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FACULTY OF BUSINESS ECONOMICS
Master of Management

Master's thesis

The impact of country of origin effect on the Jordanian tourist industry
and the potential reaction of the different stakeholders

Promotor :
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De heer Wouter FAES

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*Thesis presented in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
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Fandi Omeish

August, 2014

Supervised by: Prof. Dr. Gilbert Swinnen

Co-promoter: Wouter Faes

Preface

With the help of my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Gilbert Swinnen and Wouter Faes I have chosen “The impact of the country of origin effect on the Jordanian tourist industry and the potential reaction of the different stakeholders” as a topic for my dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master degree from Hasselt University.

During a year work, both my promoter Prof. Dr. Gilbert Swinnen and my co-promoter Wouter Faes guided and supported me to understand the main concept of the thesis better and to develop a way to structure my thoughts and create a short investigation in the matter. They guided me in keeping up the standards of adequate work and research.

In order to fulfill the objectives of the thesis, I read a lot of articles from journals and looked at tourism companies’ offerings to analyze them. Writing this thesis was a bit hard and required a lot of work of a nature that is not always required for a bachelor’s degree in my home university in Jordan. On the other hand it added a lot to my knowledge and expanded my experience. Moreover, this thesis opened my eyes to new perspectives that I never considered while doing my bachelor’s degree.

Acknowledgement

I would like first of all to thank God who helped me to get through all the problems that I faced. I would like to express the deepest appreciation to my Prof. Dr. Gilbert Swinnen and my co-promoter Wouter Faes. They are excited about teaching and helping students. My supervisors have been really treating me like I am a member of their family and they were for me as a friend, brother and more. Without their leadership and persistent help this dissertation would not have been possible.

I thank the University of Hasselt for giving me the chance to study in it. In addition, thanks for my parents and each member of my family and my friends who helped me and supported me when I needed help. They were giving me a hand to overcome all the problems that I have faced in finishing this dissertation. I am thankful for their motivation. Thanks God for giving me this opportunity that will add a lot to my future life. And thanks Belgium as a country for accepting me to study in it.

Fandi Omeish

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Executive Summary

The tourist sector is very important for the Jordanian economy. Any negative effect on this sector leads to an adverse effect on the overall economic situation of Jordan. The instability in the region Jordan is suffering from and the lack of marketing strategies for sustaining the value of this sector in the long run make this study important.

This study describes the factors that affect a tourist's choice behavior when wanting to choose Jordan as a place to make a holiday trip to. The country of origin effect that tourists experience when having Jordan as a destination option is based on the overall image the tourists have on the country compared to its nearest competitors. We wanted to have an idea about this.

The methods that were used to fulfill this aim were both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative method that was used was a focus group interview for the purpose of identifying the elements that tourist attach importance to when selecting a holiday destination, while the quantitative method was descriptive statistics that describe the sample and several statistical tests of significance like independent t-test and chi-square test to measure if there is a country of origin effect when choosing between Jordan and other places to travel to and to discover the elements a suitable strategy to market a holiday package offering to Jordan should take more into account than now. This last part builds on the literature on destination branding and its potential in overcoming eventual country-of-origin problems.

The major results in this study are that there is a country of origin effect for the three types of holidays that were tested (cultural heritage tours, beach holidays and outdoor sports holidays). It is negative for Jordan in most cases and could be linked to some causes like lack of diversity of the cultural heritage offering, fairness of prices for beach holidays and climate for outdoor sports events. Lastly, different marketing elements have to be played with different travel choices by all the stakeholders involved.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

In this chapter we will briefly depict the title and purpose of this dissertation from a scientific perspective. This signifies that we try to clarify the problem statement, the research questions to be addressed and the methodology used.

1.1. Problem Statement

As a tourist destination Jordan is certainly one of the most attractive and popular ones in the Middle East. There are numerous reasons for this. Jordan offers outstanding landscapes ranging from resorts at the lowest point in the world (Dead Sea) to adventure travel in some of the high mountains in the region in Rum and from leisure holidays at the Red Sea to cultural travel visiting some of the best kept antiquities in the world. The country has a moderate climate and affordable prices.

