given the anticipated cultural differences between the Orient and Westernised or modernised lifestyles, the tourists perhaps imagined a visit would provide them with desirable emotional benefits derived from exploration, such as escape and novelty seeking (adapted from Crompton, 1979b; Dann, 1981).

Historically diversified attractions appeared to be another attractive feature of the Middle East, home to many historical civilisations as well as the birthplace of the world's three major monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Lust, 2013). The region is known to host a range of outstanding attractions such as the Pyramids in Egypt; the attractions in Bethlehem, Jericho and Jerusalem in Palestine/Israel; and the remains of Assyrian and Babylonian empires in Iraq (Al-Hamarneh, 2005; Hazbun, 2007). In Jordan, such sites include Petra, Christian pilgrimage sites accredited by the Vatican such as the Baptism Site, the Graeco-Roman Decapolis sites and others (JTB, 2013). These attractions appeared to evoke peculiar images in the tourists' minds, for instance that the region is the cradle of civilisations, as well as a nexus of multi-religious and multi-historical sites. Framed in this way, tourists possibly selected or re-selected the region for its capacity to fulfil their socio-psychological motive of 'regression to history' (adapted from Crompton, 1979b) and possibly needs related to their faith.

These attributes arguably meet the expectations of 'tourist gaze' (Urry, 1995); in that consumption experiences would involve looking for distinctive aspects that would signify to tourists that they were living an authentic unusual experience to contrast with their everyday routine. This seems especially true of the Middle East and the Orient, where the tourist gaze is directed to rediscovering the past, as well as to discovering new people and places (Gorp, 2012).

The findings in this research underpin such reflections, suggesting that the tourists were motivated and persuaded by certain psychological emotional factors to visit the region. This research therefore supports the tourism literature that there is a positive correlation between tourist's motives and the affective component of constructed image (Goossens, 2000; Martin and del Bosque, 2008; Prayag and Ryan, 2011). As such, these results imply the possibility of a brand identity emerging from the congruence between a destination's unique qualities and the needs of visiting tourists (Cai, 2002; Ekinci, 2003). Such brand identity is a key component of the positioning process in the competitive market place. In the Middle East, for example, such an identity might be portrayed by forms such as names, symbols and slogans identifying the region as a new cultural environment and as the cradle of civilisations.

At country level, it seemed that the features which attracted/would re-attract tourists to Jordan were Bedouin culture, the friendliness of the local people, and cultural diversity, particularly in terms of Jordan's historical association with well-known figures such as Lawrence of Arabia. The following extracts demonstrate these findings from the tour guides' perspectives:

Guide (No 7): *'some tourists are quite interested in Lawrence of Arabia; Jordan is associated with Lawrence of Arabia'.*

Guide (No 15): *'tourists get amazed about the diversity of civilisations and attractions; because they found everything in one place'.*

Guide (No 33): *'tourists like exotic things or new experiences such as visiting Bedouin tents and learning about the Bedouin tradition and culture… tourists develop positive perceptions and get surprised by the friendliness and hospitability of the locals'.*

Interviews with the US tourists partly reinforced these findings. For instance, tourist (No 4): *'the positive experience, the warm welcome we received... will attract me to return, possibly once I've had children, so that I could share the experience with them as well'.*

Tourist (No 10): *'the diversity of history; I think that is more unique than I imagined, how much history in Jordan'.*

Tourist (No 12): *'I was interested in Nomads and that was what excited me'.*

The discrepancy between the data derived from the guides and from the US tourists in terms of the portrayal of Lawrence of Arabia can be explained on the basis that each tour group had different needs and interests. As such, the guides would tend to select from a variety of features those that would most successfully lead to informative interaction with different tourists. However, these findings also supported Harahsheh's (2009) research results that hospitality and friendliness of the local people at the holistic level of Jordan were evaluated uniquely by some British and Swedish tourists.

Immersion in the empirical data of this research indicated that the tourists seemed to be attracted to the features mentioned above because these evoked desirable mental images, possibly fulfilling their emotional motives. In addition, exposure to the Bedouin culture might have had a similar result. Bedouins probably exemplified an image of unusual lifestyle and unusual experience; not to mention that the guides' representations of Bedouin culture as a signifier of Jordanian authenticity might also have influenced the tourists' perceived images, as well as their needs for 'exploration and novelty seeking' (adapted from Crompton, 1979b). Furthermore, the friendliness and hospitality of the local people could also have alleviated tourists' psychological feelings of foreignness whilst in the country, since the intense sociability of some Jordanians might trigger positive images of Jordanians as very welcoming and warm people. These perceptions would in turn satisfy tourists' emotional push forces while questing for 'social relationships and enhancement of kinship' (adapted from ibid).

The diversity of Jordanian attractions, particularly in terms of history, is fortuitously observable in a short period. The close proximity of one site to the next perhaps also constructed peculiar images in the tourists' minds of Jordan as being a land of rich contrasts and deeply rooted in history. These images might accordingly serve to satisfy other socio-psychological motives such as 'regression and relaxation' (adapted from ibid). The same rule could apply to the British figure of Lawrence of Arabia, a personality possibly evoked romantic images of an adventurous, Westernised novelty seeking personality who had travelled the whole length of the Levant. This in turn would serve to fulfil tourists' needs for 'regression and novelty seeking' (adapted from ibid).

It should be noted, however, that while some of these features seemed to arouse peculiar images in the tourists' minds during and at the end of their consumption experiences, they had not necessarily had the same appeal beforehand. A shift in image might have resulted from tourists' actual exposure to Jordan's features, to include the impact of certain images projected by tour guides (e.g. poignant image). While these might potentially re-attract tourists to Jordan, these features can also be capitalised upon in Jordanian TMOs promotional strategies, to enhance Jordan's appeal and attract other potential tourists. In other words, these identified attributes might go towards developing a brand identity of Jordan as a diversified, authentic, adventurous and hospitable destination.

At site level, data offered from the guide and the US participants' showed that the majority of tourists visited Jordan also for the purpose of seeing unique religious sites and Petra:

Guide (No 11): *'tourists might still visit Jordan to see Petra, one of the seven cultural wonders. Or probably they decided to visit Jordan for religious reasons as the country has some sites of Christian pilgrimages'.*

Tourist (No 2): *'I think Jordan was in my travel list, because of Petra. And this came up and was thinking ok; I want to go there and having something new'.*

These findings echoed Harahsheh's (2009) research results from a study evaluating British and Swedish tourists' evaluations of Petra and some religious sites in Jordan. The primary evidence of this research indicated that many tourists visited Jordan as part of a Holy Land tour, which featured outstanding religious sites such as the Jordan River and Mount Nebo. These attractions possibly triggered peculiar images of such sites as holy and spiritual, thus fulfilling tourists' faith needs.

Another image of Petra seemed to be based on tourists' fantasies, which had been formed by films such as "Indiana Jones" or stories such as "The Thousand and One Arabian nights". For example, guide (No 19) said: *'some tourists associate Petra with Aladdin and Sindbad, or imagine it as in the* *stories of 1000 and one Arabian Nights'*. A US tourist (No 7) similarly articulated: '*the majority of Americans had never heard about Petra until Indiana Jones… and this raised the fame of Petra'*. While these associations might at first glance seem humorous, it cannot be ignored that the image was conceived in part as a result of tourists' fantasies (Tasci and Gartner, 2007) fed by pop culture (Banyai, 2010). Upon further reflection, such images have in common with pop-personalities or film stories a sense of signified adventure, searching for treasure and mystery. Thus, some of the peculiar images that Petra might trigger in tourists' minds would go on to fulfil the tourists' quest for 'regression and exploration' (adapted from Crompton, 1979b). To this end, while some Jordanian religious sites probably have been already branded as spiritual, Petra could be branded by local TMOs as a mysterious city or city of treasures.

A number of tourism studies claim that only destinations with a strong image are considered in the tourist decision-making process (Um and Crompton, 1999; Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Greaves and Skinner, 2009). However, understanding of this category of peculiar images is arguably more relevant for understanding this process. To use terms such as 'strong' or 'positive' in regard to generic labels of image do not seem sufficient for meaningfully understanding the powerful influences of destination image in a tourist's destination selection process. Instead, it may be more useful to consider peculiar images as more specifically referring to territories of tourist's perceptions, tourist's fantasies and push forces triggered by the unique pull features of a given entity, and that these would result in visitation or potential re-visitation intentions. This would occur despite perceived inhibitors and any fuzziness of tourists' images.

7.10 Deteriorated Image

Deteriorated image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions of given features that are poorly rated in regard to a given region, country or site. In this research, these states of mental representation appeared to be constructed particularly during or by the end of the tourists' visit, and appeared to result from experiences which fell below the tourists' expectations. Phillips and Jang's (2010) research results support this paradigm of perceived images; that is, post-visitation images might not necessarily be completely positive, while some negative images can be exacerbated from visitation.

Image deteriorating agents of some Middle Eastern countries seemed to be associated with certain socio-cultural aspects and the practices of some service providers. The guide interviewees said:

Guide (No 12): *'some tourists' rate Jordanian guide's competencies as better than those in other regional countries; some guides in Syria and Egypt treat the group according to how much money they will make from them'.*

Guide (No 15): *'some tourists who travel regionally voice that Jordanian people are friendlier than Egyptian, Israeli and Syrian people'.*

Guide (No 25): *'some tourists, who had visited Egypt, stated that Jordan is cleaner and they felt more comfortable than in Egypt because there they were annoyed by the street vendors'.*

Interviews with the US tourists uncovered similar agents. For instance, tourist (No 4): *'I heard that the situation in Egypt [the practices of some vendors] is worse than here'.*

The empirical data suggested that such images were constructed either by actual Middle East package travellers or by tourist referees' word of mouth dissemination. For example, some negative associations seemed to have been constructed amongst the tourists of Egypt as a neighbour of Jordan. Data analysis indicated that the agents most influencing this negative image of Egypt were uncleanliness, the hostile attitude of some Egyptian locals, pushy practices of some vendors and poor language proficiency of some Egyptian guides. These findings mirrored Baloglu and Mangaloglu's (2001) and Jalil's (2010:187) findings. The data from this research however indicated that similar negative constructs appeared to be true of Syria, since the practices of some guides and the attitude of some locals in Syria were rated poorly. By the same token, the attitude of some Israeli locals was seen as less friendly, potentially contributing to a negative image of Israel. These factors, on top of the current political instability in some regional countries, appeared to evoke images of a distressed general atmosphere, resulting in a deteriorated overall image of the Middle East.