The tourist sector can thus be considered as one of the most vital and refreshing resources of the Jordanian economy in general. This can for instance be justified by the fact that tourism is one of the biggest suppliers of the Jordanian national economy with hard currencies. Tourists spend their money on various issues when travelling such as on accommodation, food and beverage, transportation and entertainment. Shdeifat et al. (2006) support this by mentioning in their study that "Tourism contributes more than US\$800 million to Jordan's economy and accounts for approximately 10 % of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)" (p. 2).

Unfortunately, Jordan is surrounded by an instable region in which political conflicts rage and is sometimes still considered to be a third world country. Moreover, Western media do not always portray mainly Muslim countries positively. Thus the countries' tourist sector also encounters many obstacles making its success in the long run less certain. Jordan still lacks some of the necessary infrastructure that is absolutely necessary to totally satisfy the tourists' needs. Finally the tourist sector in Jordan still lacks qualified and experienced staffs and managers (Ministry of Planning, 1999).

The economic importance and the various unique tourist packages Jordan can offer justify the conducting a study focusing on the tourists' choice behavior with regard to the mentioned positive and negative effects. This refers to the way in which tourists view Jordan as a tourist destination compared to other destinations.

Many different factors affect customer decisions while buying a holiday, booking a ticket or even reserving a hotel. Usually customers are influenced by accommodation, sports, leisure and going out possibilities, short tours, prices, discounts and so on. But brand equity, warranty and refunds also play a role. They are however most influenced by the destination itself and the image they have of it (Agrawal and Kamakura, 1999). Thus the positive and negative elements linked to the image of Jordan as a tourist

destination directly affect the success of tourism in general and tourist ventures in particular in the country.

As such, there is something like a “country of origin” effect (COO) the Jordanian tourist industry is facing. In literature terms, theory speaks of the existence of a country of origin effect when destinations are linked to the image tourist customers have of it. It is an application of the general definition of a country of origin effect. In general, each country has its own country image that is intertwined with the types of products and characteristics they portray in the minds of customers. Colombia for example is well known for its good coffee, Switzerland is famous for its reliability and thus for its watches and Germany is considered to be a leader in the automobiles and mechanics industry, based on its image of producing superior quality (Agrawal and Kamakura, 1999).

In this dissertation we will try to investigate the holistic aspects that influence tourism in Jordan by considering the country of origin factor. It will focus on the impact the “country of origin effect” as depicted above may have on the Jordanian tourist industry, prices tourists are willing to pay for a vacation in Jordan compared to direct alternatives and which influence this has on the marketing actions of the different parties involved in the tourist management process, which we will call stakeholders.

1.2. Research questions

Since Jordan is situated in the crisis area of the Middle East, one can expect the COO-effect on Jordanian products to be relatively large. We would like to investigate this in one of the major sectors of industry of the country, namely the tourist industry.

The objective of the dissertation is thus to investigate the following research questions:

1. Is their COO effect on Jordanian tourism?

Since tourist marketing in general normally is executed in two steps, the identification of the image a tourist destination has and the planning of improvements to made to this image (Luque-Martinez et al., 2007), this research question can only be answered correctly if several sub questions are addressed. They are:

- a. Which factors are linked in the mind of tourists with Jordan as a destination?
- b. How does Jordan score on them (what is the actual image of the country as a destination)?
- c. How does this affect the willingness of tourists to travel to Jordan?

The last sub question is closely related to the value people traveling to Jordan attach to the country as a destination and thus to the price they are willing to pay for such a tourist trip. This leads us to the second research question:

2. How much money does it cost the Jordanian tourist economy to be situated in a crisis zone?

This question presupposes of course that the negative elements affecting Jordanian tourism that we mentioned before have a negative effect on the value attached to travelling to Jordan and the price customers are willing to pay for it. So actually, the second research question also contains a number of sub questions. They are:

- a. Which value do tourists attach to travelling to Jordan?
- b. Which prices are they willing to pay for it?
- c. How are the Jordanian prices evaluated in comparison to competitive destinations?

From a practitioner perspective, we have by stating the second sub question, linked the importance of tourism for the Jordanian economy directly to the money consumers are willing to spend in the country. Thus in marketing terms, the variable of price comes into play. Price is one of the most powerful marketing-mix elements due to its direct and disproportional impact on profitability (Han, Gupta, and Lehmann 2001). For tourist destinations the field of actors in the marketing field is very large. It involves the government, tourist attractions, hotels, travel bureaus and so on...(Buhalis, 2000; Hankinson, 2007; Kavaratzis, 2012). In scientific terms all these actors are called the stakeholders in the field of city, place or destination "branding". They all influence "place equity" (Papadopoulos, 2004).

Each of these has to take appropriate action to alleviate the eventually observed COO-price effect. The third objective of this dissertation is thus to answer the question:

3. Which guidelines can be given to the stakeholders in the Jordanian tourist industry to minimize the impact of the country-of-origin effect on the income of the industry?

1.3. Research Methodology

The most appropriate way to investigate the research questions is by having a questionnaire to be filled out by potential tourist to Jordan.

This research has to be developed in two stages, of which the questionnaire is only the second one.

First, focus group interviews with potential visitors have to be held to find out which elements determine the image of Jordan as a tourist destination and which tourist activities are linked with the country. Moreover, these interviews also have to yield data on the different characteristics or parameters of the tourist packages offered that are important in the decision process of the customers and what they expect to be reasonable ranges of them. The interviews can also provide data on the major competitors for Jordan on the tourist market. We hope to get some help from a travel agency in the Wagon Lits in Antwerp.

In a second stage, we can try to find out how Jordan does compare to different competitors. We would like to execute the second stage using a questionnaire in which statistical analysis will play a major role. The idea is to confront potential tourist customers with a number of typical destinations and tourist offerings Jordan offers: travel in the desert (Wadi Rum), climbing mountains (also in the desert areas), laying at the beach (Red Sea resorts) and antiquities (several sites). Most of these could also be situated in different countries as Jordan going on the outlooks of the photographs. It must thus be possible to measure the willingness of customers to travel to these destinations while changing some of the parameters discovered in the first stage they are confronted with, such as country, length of stay, price and maybe others. Price should be one of them as this should lead to an estimate of the price effect of the COO for Jordanian tourism.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

In this chapter we will review the most important part of the scientific literature on the two basic theoretical foundations of this dissertation: the country-of-origin literature and the literature on the marketing and branding of tourist places and destinations.

They are the two paragraphs of this chapter. The paragraph on country-of-origin literature will define the concept first, before going into more detail about the existing research literature on the topic. Special attention will be given to the links between country-of-origin effects and prices in marketing terms and to the research covering service products. The paragraph on the marketing and branding of places and destinations will indicate how destinations are “branded” and marketed. For this last element special attention will be devoted to the role of the different parties involved in this marketing venture and how their activities can best be brought together to support a coordinated marketing approach.

2.1. Country-of-origin effects

The country-of-origin literature is large, but mostly only about 20 years old. We will go through the most important definitions indicating what a country-of origin effects is and also define related concepts first. Then the most important types of research concerning country-of-origin effects will be named. Our attention will focus on the influencing factors of the country-of-origin effect and the most important consequences for consumer behavior. We will further look at the relationship between country-of-origin effect and price as this is the major factor playing a role in the answering of our research questions for the tourist industry of Jordan. Finally, since tourism is a service industry, specific research results with regards to country-of-origin elements related to services will be mentioned.

2.1.1. Definitions

In this section we define the country-of-origin effect and related concepts before indicating that the COO variable is gradually playing an ever more important role in our globalized world.

2.1.1.1. Country-of-origin (COO) effect

There exist a lot of definitions for the so called country-of-origin effect exists in scientific literature.

The first study of a country of origin effect was performed by Schooler (1965) and showed that there is an effect of country of origin of products on customers' views and behavior when choosing between alternative products. Customers seemed to take the country where the product had been produced into

account as one of the parameters in their choice. On the other hand, the study did not discuss the power of the country-of-origin impact on customers, nor did it compare it with other factors influencing customers' choices.

A survey made by Nagashima in 1970 defines country image as "the picture, the character and the label that most consumers attach to a specific country, which means the image that people get about this country for the well-known and professional products and services they create" (p. 69).