The above evidences also showed that tourists seemed to compare and rate such features more positively in Jordan than in neighbouring countries. While Jordan might capitalise on this to build competitive advantage over other regional countries, it could be argued from another viewpoint that the intensity and frequency of negative practices in some regional countries might gradually deteriorate the image of the whole region, including Jordan. This view can be justified if taking into account the possible failure of some tourists to recall long term the exact features of any one country that might differentiate it from other regional competitors. These assumptions have been well-captured in Batra et al. (1996) cited in Andreu et al. (2001), who claim that some tourists tend to use stereotype images of different destinations to minimise their mental load and thereby avoid complex analyses.

Deteriorated perceptions of Jordan appeared to revolve around expensive prices, dirtiness and poor quality and availability of some services, as illustrated from the tour guides' perspectives:

Guide (No 10): *'tourists leave Jordan with impressions that it's an expensive destination, which might result in dissatisfaction'.*

Guide (No 34): *'most Italian tourists dislike the uncleanness and ask about recycling... another negative image can sometimes result from the poor quality of services'.*

The US tourists' data reinforced these findings. For instance, tourist (No 9): *'there is trash on the highway; the overall impression that makes is bad'.*

Another tourist (No 10): *'I have to say it is expensive; how much I spent to go to the bathroom, sometimes I did not have enough money, I did not have coins and probably I had spent 40$ to use the bathrooms'.*

Some tourists appeared to have left Jordan frustrated to certain degree by these deteriorating incidents. Interpreting these findings, the high cost of services might have influenced Jordan's image undesirably. A build-up of such views might logically impair some tourists' ability to stay open to fully experience the country and its touristic activities in a positive way. In turn, this might result in less enjoyable experiences and dissatisfaction. Jordan's being a pricy country might not only influence the tourists' actual experiences, it could also stem the flow of potential tourists. The uncleanness also appeared to play a role in influencing the country's image negatively, understandably because tourism is typically seen as an escape from daily routine but not to spoiled areas. It should be noted that while some participants commented that Jordan was cleaner, relative for example to Egypt, this does not necessarily mean that cleanliness in Jordan was rated in absolute terms as positive. Finally, the poor standards and availability of services seemed to diminish the quality of the tourists' experiences and negatively influence their impressions (e.g. of public bathrooms). This is possibly due to an inequitable balance (Fisk and Young, 1985) between tourists' input (e.g. money in a pricy country) and tourists' output (e.g. receiving quality of goods and services). However, these findings support Schneider and Sönmez's (1999) and Harahsheh's (2009) research findings that Jordan has been evaluated negatively in terms of the quality of its services and lack of cleanliness. This implies that these issues to date are unresolved and have long been associated with Jordan.

Deteriorated perceptions of a given site were associated with the practices of some local actors, particularly in Petra. These included the mistreatment of farm animals by their leaders and the phenomenon of child labour. The tour guides stated:

Guide (No 28): *'child labour in Petra is an annoying issue because it leaves a negative image; sometimes children start begging the tourists to buy and they destroy the site by cutting and selling the rocks'.*

Guide (No 33): *'mistreatment of farm animals in Petra such as horses and donkeys can generate negative images. The ministry sometimes receives complaints about the inconsideration to animals and their welfare in Petra'.*

Interviews with the US tourists supported these findings. For example, tourist (No 4): *'there is one thing that is not positive in Petra; when you walk and somebody tries to sell you something they can be very pushy… I felt uncomfortable'.*

The discrepancies between the tour guides' data and tourists' interviews may be attributed to the guides' ability to better distil the effect of certain features. This might have been due to their observations of tourism service providers' practices on a regular basis, as well as their listening to different tour groups' comments.

The misbehaviour of some service providers in Petra seemed to arouse tourists' anxiety. To clarify, some local people in Petra capitalise on farm animals to earn money from the tourists by carrying them inside the site (Mustafa and Abu-Tayeh, 2011). However, the mistreatment of these animals might reflect a neglect of animal welfare and thus frustrate the tourists. The phenomenon of child labour also is one of the most problematic social aspects of the tourist experience in Petra, leading to a deteriorated image of poor child education, not to mention erosion of the site, interruption to the work of guides, and frustration for the tourists while touring in site. While the findings of this chapter indicated that considerable numbers of tourists held positive images of Petra, it became clear that some other aspects could influence the site image negatively. These implied that the absolute construction of an ideal image in tourists' minds might prove elusive, even if related to unique attractions. These findings also affirmed the co-existence of positive and negative images of a destination as suggested by Prebensen (2007) and Prayag and Ryan (2011).

Generally speaking, three main assumptions stem from the above findings. First, they reflect the reliability of the tour guides to read and evaluate tourism performance locally and regionally. Therefore, this stakeholder group could be seen as an invaluable information source for supporting development of tourism managerial plans. Second, deteriorating factors not only harmfully influence destination images, but also might diminish the quality of the tourists' experiences and influence negatively their satisfaction. This is because tourist evaluation of an experience is a function of a comparison between what is expected and then what is actually experienced (Chon, 1990; Andreu et al., 2001). Where there is a discrepancy, the consequence might be negative word of mouth and probably unpleasant memories associated with the destination. As such, TMOs need to pay serious attention to the impact of such attributes, and their association with the affective construct, on destination image. The importance of this is empirically validated by Kim and Yoom (2003). Third, it can be claimed that deterioration of sites' image might possibly result in deteriorating the country's image as a whole, and that in turn, the intensity and frequency of deteriorated images in different regional countries might also influence negatively the holistic perceived image of the region. The last two assumptions can explain why some guides tended to dress up an image (section 6.7), as a way of reducing the intensity of negative perceptions and of deterring dissatisfaction.

It is worth pointing out that deteriorated image can be differentiated from the distorted image category (section 6.8) in terms of cause and nature. Distorted images for instance may arise from misleading impressions projected by some guides. While this may have a partially negative influence on the image of these entities, the deteriorated image is a broader notion that takes into consideration the influences of other forces that can weaken the quality of the tourists' experiences. Moreover, tourists might or might not be aware of guides' attempts to manipulate their perceptions, whereas the deteriorated image is characterised by a higher degree of awareness of negative existing features or practices during the tour.

Moreover, a key difference between fuzzy image (section 7.5) and deteriorated image is that the former is created from indistinct or 'negatively expected' images held by tourists about a given entity's features, particularly prior to or at the beginning of a tour. Conversely, a deteriorated image is associated with the actual experience, resulting from exposure to negative features, particularly during or at the end of the tourists' tour, and influencing the tourists' evaluation of the tour. Framed in this way, it might be claimed that the confirmation of fuzzy or negative expected images based on real experiences results in a deteriorated image in tourists' minds.

7.11 Summary

This chapter aimed to establish meaningful understanding of patterns of destination image as perceived by the tourists in this research, throughout and by means of their consumption experiences. Data analyses suggested that tourists held sets of impressions about the region, the country and given sites. The factors that might influence the image formation process of these destinations were evaluated.

In addition, it was found that tourists' perceptions of each destination could be categorised into a range of themes, including 'fuzzy image', 'relatively realistic image', 'dynamic image', 'static image', 'peculiar image' and 'deteriorated image'. The variations in tourists' perceptions of one single entity can be rationalised in light of the heterogeneity and the multiple nature of images (Gallarza et al., 2002; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010).

Fuzzy image refers to a set of indistinct perceptions that were formed around certain features of the visited region, country or site, particularly as constructed at the beginning of the tourists' consumption experience. Fuzzy images of the Middle East were associated with Islam, the Arab temperament, the level of safety and the cultural fabric of the region. Fuzzy perceptions of Jordan appeared to revolve around its stability and certain socio-economic features. Indistinct ideas of given sites encompassed the functional characteristics of some sites and also what sites would be seen in Jordan.

Relatively realistic image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions that matched the actual state of given features of the region, country and site. This image was held by some tourists even at the start of their consumption experiences. Relatively realistic perceptions of the Middle East involved awareness about the political conflict in some regional countries and general impressions about the region's profile. Relatively realistic perceptions of Jordan were associated with the country's profile, the Royal Family and safety. Relatively realistic ideas of given sites included the functional characteristics and symbolic significance of Petra and the Dead Sea.

Dynamic image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions about some features in the region, country and site that underwent processes of modification, specifically during and by the end of the tourists' visit. At regional level, some perceptions about religion, the Arab temperament and politics were apparently reconstructed. At country level, it seemed that there was an upward adjustment in views of certain socio-cultural features, urbanisation and tourism services providers. At site level, tourists' perceptions about the diversity and significances of some sites were changed.

Static image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions about some features in the region, country or given site that remained stagnant. This type of image was retained even at the end of the tourists' consumption experiences. Regionally, static negative impressions were associated with Islam and static positive images were associated with the region's literacy level. Nationally, negative perceptions about women's rights and political representations in the Jordanian parliament remained shallow. At site level, it appeared that Petra and some sites were perceived statically as unique.

Peculiar image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions that were triggered by the unique pull qualities of a given region, country and site. These pulled the tourists to visit/re-visit these destinations to satisfy specific push forces. These images might be held by the tourists at the initial stages of the consumption experience, and might be refined during the visit. Peculiar images of the Middle East revolved around Easternised cultures and the idea of the region as the cradle of civilisations. Peculiar images of Jordan were evoked by the Bedouin culture, the friendliness of the local people, and by the cultural diversity, particularly in terms of history and Jordan's association with some well-known figures e.g. Lawrence of Arabia. Peculiar images were also triggered by some unique religious sites and Petra.

Deteriorated image refers to a set of tourists' perceptions about given features that were poorly rated in regard to a given visited destination. Deteriorated images were particularly formed during or by the end of the consumption experiences. Image deteriorating agents of the Middle East involved certain socio-cultural aspects, the practices of some service providers and the political instability. Deteriorated perceptions of Jordan revolved around the expensive price levels, the dirtiness and the poor quality and availability of some services. Examples of deteriorated perceptions of given sites such as Petra were associated with the practices of some local actors, specifically the mistreatment of farm animals and the child labour phenomenon. The next chapter presents the conclusions of this research.

Chapter Eight: Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the key points of this research. The research aim and objectives are revisited to explain how they have been addressed. The theoretical, practical and methodological contributions of this research are then examined to evaluate their significances. The limitations of the research are discussed, before proposing potential avenues for future research. The chapter concludes with the researcher's reflections on the research process and the overall doctoral experience.

8.2 Achievement of the Research Aim and Objectives

The principle aim of this research was to investigate the patterns of destination image as actually projected by tour guides and as perceived by tourists during the consumption experience. The following objectives were identified as instrumental in achieving the central research aim:

Objective One: critically evaluate existing literature relating to destination image and tour guiding in order to identify the key arguments.

This objective was addressed in Chapters Two and Three. A critical evaluation of destination image literature was undertaken in Chapter Two, involving an exploration of seminal studies by key contributors (Gunn, 1972; Hunt, 1975; Crompton, 1979a; Chon, 1992; Gartner, 1993; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a; Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Tasci and Gartner, 2007). Numerous definitions of destination image were reviewed and analysed, as well as various conceptualisations of the pivotal significance and complex nature of this construct in tourism. The literature suggested further significant philosophical arguments, contextualised in discussions of destination image components and destination image formation processes. A number of studies were also critically construed, dealing with the interrelationships between destination image and different marketing streams, to include self-concept, tourist behaviours, service providers, motivation and branding. Destination image studies undertaken in the Middle East region, particularly in Jordan were then examined.

Chapter Three focused on tour guide literature. Key philosophical arguments proposed by tourism contributors to this line of enquiry were reviewed and discussed (Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Ap and Wong, 2001; Dahles, 2002; Zhang and Chow, 2004; Ying and Simkin, 2009). Focus was brought to the various definitions and classifications of tour guides, as well as their crucial significance and multifaceted roles in tourism. Further vital factors relevant to tour guide performance and the conducting of tours were disclosed.

A critical appraisal of these theoretical frames exposed certain gaps in knowledge and application of understanding in these areas. This researcher shared the same observations as other tourism authors, that destination image studies lack solid theoretical frameworks and a set of clear conceptualisations (Gartner, 1993; Beerli and Martin, 2004a), particularly of those constructed during a tourist visit (Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Smith et al., 2015). More precisely, the literature review revealed that the patterns of destination image as perceived by tourists have to date remained empirically unexamined, despite the emphasis placed on the value of such potential research in exploring the complexity of tourist's perceptions and their impact on successful tourism development (Tasci and Gartner, 2007). This lack of theorisation extends equally to patterns of destination image as constructed by tour guides, despite their pivotal influence upon destination image and reputation (Yu el al., 2002). The research methodological design thereafter was developed to address the questions raised, as manifested in objective two.

Objective Two: empirically explore the nature of destination images as projected by the tour guides and as perceived by the tourists during the consumption experience.

This objective was addressed through empirical investigation, as discussed in Chapters Four and Five. The theoretical background of research methods employed in this research was explained and justified in Chapter Four. It was considered that the complexity and subjectivity of the phenomena under research had not yet been adequately encompassed in theory, and so would require the researcher to engage in interactive involvement with the researched subjects in order to address the research problem. Consequently, an interpretivist research paradigm was adopted. After careful consideration of previously developed research strategies, a Straussian version of grounded theory appeared to be the most suitable research path for providing meaningful explanations of the nature of constructed images, as grounded in the guides' and the tourists' expressed views.

Chapter Five explained in detail the empirical grounded theory research undertaken in Jordan. The primary data were collected at different stages of the process by means of qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews and participant observation. Five national tour guides were purposively interviewed during the pilot study to steer the theoretical sampling process. The main fieldwork was then undertaken to investigate the problem at greater depth. Thirty tour guides from contrasting milieus and work experiences were purposively recruited for interviews. The researcher then conducted overt participant observation, in a region witnessing political instability and suffering a considerable drop in tourism numbers. The carefully selected tour party was composed of twenty USA-origin tourists undertaking an eight day/seven night guided tour of Jordan's cultural sights. Concurrently, twelve USA-origin tourists and their designated guide were interviewed to elaborate and densify the empirical data.

These valuable qualitative methods have proven entirely effective in collecting saturated information. The clarity of emergent participants' voices allowed a broader understanding of the multidimensionality of image constructs. The primary data were simultaneously collected, transcribed and coded. Objective three explains the aim of these processes.

Objective Three: inductively analyse and evaluate the patterns of destination image as projected by the tour guides and as perceived by the tourists during the consumption experience.

This objective was addressed in Chapters Six and Seven. Chapter Six presented the analyses and discussion of the rich data related to patterns of destination image as projected by the tour guides. It was discovered that these tour guides habitually engaged in the process of representing the region, the country and specific sites. The tour guides' commentaries concerning these destinations appeared to be loaded with different ideas and feelings, which were categorised into different themes, including 'official image', 'personal image', 'dressed up image', 'distorted image', 'poignant image' and 'relatively realistic image'.

Chapter Seven concerned the patterns of destination image arising from the consumption experience as perceived by the US tourists and as understood by the tour guide interviewees. The profundity of the collected data suggested that the tourists tended to construct complex images associated with each visited region, country and given sites. The types of image perceived of these destinations by the tourists seemed to revolve around 'fuzzy image', 'relatively realistic image', 'dynamic image', 'static image', 'peculiar image' and 'deteriorated image'.

These emerged as meaningful categorisations, based on critical evaluation of the characteristic(s) of each type of image, understanding of the construction of each given type of image, and assessment of the attributes associated with each type of image in relation to a given entity. In the course of the primary data analysis, this substantive series of unique categories was labelled for clarity and transparency with name-codes, derived from the main essence of each theme. The data analysis followed an inductive approach, using various forms of triangulation such as sources of data (tour guides, tourists) and methods (interview, participant observation). The findings were also triangulated and compared with key theoretical issues identified as arising from tourism literature, as reviewed in Chapters Two and Three. Moreover, a number of other scholarly studies were consulted and when relevant cited, to increase the abstraction and explanatory levels of the empirical evidence. Such studies included psychology, archaeology, religion, politics, international relationships, communication and media. Objective four exemplifies the end product of these processes.

Objective Four: develop frameworks for understanding the patterns of destination image as projected by tour guides and as perceived by tourists during the consumption of tourism products.

Building upon secondary and primary data drawn from different sources, two theoretical frameworks emerged. From the emergent understanding of the structured and patterned types of destination image as projected by the tour guides during the course of their work, a first framework was founded (see chapter six). Similarly, drawing on the patterns of destination image as perceived by the tourists, a second framework was then created (see chapter seven). The structured interpretations and representations of these rich data enabled the final objective to be achieved, and by this the central aim of the research. The most important aspect of these multilevel frameworks is their strength in demonstrating a complete gestalt of image patterns as constructed by the tour guides and tourists, and integrating their associations in regard to various interlinked destinations. The following section further discusses the theoretical contributions of this research.

8.3 Theoretical Contributions

This research has made six main theoretical contributions. Firstly, tourism studies show an increasing interest in the mediation competence of tour guides (Cohen, 1985; Leclerc and Martin, 2004; Wong, 2013). However, the processes of collecting and evaluating the empirical data of this research have served as a platform from which previous studies could be positioned as insufficiently theory-based and lacking detailed explanations about the representational responsibilities of tour guides in any specific destination.

Thus this research could be considered completely innovative in the tourism literature, as the first to propose a novel view, extending a previously simplistic theoretical understanding of tour guides' mediatory representations. While studies to date have largely confined themselves to investigating tour guide mediation at country level only (see Howard et al., 2001; Yu et al., 2002; Ying and Simkin, 2009), this research has provided a comprehensive synthesise of tour guides' representational responsibilities at regional level and at country level, as well as including their mediation at local sites.

The findings illustrate tour guides' commentaries as playing a subtle but important role in making meanings of images, as well as actual image construction, of the destinations visited by their tourist groups (see chapter six). As such, this contribution illuminates the richness and complexity inherent in the performative nature of guiding. It has also advanced the generic research line in 'tourism representations'; traditionally such research has concerned itself with visual and guide-books representations (see Pritchard and Morgan, 2001; Bandyopadhyay and Morais, 2005), but this research goes further to include the longer lasting impact of 'actual tourism representations'. This might allow greater understanding and assessment of any potential gaps between the two forms of tourism representations.

The second main theoretical contribution of this research is in the domain of tour guide roles. The data identified eight overarching tour guide roles which ratified the findings of other studies including: information giver, cultural broker, pathfinder, housekeeper, companion, service provider, representative, and entertainer (adapted from Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Howard el al., 2001; Zhang and Chow, 2004; Salazar, 2005; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006; Scherle and Nonnenmann, 2008; Ying and Simkin, 2009). The findings of this research, however, have extended the previous body of knowledge of tour guide roles by identifying further specific professional roles of the tour guide. These included 'political representative' as one who reports to regional and local powers in diplomatic ways; 'interfaith broker' as one who initiates dialogue and facilitates understanding between different religious groups; and ‘destination image mediator’ as one who manages a multiplicity of images at demand and supply levels by means of their commentaries (see chapter six). These three further contributions serve to deepen the understanding of contemporary and key roles of tour guides in the modern world, and to underpin the absolute importance of this stakeholder group in tourism.

A third theoretical contribution of this research lies in developing a substantive theory, based upon identified patterns of destination image as constructed by the tour guides. These patterns referred not only to the country and the local sites being visited, but also to the wider Middle East region. The findings demonstrated that the images of destinations constructed by the tour guides ranged from ‘official images’ as reflecting tour guide representations of policymakers’ worldviews, to ‘personal images’ as reflecting tour guide representations of their own subjective worldviews. Others identified patterns were the ‘dressed up image’, which represented tour guides’ attempts to soften or conceal negative aspects of a represented destination, or conversely, the ‘distorted image’, which captured tour guides’ misrepresentations of a given entity’s features. The ‘poignant image’ was discovered as a further paradigm used to describe tour guides’ commentaries when emotionally loaded. Such commentaries seemed designed to evoke specific emotional tourist’s responses to a given destination’s features. Finally, a ‘relatively realistic image’ was identified as corresponding to a fair degree with the actual state of a represented destination. Identification of these patterns of image was crucial in unravelling the complex interplay between tour guides and destination image, and in advancing academic theoretical knowledge of destination image construction (see chapter six).

A fourth theoretical contribution of this research concerns a previously unexamined construct, that is, of destination image patterns perceived by tourists during a visit. The exploration and demonstration of these patterns in the research represented a rare attempt to develop an innovative explanatory theory, grounded in the complex patterns of tourists’ perceived images of multi-level destinations during a visit. This research has illustrated that tourists are unlikely to hold single dimension stereotypical images of a given visited country. Instead, they appear more likely to hold complex and at times paradoxical images about various features of a visited region, country and local sites.

Elaborating on previously developed theories in the field, and based on analysis of the extensive empirical evidence, the findings as to tourists' unique perceptions of these destinations were categorised into a range of themes. The first axis demonstrated the tourists as holding a range of images, from 'fuzzy' or indistinct images, to more distinct and 'relatively realistic images', in particular at the initial stage of their visit. At another crux point, 'dynamic images' were seen to emerge, when tourist's perceptions underwent processes of modification. This appeared to contrast with other types of image which remained 'static' or rigid, even during or by the end of the tourists' visit. Another discussed pattern was the 'peculiar image', which captured the unique pull qualities of a given entity. It was surmised that these qualities would attract or re-attract tourists to a visitation in order to fulfil specific push forces, even despite some fuzziness in tourists' images and actual 'deterrent' agents identified within the visited destinations.