From a customer-based perspective, country image has been defined as consumer's general perceptions about the products that are being manufactured in the given country (Bilkey and Nes, 1982; Min Han, 1989). Moreover, COO is used by costumers to evaluate the products from foreign origin they are unfamiliar with (Bilkey and Nes, 1982). This explains that customers use COO as an indicator for evaluating the performance of the product. For example consumer may not be familiar with some products that are produced by Germany but there are a lot of indicators that confirm that German products in general stand for high quality. Because of this general "country image" the consumer proceeds to evaluate even unfamiliar German product as favorably. Huber and McCann (1982) add to this that the more a product is unknown to customers, the more they will rely on the COO-effect to assess and measure its quality.

From marketing perspective, Roth and Romeo (1992) defined country image as "the general insight the consumers have in their mind about a product of particular country, build on previous perceptions of the country's manufacturing and marketing strengths and weaknesses" (p. 478). This definition also expresses the role marketing can play in building the strength or weakness of a country's image in customers minds and thus in creating a quality perception of the products and services offered by or produced in this country. An example is for instance that before the Second World War most products "made in Japan" were considered to be of doubtful quality. A concerted effort by MITI (Ministry of Foreign Trade in Japan) after the war did not only create a sense among Japanese companies to be quality oriented, but was gradually also marketed to the outside world for all Japanese exports. As people experienced improved quality, the world started to believe that Japan stood for good, if not excellent quality products. The example also learns that the effort goes at a certain price. The first exports of Japanese products after the Second World War were priced lower than average.

Papadopoulos and Heslop (2002) mention that the country-of-origin construct is not qualified to be single criteria in segmenting products and cannot be used as a single indicator of the quality of the product. They explain that the COO-effect assumes a single place of origin for a product, which is not always the case. Moreover, other factors such as expected value, perceived risk and performance are considered more effective in evaluating the quality of a product. Other researchers however (Leifeld, 1993; Peterson and Jolibert, 1995; Samiee, 1994) agree with one another that country of origin-effects play an important role in how consumers assess a product. Consumers tend to apply the country of origin indication as an outside sign amongst others to make some judgment about the quality of the products they buy. COO might include multiple factors like perception, values, and beliefs about the countries that produce the product (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999). In that sense many customers will for instance consider a German car to be of good quality and have doubts about a Chinese one.

Finally Zhang (1996) defined COO as “information pertaining to where a product is made” (p. 51), which means that the COO is considered as a basic label containing information about the country where the product was made. In this definition no references to the effects of the COO in customer perceptions are made anymore.

These different definitions and the discussion on the effect of COO on quality perceptions by customers indicate that all researchers accept a number of common elements in any definition of the country-of-origin effect. They are:

- COO is related to the image a country has in the eyes and minds of customers;
- The COO-effect indicates that this image is transferred to the image of the products and services offered and produced in this country
- COO-effects are mainly related to the quality perception customers have about the products of this country, next to other factors affecting this quality assessment
- COO-effects are dynamic and can be changed over time by country image building and marketing
- COO-effects rely heavily on the information available to the customer about the origin of a product or service.

In summary, we can say that the image of a country is build up of multiple variables such as products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history and traditions associated with the country. We will indicate how a countries' image is build up by marketers in the second paragraph of this chapter. COO links this image to the image customers have of the products and services offered by that country. It is considered as a one factor among others such as price, reputation and retailer image that will influence the perception of customers about these products and their quality and thus also their purchase decisions. COO effects are dynamic and can be influenced by good nation branding and are transferred to customers mainly by available information about and on the products, thus also by product marketing.