These extensive strands of image construction were integrated into one larger theoretical frame to provide a richer and deeper portrait of "relativistic, multiple and complex dimensions of tourist's perceptions" (Gallarza et al., 2002:56). This contribution suggests the need for change in the traditional ontology of studying tourists' images from a homogenised perspective, towards a more differentiated and multi-dimensional approach (see chapter seven).

A fifth and substantive theoretical contribution of this research is to the destination image formation theories (see section 2.6). By identifying and cataloguing new factors that can influence tourists' perceived image of a region, country and given site, this research advances academic understanding about the ways in which destination image is constructed. As discussed in Chapter Seven, the formation of regional image is recognised as being influenced by a number of factors. These may comprise firstly, multi significant socio-economic and political events which may arise in a region; secondly, the practices of expatriates originating from a given regional country and living in a different region; thirdly, tourists' exposure to commercial sources; and fourthly, actual visitations to different regional countries. Although the third and fourth factors are consistent with those identified by Gunn (1972), it was also found that tour guides themselves may be highly effective in being 'image autonomous agents' as identified in Gartner's (1993) model for neighbourhood regional TMOs. That is, tour guides are powerful in being outside the immediate control of TMOs, and more significantly, in having the capacity to change a given regional country image over a short period of time. However, the perceived image of a country seemed to be influenced by further agents, such as the perceived image of the host region and the tourists' characteristics, including their interests, perceptions and group size. In sum, this research offers rich findings regarding the factors which influence the formation of site image, including resources devoted to promoting the site's characteristics and the nature of the itinerary itself. Such agents are arguably synergistic even if their greatest influences are destination specific.

As a sixth and final theoretical contribution of this research are insights into the Middle East as a volatile tourist destination. A review of destination image studies published between 1973 to 2007 reveals that the regions most researched were North America, UK, Europe, Asia, Australasia, Africa, followed by Central America, South Pacific and South America (Pike, 2002; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). Almost half of these studies were limited to exploring the image of a single destination, without any frame of reference to competing destinations (Pike, 2002). Reviewing such literature, it is clear that developing countries such as those in the Middle East have been a neglected area of research. It was noted for the purposes of this research that Jordan specifically has received little academic attention (see section 2.8). This research is significant for its important contextual contributions to knowledge in researching some competing Middle Eastern tourist destinations such as Jordan, Egypt and Palestine/Israel. As far as the researcher knows, this work is the first in tourism literature to assess patterns of projected and perceived images associated with various attributes of these countries, and as such has increased the share of tourism studies focusing on the Middle East as a region. These contributions open up opportunities for further understanding and research of this area.

8.4 Practical Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this research hold practical implications and recommendations for TMOs as well as for tour guide intermediary group. The implications for each group are discussed below.

Marketing and Managerial Implications

Destination image appears to be a multilevel construct encompassing given sites, the country containing them, and the region as a whole. The findings in this research offer TMOs a fresh understanding of the ways in which destination image is constructed, and inform further business practice in fine-tuning accurate and context-based marketing campaigns. This research suggests that tourism marketers should not only strive to enhance a given country's image, but also consider promoting other destinations in the region as a means to enhance competiveness. For instance, regional TMOs such as the Arab Organisation for Tourism, the European Travel Commission and the Pacific Asia Travel Association may develop inclusive strategies to assess and differentiate their own regional image in the world market place. Such corporate efforts reflect an observation that tourists tend towards an undifferentiated regional image in their perspectives of a visit. In parallel, these findings contribute to the notion that 'site image' is a specific invaluable platform from which to enhance the positioning of sites, emphasising particularly unique qualities or new touristic sites which are still in process of establishing a desired image.

Other factors that might influence image formation processes of individual destination have been identified (see chapter seven). Such findings are valuable for helping TMOs to design appropriate marketing strategies that will promote positive images and reconcile any gaps formed by agents outside their immediate control. For instance, TMOs in co-operation with travel agencies should capitalise on thoughtfully designed itineraries that balance group size, number of sites visited and time allocated for visitation. Well-coordinated, the right mix of these may enhance the appeal of the visited destinations, and thus ensure satisfaction and memories that reinforce loyalty. The literature also suggests that building networks with media, running familiarisation tours, promoting the use of films, participating in tourism trade shows and developing online sources are all powerful agents capable of changing an area's image pre-visitation over a relatively short period (Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Croy, 2010; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). It is important to assert the value of establishing co-operation between different tourism stakeholders in order to facilitate promotion of a coherent and clear image (Bramwell and Rawding, 1996 cited in Zehrer et al., 2007).

The findings regarding patterns of destination image as projected by tour guides have significant practical implications. The explored 'distorted image' category of the research highlights the need for an effective monitoring system to reduce unprofessional practices among guides. However, the diverse nature of the tourism products and the increased expectations of tourists make it important to develop a variety of desirable images (Andreu et al., 2001; Echtner and Ritchie, 2003). Thus it is recommended that TMOs capitalise on useful patterns to promote given destinations, depending on their agenda and tourist markets. For example, the identified 'official image' category may be used as a tool to induce idealised images of the destination in promoting world-class services. The identified 'poignant image' may serve as a promising platform for designing emotive promotional strategies that enhance favorable emotional states in tourists (e.g. thrill) and accordingly stimulate buying desire. Alternatively, a generic approach may be adopted to harness taxonomies of image to meet different tourist preferences (e.g. diplomatic, affectionate or realistic). Given that tourists tend to select destinations which enhance their self-image (Sirgy and Su, 2002; Beerli et al., 2007), it is crucial for TMOs to understand and meet tourists' expectations, since any potential mismatch between the promised and the experienced may result in dissatisfaction (Chon, 1992; Bowen and Clarke, 2002).

Findings relating to the patterns of destination image as perceived by the tourists also have valuable practical implications. Firstly, they can serve as a guide for efficient destination image management, which according to Gartner (1993) requires an assessment of tourists' current perceived images and some initiative in moving those images in a desired direction. In terms of this research, it appears that TMOs must not only strive to promote positive images in the market place, but also to identify and repair any potential misconceptions. This is because tourists tend typically to act on their subjective perceptions rather than on the reality of the destination (Gallarza et al., 2002). As such, assessing destination attributes that fall within the 'fuzzy image' as opposed to the 'relatively realistic image' paradigm in turn may serve as a solid platform to achieve these aspirations. In parallel, the examined 'dynamic image' as opposed to the 'static image' may provide TMOs' managers with very useful guidance as to how to modify and durably maintain positive images. The empirical findings of this research indicate that the constant dissemination of appropriate information, to offset previous negatively held ideas, may be a useful strategy.

A further promising benefit from these findings is how to capitalise on 'peculiar image' paradigm to create effective marketing opportunities. Alignment of a destination's unique qualities with tourist motivations is likely to attract/re-attract tourists to potential visitations. It also allows the development of an appealing branding identity, which is a key component of the positioning process in the competitive market place. Finally, following research claims that images held by actual tourists tend to be long lasting (Beerli and Martin, 2004a; Tasci el al., 2007), it is very important to continuously identify and repair any actual deteriorating agents that might negatively influence destination image or detract from tourist satisfaction. As such, the identified 'deteriorated image' category serves as a useful platform for managers to achieve these goals.

Enhancing Tour Guide Professionalism

The findings of this research will be of use to different associations in charge of tour guides such as the WFTGA and the JTGA, in making them more aware of the importance and multifaceted roles of this stakeholder group. Even though tour guides might be working in a given single country, there is a need to recognise that their mediatory representations extend across borders to influence the construction of a wider regional image. Guides also have been identified to have influence over destination image in many different ways. At the same time, guides are shown to be powerful induced image formation agents within the limitations of specific destinations (see section 6.5). As such, tour guides' associations in co-operation with TMOs could develop effective communication strategies for tour guides to enhance the formation of attractive destination images during a tourist visit.

This research has evaluated tour guides' various representational responsibilities of a given region, country and sites within that country. Such findings serve as a useful guide for developing more appropriate educational courses and improving tour guide's competencies. Currently, and internationally, competency-based tour guide training programmes focus on natural sciences, communications theory, languages, politics, history and geography (Weiler and Ham, 2001; Christie and Mason, 2003). However, the findings of this research suggest that an educational curriculum for prospective tour guides should be broadened to topics such as codes of professional ethics, international relationships, interfaith dialogues, and social structure and history of relevant countries/regions. Such findings may also allow tour guides to structure their commentaries in logical and colourful ways, and to have a direct positive impact on the represented destination's image. This is based on the belief that clear and effective information about a destination has a positive effect on post-visit image (Boo and Busser, 2005).

This research has also provided insight into possible patterns of destination image as projected and encountered by tour guides during their work. Such findings also serve as a fundamental basis for enhancing tour guide competence in the growing tourism industry. It has the potential for professionally developing guides' understanding of the complexity of tourist ideas and feelings, and also developing their strategies for constructing appropriate image types. Thus they would learn skilfully to defuse any potential tourist misconceptions whilst establishing mutual understating and generating tourist satisfaction. For example, tour guides can draw upon on the 'official image' paradigm to represent diplomatically the political affairs of any destination when needed, and as such avoid any potential tensions associated with representing such sensitive topics. Moreover, constructing 'dressed up images' appropriately may help tour guides to reduce tourists' anxiety and to attenuate the intensity of actual negatively perceived images provoked by any 'deteriorating agents' encountered during the tour. In addition, the discussed findings related to the tourists' fuzzy perceived images are useful for enabling tour guides to understand and manage tourists' misconceptions, through appropriate interpretation or representations of 'relatively realistic images'.

Finally, this research offers useful insight into the impact of tour guides' emotionally loaded commentaries on the formation of 'poignant images', and makes a critical claim for the development of tour guides' emotional intelligence as crucial for a successful tour. Emotional intelligence is a scientific concept introduced into psychology by Goleman (1995), referring to an individual's ability to understand and manage feelings about oneself (intrapersonal intelligence) as well as about other individuals' desires and feelings (interpersonal intelligence). Researches in business have theorised that emotional intelligence enables leaders and managers to communicate effectively and to influence positively their followers' satisfaction (Wong and Law, 2002). Emotional intelligence can be argued as a crucial factor in managing the increased expectations of tourists in the growing competitiveness of the tourism market place. As such, it is very important for tourism stakeholders, including tour guides, to develop at minimum a competent ‘interpersonal intelligence’ in order to ensure positive satisfactory emotional experiences for tourists or to meet their ‘peculiar images’ in such a way as to lead to a memorable tour.

8.5 Methodological Contributions

Tourism authors have observed that quantitative method studies have in the past tended to dominate destination image research (Gallarza et al., 2002; Prebensen, 2007). In response therefore to increased calls for the adoption of qualitative methods, this research has employed such an approach to data collection. This fulfils the ethos of a qualitative approach, to attain fresh understanding and rich explanations of the complexity of the construct under research (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003; Pike, 2007; Tasci et al., 2007; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010). This research thus increases the share of qualitative research in tourism, specifically in the field of destination image studies.

The main methodological contribution of this research has been to demonstrate the power and usefulness of participant observation method for illuminating the inherent complexity of destination image. While a number of tourism studies have used semi-structured interviews as a means to explore a range of issues relating to this construct (see Konecnik, 2002; Prebensen, 2007; Camprubi et al., 2009; Banyai, 2010), no study in this field has yet been identified using participant observation as a data collection tool. This research supports the usefulness of this method in many ways, and urges future tourism researchers to use this efficient tool in their research design.

A number of reasons can be offered to support this view. Firstly, the tourist experience is an intense time in an individual’s life. Some travellers may have waited all year for their one or two weeks of annual holiday, dreaming of and imagining their touristic experience and sacrificing effort, time and money to reach a particular destination. A participant observation technique used in such situations is especially suited for discerning at first hand tourist’s reactions to their longed-for experience, and for closely monitoring group members' different emotional feelings. This was found to be particularly useful in this research for identifying 'poignant image' and 'peculiar image' categories, which encapsulated a spectrum of the researched subjects' emotional reactions to encountered phenomena. To contextualise these findings in the literature, the affective component is said to involve subjective attitudes toward a destination's attributes, and to be best understood from an insider viewpoint represented by respondents (Tasci et al., 2007). It is also argued that the affective component of tourist reactions has a stronger influence on tourists' global image than the cognitive component (Beerli and Martin, 2004a; Castro et al., 2007). For these reasons, researchers are urged to use a participant observation technique to understand further the affective component of destination image. Use of such a unique tool also promises to balance out the prevalence of quantitative studies which, according to Stepchenkova and Mills (2010), have led to the cognitive component receiving a greater share of academic attention than they perhaps have warranted.

Secondly, in contrast to participant observation, other data collection tools such as questionnaires and interviews valued for providing wide coverage of a range of situations and attributes (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991; Bryman and Bell, 2007), nevertheless have failed to detect the frequent and subtle changes of mood which can potentially arise from day to day or even from hour to hour in the tourist experience. In this context, a questionnaire might even have skewed results, in that some respondents' answers might have differed from moment to moment, depending upon their mood and situational impact. Although it could be argued that participant observation is subjective and as such unable to ensure validity, it has the enormous and exceptional advantage of allowing detailed observation of nuances and respondents' changes of mood over a considerable length of time. This in turn enhances the richness of potential data and permits the development of saturated unprecedented themes.

Thirdly, this method compensates for shortfalls in interview data. It can be claimed that informants in any research may overstate their answers in order to enhance their ‘ideal social self-image’ (the concept is adapted from Sirgy and Su, 2000). That is informants’ responses will reflect how they would like others to see them. On the other hand, the participant observation technique is more naturalistically authentic for understanding respondents’ actual expressions and behaviours. As such, this approach is more likely to represent the complex reality of the tourist experience, and may be used as a supplementary tool to reduce over-reliance on interviews or questionnaires. As mentioned above, such techniques taken on their own can be misleading for encouraging false witness or for narrowing responses.

8.6 Research Limitations

Some limitations have been identified in this research. Firstly, due to constraints on access, participant observation was limited to a single group. However, reflecting upon this constraint as a potential limitation, it has to be said that the aim of this qualitative research was not intended to be statistically representative, but rather to provide in-depth understanding of the participants’ lived experiences. In the event, the findings from the research demonstrate that this carefully selected tour group did yield valuable and rich data. Moreover, the plausibility of the findings was strengthened through further data derived from semi-structured interviews, both with a number of tour guides, and with some US tourists encountered during the tour. A combination of these methods served to strengthen the credibility of the research, and to render it compatible with the perspective of an interpretative qualitative paradigm. In such a paradigm, it is widely accepted that viable research may be based on small sample sizes (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Bowen (2002), for example, carried out useful research using a single participant observation as a means of investigating tourist satisfaction on a long-haul inclusive tour in Malaysia.

To move on to a second research limitation, it could be argued that there was a limitation in the scope of tour guide profile amongst the tour guide participants of the research. Since these tour guides were entirely licensed by the Jordanian authorities in possessing a valid tour guiding license, it could be said that they at times expressed views on the guarded side, in that their livelihood depended upon their representing the official line of their licensing body as regards to Jordanian and Middle Eastern contemporary issues. Notwithstanding this, it was found that the prolonged duration of each tour guide interview allowed for extended and to some extent unpredictable discussions with most tour guides, thus revealing a complex layering of tour guide perspectives and practices (see section 5.3.1.3 for details).

A final potential limitation could have been that all of the interviewed tour guides had attended a common training course as a means of obtaining their license under Jordanian authority (see section 1.6 for further details). This uniformity of training may well have impacted on the tour guides' worldviews and at times may have resulted in somewhat standardised answers. This may have reflected the orthodox views of tour guides, or a common observation of professional, as opposed to personal identity. However, it was also the case that the tour guides interviewed, although undergoing a common training, had come to that training from different socio-demographic backgrounds in different geographical regions in Jordan and that their multi-contextual realities were captured in the interview data. Probing questions were also raised during the interviews, which allowed individuals to elaborate on their perspectives. This approach to data collection was found to add depth to the data, and to an extent to differentiate individual perspectives and practices.

8.7 Future Research Agenda

The complexity and the wide variety of factors impacting on tour guide performance and destination image formation process reflect the need to explore these constructs further, from the varying perspectives of multiple disciplines. The recommendations for future research are outlined below.

- This research has focused on the perspectives of tour guides. Given that tourism is an industry comprising many sectors, each with its specific objectives and organisational culture, it would appear that context-based studies are essential. In this respect, the patterns of destination image as projected by travel agencies and tour operators can also be investigated.

- The communication techniques employed by tour guides to project destination image are another potential area for exploration. This may provide understanding of how destination image is deconstructed and reconstructed during the presentation and consumption of tourism products.

- Management of the destination image formation process, specifically during the consumption of tourism product, is an area open to fruitful investigation.

- Management of destination image of a region which is impacted by political and geographical crises is another pertinent topic for examination. There would appear to be a need for studies investigating potential strategies for image recovery and reduction of perceived risk of destinations associated with this kind of crises.

- Evaluating destination attributes associated with each pattern of tourists' perceived image in a cross-cultural context is also required. This would enable better understanding of the variations of tourists' mental representation of a destination's features according to personal attributes such as nationality.

- Future research on the influence of tour guide destination image projection on tourist satisfaction is recommended. This investigation would require a review of the literature on tourist satisfaction, and some explanatory research to understand meaningfully tourists' satisfaction with destination images as constructed by their tour guides.

- Although this research has focused on Middle Eastern destinations, similar studies could be undertaken in other contexts. This could provide further understating of how other regional destinations might be projected and envisioned during the actual tourist experience, given that each area has its own unique attributes and qualities.

8.8 Personal Reflection

Reflection is defined as "the personal tale of what went on in the backstage of doing research" (Tedlock, 1991 cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003:212). This section presents the researcher's personal reflection on the doctoral experience in terms of how the topic of the study came into being, the research method chosen for the research, and how the data collection and analyses were conducted.

Reflecting on my research interests, this dissertation proposal originally came into being when I gained the PhD scholarship from the University of Jordan in 2009. Over the year in the faculty of archaeology and tourism, where I was employed as a lecturer, there emerged increasing concerns about the importance of the tour guiding profession in Jordan, particularly after the announcement of Petra as one of the Seven Cultural Wonders of the World in 2007. The impetus for this research proposal came in 2010, when I began spontaneously observing some guide behaviors in tourist restaurants in Jordan. These observations evoked some initial questions relating to how one tour guide alone could influence the perceptions of as many as thirty tourists. My quest for information on the secondary data began at that point and led on to a preliminary draft proposal of the current research.

After a considerable period of reflection and several meetings with my supervisors at Oxford Brookes University, it was noticed that tour guiding literature was lacking a solid theoretical framework. It was also noticed that the notion of tour guiding could be studied in relation to tourist satisfaction and motivation, service quality, service encounters and so on. The significance of guide performance seemed also to extend to actual influence on destination image. In this process of preliminary investigations, I decided to focus on image types as projected and encountered by tour guides during the consumption experience due their potential theoretical and practical contributions to tourism (see research rationale). While it took me considerable time to focus on the emerging theories underpinning this dissertation, the move back and forth between different literatures was particularly useful in crafting a unique mosaic of guide roles and experiences in mediating destination image. This also suggested that there is no direct way to do PhD research; rather the progress depends on maintaining a balance between the data's capacity to guide the research (particularly primary data) and the researcher's ability to manage and understand the data.

Reflecting on research methods adopted in this research, I felt they were not only useful for gathering rich information, but also powerful in promoting this research to some policymakers and establishing friendly relationships with the respondents. The processes of face-to-face interaction allowed both the researcher and the respondents to share life experiences which enriched data collection processes that might not have been the case if using questionnaires. This is not to imply any over criticism of positivist stances on data collection, because it would not be fair to claim that my researcher stance was purely interpretivist. However, even though I adopted an interpretivist stance in the research methodology, in the literature review I nevertheless capitalised on many studies and theoretical concepts based on a positivist worldview. Therefore, my understanding of the topic under investigation was inevitably influenced by this paradigm, as accordingly, were the findings for this research. Given that no researcher can claim to be purely interpretivist or positivist, there seems little purpose in debating the merits of opposing traditions, but to recognise each as useful where appropriate.

Reflecting on data collection processes, I personally felt that the research began at the moment of piloting. I believe that a PhD student keeps rewriting and reflecting on other research until s/he starts the field work. Another interesting aspect of data collection was noticing in the process, a shift in my worldview about the role of guides. My initial view of their being information givers and cultural mediators changed considerably to seeing them more as destination image brokers, and as engineers of the tourist experience, using their guiding ability to deconstruct/reconstruct destination image and to influence the tourists' consumption experiences at every stage.