2.1.1.2. Related definitions of the COO-effect: Country-of-manufacturing, country-of-assembly, country-of-design and country-of-parts-effects (COM, COA, COD and COP)

Under the influence of the globalization, companies start developing trade and manufacturing alliances all over the world. Trade between countries is also eased a lot and thus economically countries become closer to each other. This is reflected in the fact that the COO of a product has become a complex matter to assess. It can indeed be segmented in different elements, like country of design (COD), country of manufacturing (COM), country of assembly (COA) and country of parts (COP) (Chao, 1993). Airbus aircraft have different COP: the wings are made in Spain, the engines in Britain, the body in France, the technical materiel mostly in Germany and the assembly in Germany (COA). So each one of these elements in itself can sometimes be subdivided, even the COD. The Eurostar train to Britain has

Belgium as COD for the exterior and France as COD for the technical part. Many terms such as bi-national and hybrid products have been used recently within global market places for this phenomenon. Both terms thus describe the same concept that emphasizes a product that has been designed in one country and manufactured or assembled in another one. It indicates that these products have different COD, COA and COM's.

The existence of these products is due to the fact that companies pursue strategies that seek for an adequate quality to be combined with the lowest cost possible and cheap labor. Manufacturing a product in one country and designing it in another place will help the firm to improve its competitive advantage in the market with lower costs (Phau and Chao, 2008).

The problem is of course to know how the customers will react to these mixed influences in terms of perceived risk and expected quality of the products, certainly since many companies concentrate in their advertising campaigns and branding of products on this very difference between COM and COO (Papadopoulos, 1993). Moreover, the situation may be even more complex since sometimes there is a supplementary divide between the country in which the parts are made and the country in which the assembly is done.

The place of manufacture certainly influences product evaluations (Gurhan-Canli and Maheswaran, 2000) by consumers, but to what extent? Han and Terpstra (1988) and Tse and Gorn (1993) found that the COM-effect is larger than the COO-effect for many technical products. The COO in these studies was linked to the country of origin of the brand. On the other hand Hui and Zhou (2002) and Srinivasan et al. (2004) present studies that prove the contrary.

One of the reasons for the difference might be that some studies concentrate on consumer products whereas others concentrate on products bought by industrial companies and organizations. Customers who are considered to be "organizational buyers" take the country of design factor (COD) into their main considerations since they believe that the well-designed product can overcome most of the deficiencies caused during the manufacturing or assembly process. Individual household buyers on the contrary mainly concentrate on the brand name and the COO and not on the COD or COM (Hui and Zhou, 2002).

Another reason might be that some studies are situated in industrialized nations only whereas others take differences between industrialized and less industrialized nations into account (Biswas et al., 2011). When COD and COP are industrialized nations, quality perceptions are clearly seen to be higher, as well as when the COA is an industrialized nation according to this study. The only exception is that the effect of domestic production will sometimes contradict this.

2.1.1.3. Importance of COO-effects in a globalized world

COO-effect seems to have a growing impact. This is due to a number of factors, mentioned by Phau and Chao (2008). These are the growing globalization of our economic system, the continuous confrontation

with product scares in all parts of the world and the global mindset customers are gradually developing due to the availability of information on large scale and via very simple social and other globalized media.

Impacts of the increasing pace of globalization over the last few years are being felt throughout the world, as mentioned in the previous paragraph. In spite of the positive and negative effects this might have on welfare, multinational corporations are forced to pursue a global strategy increasing the number of hybrid products, whose countries-of-origins are no longer easy to identify and the effects of which on consumers have been reported (Chao, 2001).

In light of the recent developments including food scares and product safety issues, COO cues have become an important issue for more consumers throughout the world. Whereas COO influences might have been absolutely unimportant for a vast majority of consumers in the past, these recent events have certainly heightened their sensitivity to this particular variable. Nowhere is this more evident than in the land where most of the recent cases originated: China (Chao, 2006) and in Europe, where the attention specifically for food safety has become a major political issue.

Through a vast number of sources – such as the media, technology, internet, advertising, and travel – people discover what it means to be a global citizen. Being a global citizen has many connotations, but in this context, it is a person who lives in this world of converging cultures and international products (Holt et al. 2004). In this respect, the term “Global mindset” explains how individuals’ reactions to an international product offering are formulated through their worldview, a set of beliefs and orientations that we refer to as the “mindset” of an individual about much more countries than ever before (Cleveland and Laroche, 2007).