Reflecting on the data analysis process, I faced a challenge in choosing either a manual approach or Nvivo (qualitative data analysis software). I attended a one day course on Nvivo package software at Oxford Brookes University before the decision was made to use a manual method, for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is generally agreed that the researcher in qualitative studies is the instrument for data collection and analysis (Silverman, 2001; Watt, 2007). This reflects the direct relationship that qualitative researchers develop with the primary data, which I endeavoured to maintain during the analysis process to attain insight into potential meanings in the data. This is above all the central tenet of the qualitative method. It was envisaged therefore that using Nvivo software might block the process of ‘digging deep’ and distance me from the data. Secondly, some authors argue that the utilisation of computer software provides merely a simple way of counting ‘who said what and when’ (Richards and Richards, 1991; Welsh, 2002). But the aim of this research was not about quantifying the qualitative data, but rather to interpret them. This was seen as an inversion that sublimates the distinct qualities of the qualitative method. It was thought therefore that a manual approach, although time consuming, would yield more valuable outcomes than electronic analyses. It should be noted however that the whole set of quotations were cited in reference to each category into a memo in order to understand the characteristics and differences between the emerged categories.

Analysing and presenting the findings, however, was a different challenge. This challenge emerged when it came to managing research method subjectivity, distilling the volume of complex data and understanding their multiple meanings. Moreover, the complex contextual conditions of the Middle East region resulted in primary data that contained sensitive topics such as politics and religion, which were stressful tasks to discuss especially in the relative absence of tourism studies that addressed similar matters. This multiplicity and complexity led me to restructure the findings many times. For example, it seemed appropriate to structure each emergent theme into three main sub-sections e.g. regional official image, country official image and site official image. Following several discussions with my supervisory team and for convenience of presentation, the findings were then restructured according to the current format. Some attempts were also adopted to objectively explain the participants' lived experiences. First, I looked 'outside the box' of tourism research and incorporated a wide variety of interdisciplinary studies as a way to increase the research sensitivity, as recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2008). Second, attempting objectivity from a helicopter view perspective was also found useful. To this end, I hope that this research will be useful for the academic community and for industry practitioners.

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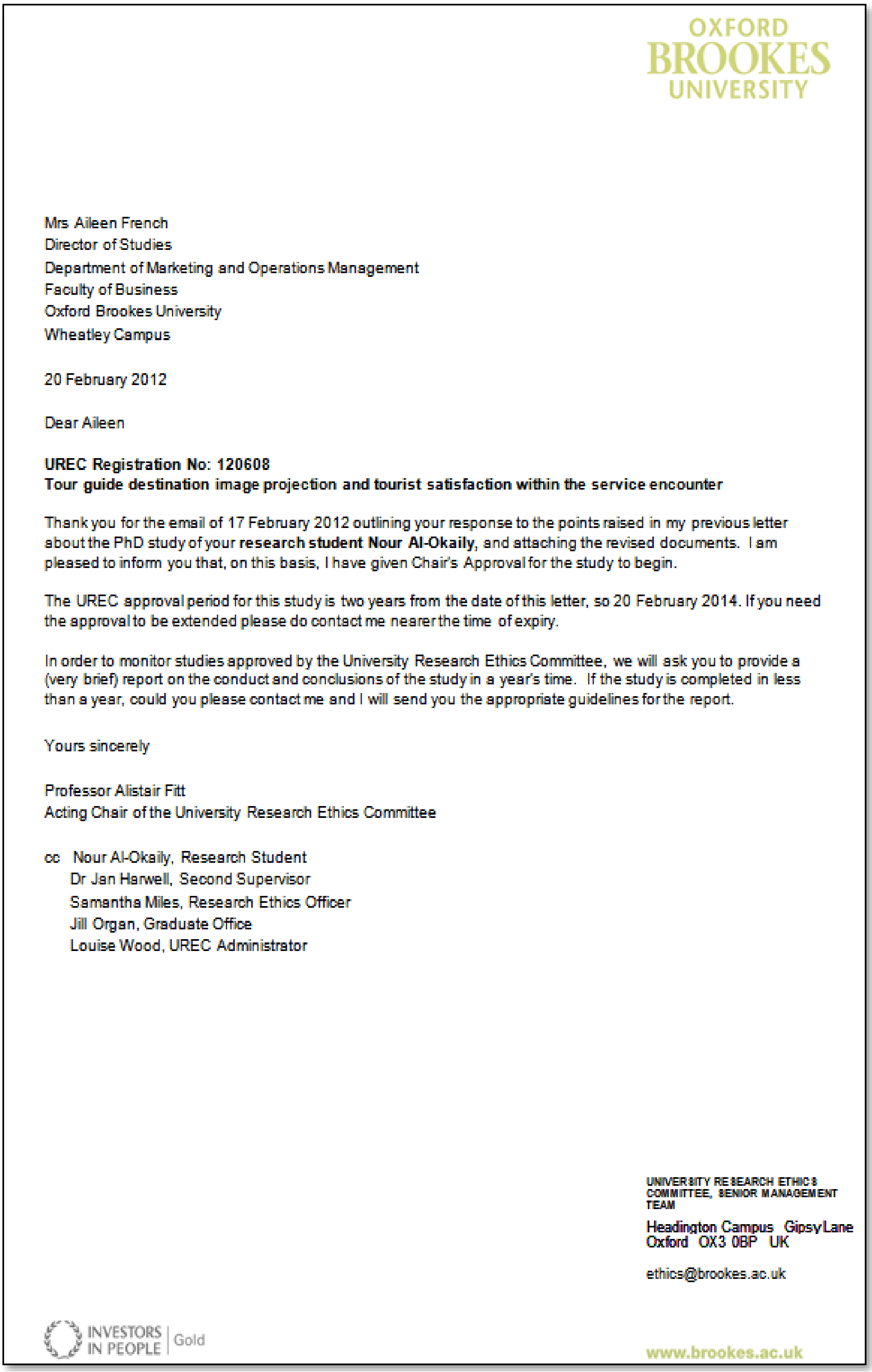
Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical Approval



OXFORD
BROOKES
UNIVERSITY

Mrs Aileen French
Director of Studies
Department of Marketing and Operations Management
Faculty of Business
Oxford Brookes University
Wheatley Campus

20 February 2012

Dear Aileen

UREC Registration No: 120608
Tour guide destination image projection and tourist satisfaction within the service encounter

Thank you for the email of 17 February 2012 outlining your response to the points raised in my previous letter about the PhD study of your **research student Nour Al-Okaily,** 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 this study is two years from the date of this letter, so 20 February 2014. If you need the approval to be extended please do contact me nearer the time of expiry.

In order to monitor studies approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, we will ask you to provide a (very brief) report on the conduct and conclusions of the study in a year's time. If the study is completed in less than a year, could you please contact me and I will send you the appropriate guidelines for the report.

Yours sincerely

Professor Alistair Fitt
Acting Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee

cc Nour Al-Okaily, Research Student
Dr Jan Harwell, Second Supervisor
Samantha Miles, Research Ethics Officer
Jill Organ, Graduate Office
Louise Wood, UREC Administrator

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Appendix B: Sample of Tour Guide Interview Transcript

First, thank you very much for agreeing to take part in my research. Just to comment that my research is undertaken anonymously, so your name will not be revealed in the research.
You are welcome. I have no problem.

What languages do you speak? How much your work experiences are?
English. I have been working as a guide for sixteen years.

My first question is: what commentaries or stories do you commonly represent for the tourists?
As a tour guide, I have to talk about everything. First and after the tourists finish the cross boarder procedures, I welcome the group, I introduce myself and then the bus driver. Then, I represent general information about Jordan such as the population size, the official name of Jordan, local time and so on. The duration of such representations typically lasts for 10-15 minutes. Following this, I ask the tourists about the clarity of my voice and tell them that I will be happy to answer their questions. There should be also funny things to break the ice. So I do tell jokes. The first 15 minutes is the most important stage, during which the guide should reflect positively his guiding competencies to build rapport with the group. Throughout the tour, I move to talk about more detailed matters such as the educational system in Jordan and the number of educational institutions. This takes about 15 minutes. I then explain that the Jordanian economy depends on services and mining industries. I talk about modern Jordan, local culture and marriage traditions. Each set of information should last for about 10-15 minutes. Generally speaking, you know, in each group there could be the poor or rich tourists. There are tourists from different professional and educational levels. So it is important to represent information that suits every taste at the right time and in the right place. I avoid giving information the whole time, but choose my moment. For example, I present topics that need a great deal of explanation on the coach, when the entire tour group is gathered. But the representations also

depend on the tourists' interests and questions. Some tourists put on the set headphones and they don't show interest in listening to anything else. Others do like to learn new things. The tourists' reactions largely influence the tour guide's performance and the success of the tour.

Ok, what about in sites, any representations?
Well, the representations depend on the nature of the site. For example, once in Petra, I start with general historical information about the city such as who built Petra, the different names of the city and the world significance of the city. Then I move to talk about the history of each monument such as how the Treasury was built and for what reasons and so on. In Wadi Rum, I talk about Bedouin traditions and how Arabic coffee is made and served. In Mount Nebo and Machaerus, I connect the biblical stories with these places. There are different stories. It is also very important to facilitate tourists' interaction with local people to bring the site alive.

You mentioned earlier that the representations depend on tourists' questions, which takes us to the next question. Could you explain more what the common tourist's questions are? And how you would respond?
Yeah, true, the questions differ from one tour group to another, and it had depended as well on the timings of the political situation in the Middle East. For instance, before the 11 September attacks and the war against Iraq, tourists' questions revolved around polygamy, women's rights and Hijab. However, now they ask about Jihad, differences between Sunni and Shia' and why a Muslim might commit suicide. They ask more about Islam due to the influence of the mass media. Sometimes tourists presume the media reports are not entirely true. Therefore, they ask about these issues to check preconceived ideas. So as a tour guide, I try to clear up misconceptions about Islam by telling some stories about the Prophet Mohammad's life, for example, that during wartime he cautioned his companions not to kill women or children, not to destroy churches and not to cut down trees; his teaching was that if people have faith in you, then return their faith. What else? Some tourists have misconceptions about Arabian women and ask a lot about their

rights and the wearing of Hijab. They typically ask why women veil their faces. I explain that women in the past tended to live in the desert and started wearing veils to protect their faces from the dust and sunrays. Gradually it has become a tradition. They also ask about safety in Jordan, the Royal Family, and political elections. I typically tell the tourists some stories about King Abdullah. Like that one when his majesty disguised himself as a regular citizen and went to different state organisations to check the quality of services provided in those organisations. The tourists like such type of stories.

Are there any unprofessional practices amongst tour guides?
Yes, there are. There are good and incompetent employees in any profession.

Could you please clarify more? What about specific tour guide's practices?
Well, tour guides who lack a sense of belonging might represent Jordan in a negative way for personal interests. Any tour guide can manipulate the tourists, particularly once trust is maintained. Therefore, the selection and licensing of tour guide should be based on his behaviour. This is important, because tour guides represent Jordan and reflect the country image.

Ok, in terms of tourist's images and impressions, are there any particular images that tour guides should reflect as to the nature of Jordan? What kinds of impression do you specifically attempt to create about Jordan?
I think the role of tour guides is to create a positive image about tolerance and to point out that as Muslims we have to believe in all prophets whether Christian or Jewish. The tour guides' ideas and impressions would definitely influence tourist opinions. So it is very important for tour guides to be objective. But unfortunately, some guides are not objective. Ideally, tour guides should be diplomatic and adopt the perspective of official policymakers, to avoid any conflict or risk of offending tourists. Sometimes I dress up the negative aspects of our society by attributing the poor quality of services to a third party. For example, if there isn't any hot water in the hotel's bathroom or the air conditioning is broken, I say the technician might be on

holiday so the problem could not be fixed. Also in Jerash, I comment that the city is an open exposed city and the air carries the waste into the city to justify the dirtiness. I attribute the negative aspects to a third party because I have to create positive impression about Jordan.

Interesting points, you mentioned earlier that you adopt the official perceptive in you presentations. Could you please explain more why you do so and it is possible to give examples about it?
Well, the tourists have travelled all the way to Jordan to have good holiday and enjoy their time. Each tourist has specific beliefs or personal opinions. Tourist could also be following a specific political party. So my own political beliefs might contradict those of the tourists and thus imposing my own political beliefs during the work might possibly lead to conflict. So I prefer to adopt the official perspectives of the country. That is, for example, Jordan has had a peaceful relationship with Israel since 1994 but this does not mean that we do not believe in Palestinian land rights. So I go on to talk about the role of King Abdullah toward the Palestinian case and the peace negations between Arab and Israel.

Could you please describe what the tourists' ideas and impressions at the beginning of the tour?
The image is different from one tour group to another. Some nationalities such as the British tourists have more knowledge about the region, more than the Americans. Some American tourists do not believe what they see in Jordan because they have low expectations. Tourists' ideas about Jordan are generally influenced by the perceived image about the Middle East. That is, Islam is the religion of terrorism, this is a dangerous region, and women are oppressed. So I clarify that irrespective of Islam, Christianity and Judaism religions, terrorism has no religion. By the same token, the idea often held about Jordan is that it is an Arabian Muslim third world country. Some tourists think that the people here are uncivilised and Jordan is an underdeveloped country. So the pre-tour images tend to be somewhat negative and undifferentiated.

But, from your opinion, why would the tourists be attracted to visit the region or Jordan despite having such negative ideas?

I think the main reason that attracts tourists to visit Jordan is to see Petra. The tourists might also visit Jordan for religious purposes. They could be on a regional tour to Israel and Egypt and afterward they visit Jordan.

Are there any other reasons?

Well, I think these are the main reasons. The tourists like unusual things and are keen to experience something different than their daily routine. Some tourists could be interested in understanding new cultures. So on every tour I try to engage the tourists in new unusual experiences. For example, in Wadi Rum, we sleep under the stars and I start telling them stories about Bedouin traditions and love stories. Sometimes I teach tourists how to eat Mansaf by hand or how to cook local dishes, particularly once we are in the Petra kitchen.

Do these negative images change by the end of their tour?

Yes, tourists' images change in positive directions and become more differentiated in most cases. They started to perceive Jordan as a safe developing country, with friendly people and competent guides. They get really surprised when they see the modern houses and cars in Amman and in other towns. The tourists generally leave Jordan happy because they found sea, sand, green lands, and archaeological sites in one place. They like the diversity of attractions, and particularly once they see Jerash and Wadi Rum, their images change regarding tourism diversity. Actually, when tourists saw Jerash they said that they had been to Rome but they had not seen such a breath-taking historical Roman city as Jerash. Tourists usually comment that they would like to revisit Jordan and recommend it to other friends. I believe that this is a sign of tourists' happiness.

Ok, you mentioned earlier that pre-visitation and at the start of the tour, tourist's images and ideas about the Middle East could sometimes be negative. Do these ideas also change?

Yes, they do, particularly for tourists on regional packages. Of course, some tourists are arrogant and do not want to understand other people's perspectives. For these, negative stereotypes may remain the same. But in general the tourists begin to perceive Arabs as friendly and caring, and this is what some Western tourists miss at home, particularly the elderly.

Are there any negative images which might be held by tourists at the end of their tour?

Yes, negative images of dirtiness and trash. Most tourists comment negatively about these issues. But the tour guide is the one who interacts with the tourists during the whole tour, so he is the one who is in a position to reduce any negative image. Tourists do not see the people who work in travel agencies, they only see us. Therefore, we try to deal with negative incidents and perceptions in a diplomatic way.

It seems that the success of tourism experiences depends very much on the tour guides?

Yes, indeed. It depends on competent guides. Tour guides are the ambassadors for Jordan. Some tourists do not visit Jordan just because of the marketing campaigns of the ministry of tourism. Some tourists have impressions that Jordan is only Petra. They are not completely aware of the diversity of attractions. Tourists know about Jordan mainly through the marketing campaigns of regional packages launched by Egypt and Israel. But it is the tour guide who plays a significant marketing role. Competent tour guides can influence tourist satisfaction positively and indirectly create positive recommendations. These recommendations are a powerful promotional tool due to their credibility. Even so, after all the hard work we do, some people underestimate our efforts. There should be more appreciation for tour guides' work. Organisations should engage tour guides more in preparing marketing strategies because we have the knowledge about the tourism products.

I do appreciate the tour guides; you really have big responsibilities. That was my last question, thank you very much. Would like to add anything else or to comment on any issue?

No, I do not. I hope my answers will be useful for your research and good luck in your studies.

Appendix C: A Sample of Tourist Interview Transcript

Thank you very much for taking part in my research. Just to mention that this research is undertaken anonymously, so your name will not be revealed in the research.
That is okay. I have no problem.

Is this your first visit to Jordan?
Yes, it is.

Really, so, how has it been? I hope you have enjoyed it!
Yes. All have been wonderful and so friendly.

That is good. Can we start with the first question? What were your ideas about the Middle East and Jordan beforehand or at the start of the tour? Did you have any ideas?
Until we decided to come here, no not really, I have family and some friends who were like a little bit: you are going where!! I think there is little knowledge about Jordan. They do not know what and where Jordan is. My vision of Jordan before I came here was only the Dead Sea and Petra and that was all I knew about Jordan before I came. I read that people were friendly and nice here, but I was overwhelmed by the friendliness of everyone in the street. We were lost in the street, obviously, looking like tourists, and people asked where are you trying to go? I said we are going to the restaurant. So they took their phones out, did calls, look like they asked where, and give us directions and said welcome to Jordan. This does not happen to me a lot in my travels. I think it wasn't just being kind, it was beyond my expectations. We took a taxi, back to our hotel, and the taxi driver told us that there was a great bar here, and he came inside with us to check if everything was okay.

Ok, that takes us to the next question, could we please talk about your ideas or images about the region and Jordan now?

My impression of the Middle East in general has probably improved a bit after this trip to Jordan, although in general when I think of the Middle East, I think of tense relations between the US and the governments of countries like Iran and Iraq, and my positive experience in Jordan does not have much bearing on that impression of the Middle East in general. Overall, the people I met in Jordan were friendly, helpful and welcoming, but I knew that from what I'd read about the country beforehand. I was surprised by the diversity. The country is so diverse. I mean you have modern cities and then you have scenery that I have never seen in any other part of the world. I like to think, I am, kind of, a world traveller. But I have seen so many things in this world and so many things that I have seen here that I have never seen anywhere else. I was just saying that all the things that I have seen in my life, Petra is just dazzling; I have never seen anything like that anywhere else.

So, why did you visit this region, particularly Jordan?

Petra was nearly at the top of my list, but also I like trying something really different and I had never travelled in the Middle East, so I chose Jordan. But why Jordan, I did not give it much thought. I guess because it is safe. I read about the country and I watched some travel documentary films about Petra and the opportunity came to travel here. For me, I think safety is the big thing here. Travelling in the region, you know, at least the perception like this and like that, I never once felt uncomfortable. You know that is a great way to check things. So when I go home and I talk to people, if they ask how it was!! I'll say it was great, people were wonderful and the sites were amazing. They may ask: did you feel safe? So I'll say: yes, I never felt unsafe once. So, Americans are really concerned that we travelled to the Middle East. The tourist police was a very positive thing for me, having a police officer with us helped us not to worry.

Are there any aspects you experienced during the tour that might have influenced your image or satisfaction negatively!

Overall, I am definitely satisfied with the tours we saw. It is one of the things that I wanted to see. The think that I did not like is that I would love to be able to spend more time in these places. But I also know that in order to be able to do all of these things in a certain time, you need to stick to the schedule. I would love to have had more time to wander around. But I've got a good reason to come back. Actually, the vast size of Petra makes me want to come back to explore more of its wonders. Everything has been fantastic; the people have been great and places are great. I was dissatisfied with some things that were pricy, but at the end other things were much cheaper than I expected. In Amman, we took four taxis and three of them did not have a meter. So you get to the place and then you say how much? And they will tell you anything which might be much more than it should be. Some of this dissatisfaction is going to be real; when you go to a place and people force you to buy postcards, like in Petra. It was not nice.

What is your overall evaluation of the tour guide?

I would say he coloured our experiences in Jordan. I normally travel in non-guided tours. I go alone and I use guidebook. The thing that I did really appreciate was when the guide said: 'to get to site at the right time, where there is light coming in'. These little things on a guided tour can add lots of value to the tour. If you were by yourself, you might not know, or even the guidebook will not tell you that. I think what makes this a richer experience is having a tour guide that knows everything, which I appreciate. He can also explain political things that are going on by saying people are thinking this and this and thinking that. There is neutrality there. Also when he talked about religion, he mentioned what the Quran says and what the Bible says, you know it is more factual. For me, I think this is trustworthy and I feel better. In general he knows a lot. He presented things in a way without trying to tell us to do this and do not do that, but I think he did it in a nice way. This is positive.

You mentioned earlier that some Americans might be concerned that you have travelled to the Middle East, so what your suggestions for Jordan to overcome such negative stereotypes and to attract more tourists?

Yea, I have some friends, they can see deals, but never ever will come here. I could tell them that this is one of the best trips, but they will never ever come here. I think you should promote for more exotic specific things. Some countries are strongly associated with a given type of tourism, so you do not even think about other choices. So when I think of something exotic and historical, I need just immediately to think about Jordan, to market for specific things.

Thank you very much for your time. Would like to add anything else?
Welcome. No, not really.

Appendix D: Samples of Descriptive Observational Notes

Day 5 (23 Nov 2012): Petra

First Stop: The Main Gate

The tour started early at 8:30 AM from the Petra Visitor Centre PVC. The weather was very pleasant with a clear blue sky and fresh morning air. Most tourists in the group were wearing middle-weight to light clothing, comfortable shoes and rucksacks. Some tourists were carrying a camera and filled water-bottle. There were other tour groups in the vicinity, although few in number. These were gathered in front of the gate of the PVC, waiting most likely for their accompanying guides to arrive with their entry tickets, as were our group. Most tourists seemed somewhat impatient for their tour to get started. Our guide then arrived with our tickets and surprised us all by asking who wanted to have a horse ride. One female tourist expressed her interest but only on the way back. The tour guide informed the group that the horse leaders would expect a tip each time a horse was hired. Afterward, we proceeded to the main gate of Petra's archaeological park. We encountered here twin pathways, one for horseback riding and one for tours on foot. At this stage, all the tourists preferred the footpath, probably to enjoy the sightseeing.

Fifth Stop: The Treasury

We came to the end of the Siq at 9:30AM. The Treasury slowly came into vision. On the right, immediately after the Siq, there was a small bazaar for refreshment, drinks and souvenirs. On seeing the treasury, the tourists instantly expressed positive reactions. A tourist said: '*wow, I'm very excited. It looks a lot like in the advertisement. This is an unforgettable moment'*. Another tourist looked really surprised and loudly said: *'wow amazing. So this is it!'*. The guide whistled for the tourists and then said: *'I know that you will not listen to any word I will say now. I will give you 30 minutes for photo taking and then I will call you to talk about the Treasury and then to move on'*. The guide constantly attempted to give clear directions for the tourists, as if he was following and creating for them a mind map of the daily tours and the experiences which would be encountered at each visited site. The guide was also constantly mediating the tourists' encounters with the souvenir sellers. The tourists started wandering around, examining the treasury façade and taking pictures from different corners with different positions. At this point, there were also camels and camel leaders, which attracted the tourists' camera attention. Other tour groups were reacting in the same way. Some tourists on the other hand had opted for refreshment in the small bazaar.

After 25 minutes, the guide called the tourists into a shaded spot and talked in detail about the Treasury history. He explained that the Treasury was the greatest monument in Petra, and that its name came from a myth, that the Nabatean kings had hidden their gold and treasures in this monument. The guide went on to explain that the Nabateans had built the Treasury on this spot, immediately outside the Siq, in order to impress their visitors. He said that the monument had Greek, Egyptian and Roman influences as well as Nabataean touches. This was in contrast to other monuments on the site, which had only Nabatean and/ or Roman influences. However, since this is the first monument that the visitors were encountering on the site, the guide emphasised that the Nabataeans were open to other cultures, and that they wanted their city to be seen as cosmopolitan. At this stage, a very young child with postcards turned up and interrupted the guide commentary, shouting: *'postcards of Petra for 1 JD'*. The guide responded in a frustrated manner, saying: '*could you please let us talk*!'. The child went away.

The guide continued to expound on the most accepted theory as to the monument's function, that it was a tomb for one of the Nabatean king and his wife. The guide then talked about the Treasury's architecture. The structure has two stories, the bottom story being decorated with horses and horse riders. At the back of the structure, there are two rooms which were used for burial rituals. The upper part of the structure has a pediment decorated with eagles, and other sculptures at the sides. The guide commented: *'You may ask why the Nabateans did not write about* *themselves, although they seemed a very rich and business-oriented culture! Their business languages were Greek and Latin. But the Nabateans might well have written about their monuments and their kings on billboards which did not ensure the ravages of time'.* The guide's delivered interpretations here were very detailed, using colourful language such as 'magnificent carved façade', 'breath-taking' monument, and 'beautiful' sculptures. All the tourists remained grouped around the guide to hear his commentaries, and appeared to pay careful attention to his stories. No questions were raised by the tourists, perhaps because the guide's stories were sufficiently rich and clear to satisfy their needs for knowledge.

Appendix E: Samples of Reflective Observational Notes

Day Two (20 Nov 2012): Desert Castle

I was under the impression that one tourist (a PhD holder in psychology) was constantly observing me. He may have been curious to know the way I was observing the tour group. For a time I felt uncomfortable about this attention, because it meant I had to adjust the way I intended to observe the tourists, which was to appear unobtrusive. I therefore pretended immediately to be reacting spontaneously to the tourist environment. I began looking more at the guide, and the surrounding settings, and only then focused on the tourists to observe their reactions.

This incident raised my awareness of the challenges of participant observation as a research tool. It became clear that covert observation might indeed give rise to uneasiness and self-consciousness among participants if not sensitively handled. I thus began to reflect on suitable tactics which would serve to reduce any unwanted side effects of my presence as an observer. To this end, I started wearing dark sun glasses which were particularly useful in open settings as they served to disguise the fact that I was looking at specific tourists at any given moment. In addition, I pretended to be carrying out phone calls on my mobile phone while audio-recording my observations, and also took an unobtrusive back seat on the coach in order comfortably to record my manual notes. I was laughing at myself deep down because it looked like that I'm in 'secret mission'. I realised thus that there were very good reasons for not conducting participant observation too overtly. Many of my actions and most of the data recording were therefore done covertly, so as to minimise any risk of intruding upon the tourists' emotional comfort and enjoyment. After all, they had come a long way to enjoy Jordan, and to feel free to see and do what they wanted, and this ethical consideration had to be paramount in the data collection methods.

Day Three (21 Nov 2012): in the Coach Travelling from Jerash to Amman

I felt that I was becoming a part of the group as more rapport began to be established. Some tourists in the back seats asked me to teach them some Arabic words for phrases such as ‘thank you’, ‘how are you’ and ‘good morning’. They wanted to say these words to the guide in order to surprise him. They were very friendly and open to me, which led us to chat about our hobbies, and more personal issues such as our families. The tourists then asked me questions about the local culture such as whether women were allowed to drive in Jordan. I felt it was important to answer the question briefly to maintain the friendly relationships with the tourists. At the same time, I did want to look as though I was taking over the guide’s role. Overall, my main focus was on noting what kinds of questions the tourists would pose and how the guide would respond. To this end, I politely advised the tourists to ask the tour guide directly when they had questions, because he was well-informed and would give better information than me.

Appendix F: Sample of Memo

Although there appeared to be some connection between the ‘official images’ and ‘dressed up images’ of a phenomenon represented by the tour guides, there were nevertheless some apparent differences between the two types of image, in terms of their characteristics and how they were associated with certain features.

Differences:

Analysis of the findings suggested that an ‘official image’ was represented by the tour guides as reflecting the worldview’s of Jordanian policymakers. This was particularly the case when guides were representing political attributes of a given entity. On the other hand, a ‘dressed up image’ appeared to be used to mitigate negative aspects of a represented destination, for instance, when tourists were observing or experiencing unprofessional practices of service providers.

Similarities:

Both patterns appeared to follow a common motivational route in that the tour guides were aiming to promote a positive image of a represented destination and to manage tourists’ experiences positively. In their interviews, the guides demonstrated their awareness of tourist diversity, of their charges coming from different backgrounds and holding various professional positions in their home countries. They also acknowledged an expectation that such tourists would be likely share their Jordanian experiences with co-workers, friends and families back home. In this respect, it was seen as logical that tour guides would resort to constructing official images if they sensed a risk of misunderstanding, disapproval or dispute in respect to what tourists were seeing. By taking a pan-Jordanian policy position, they would thus avoid the risk of imposing their personal mono-opinions in relation to political issues. The ‘dressed up image’ was similarly constructed as a device to allay tourists’ anxiety or to offset any undesirable word of mouth dissemination that might result from actual or perceived negative aspects of a visited destination.

Theoretical sampling was employed during the main field work to sensitise these findings and assumptions. Questions which evolved during the upcoming interviews, for example, were:

- In your opinion, are there any differences between representing the official perspective and dressing up the truth?
- Could you please provide examples about how you might represent each type?

Appendix G: Master List of Tour Guides’ Representations

Main Themes	Sub-Themes
Regional Attributes	
Religion	The position of women in Islam, the practice of polygamy, differences between Sunneh and Shia’, the concept of Jihad, Islamic associations with terrorism, the pillars of Islamic practices, the relationship of Islam to Christianity.
Politics	Political conflict and intraregional political relationships.
Socio-cultural issues	Lifestyle, friendliness and hospitality of Arab, the level of literacy and cleanliness.
Tourism	Historical attractions and service providers’ practices.
National Attributes	
Background information	Official name, predominant language, predominant religion, local time, location, population size, exchange rate and weather.
Culture	Marriage traditions, family bonds, daily life patterns, locals’ coexistences, friendliness and hospitality, the fabric of society, local entertainment patterns, locals’ entrepreneurship, food and beverages, handicraft items, cleanliness and architecture.
Politics	Political development, interior affairs and the country’s foreign policies.
Economics	Sources of income, income per capita, the employment rate and price levels.
Education	Educational system, number of academic bodies and number of current educators.
Tourism	Diversity, services and quality provided by tourism workers.
Site Attributes	
Attractions	Cultural sites, religious sites and therapeutic sites.
Tourism services	Available restaurants, souvenir shops, shopping facilities, events and others.
Site home actors	The practices of the local community and service providers.
Other	Safety, politics and other.

Appendix H: Master List of Tourists' Perceived Image

Main Themes	Sub-Themes
Regional Attributes	
Region Profile	Location, language and religion.
Politics	Political conflict and political stability.
Socio-cultural features	General lifestyles, the gender status of Arabian men and women and friendliness of Arabs.
Urbanisation	Development and literacy levels.
Tourism	Attractions and the practices of service providers.
National Attributes	
Country profile	Location, language and religion.
Socio-cultural issues	Aboriginal cultures, lifestyles, hospitality and friendliness, local food, architecture and cleanliness.
Economics	Affluence and price levels.
Politics	Interior affairs and the foreign policies.
Tourism	Tourism superstructure, service providers, diversity, landscape and the quality of services.
Urbanisation	Infrastructure, literacy and information technologies.
Site Attributes	
Functional characteristics	Site size, location and surrounding setting.
Symbolic characteristics	Spiritual or historical significances.
Site home actors	The practices of the local people and service providers.