Consumer product information processing may also be influenced by strong consumer sentiments triggered by various international events such as anti-whaling campaigns against Japanese fishermen and the backlash against American products in the Middle East due to the war in Iraq, etc. as recent examples. This will of course greatly influence the perceptions of consumers about products produced, assembled or designed in these countries, certainly among those customers directly interested in the issues mentioned. Chinese consumers’ call in 2008 for instance for boycotting Carrefour, the French retailer in China in response to the disruption of Olympics torch relay in Paris by French citizens is the most recent case in point (Phau and Chao, 2008). As new world events unfold and new issues continue to evolve on the world stage, it is to be expected that new COO research will have to address these issues as well.

2.1.2. Overview of research about the country-of-origin effect

There are three types of studies on COO: (1) studies dealing with consumers’ perceptions about various countries in general; (2) studies looking at the different factors influencing the country-of-origin effect; and (3) studies examining the impact of country image on consumers’ product evaluations and

purchases. In this paragraph we will mainly give an overview of the second and third strain in the literature. The first one was already mentioned when we defined the COO-effect in paragraph 2.1.1.1. We do not talk about the studies investigating partitioned COO on consumers' product evaluations, thus making distinctions between country-of-design and country-of-manufacturing and country-of-origin effects (Biswas et al., 2011) any more either as we have dealt with them in paragraph 2.1.1.2. The two remaining issues (numbers 2 and 3 above) will be the subsections of this paragraph.

2.1.2.1. Factors influencing the Country-of-origin effect

Research has studied several "antecedents" of the country-of-origin affect, which is influencing factors.

First, demographic variables of the customers seem to play an important role. Gurhan-Canli and Maheswaran (2000) have found that the COO-effect is much stronger felt by people who are aged, less educated and politically conservative. In these groups ethnocentrism plays a larger role leading to a less positive attitude and feeling about foreign products. These are considered of lesser quality. This was later confirmed by Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2004) in their study on the influence of ethnocentrism on COO. Gender also seems to explain some COO-effects in more masculine cultures (Samiee et al., 2005).

Second, a number of cultural variables influence the COO as well. The larger the similarity between the culture of the consumer and the culture of origin of the product, the more the COO seems to be positive (Laroche et al., 2003). Orth and Firtasova (2003) explored the end of this scale and found that ethnocentricity, the fact that you consider your own culture as superior to others, to be highly significant as a predictor for COO. Ethnocentricity increased the influence of some demographic variables when studied in conjunction with them. No real research has been performed as of yet to investigate the influence of the different cultural dimensions as described by Hofstede on the country-of-origin effect (Pharr, 2005)

A third variable that was found to be influencing the country-of-origin effect is motivational intention and information processing by the customer. Gurhan-Canli and Maheswaran (2000) followed an information processing approach and found motivational intensity, information processing goals, and product information to impact COO evaluations by affecting the number and type of country-of-origin related thoughts about products and services consciously used by individuals. Specifically, when consumers intentionally focused on the country of origin and received new information dispersed across several of the country's products, they were more likely to consider the information and give positive COO evaluations. On the other hand, when consumers did not initially focus on the country of origin but focused instead on other brand attributes or beliefs, country of origin information was not used in their judgments (Hong and Wyer, 1990).

Fourthly, country stereotypes are also important. Liu and Johnson (2005) found "country stereotypes" to significantly influence COO evaluations and that such stereotypes appear to be spontaneously activated by the mere presence of country-of-origin information in the external environment even when

participants' intentions to use the information when forming product or country judgments was very low. This suggests that the idea of 'country of origin' is complex and encompasses symbolic and emotional components as well as cognitions. In other words, country-of-origin evaluations may stem not only from country-specific beliefs or cognitions but also from one's emotions or feelings toward a country (Pereira et al., 2005; Pharr, 2005).

2.1.2.2. Factors influenced by the country-of-origin effect

Various studies have been conducted to understand how the COO effect could influence perceptions about products. Impacts have been measured on quality perceptions, brand image and brand equity. Of these the impact on quality perceptions is the most important one. Country-of-origin effects mainly act as a signal of product quality, influence consumers' perceptions of risk and value, and directly affect the likelihood of purchase and the purchase intentions (Kramer et al., 2008).

Kramer et al. (2008) found out that consumers perceive products from countries high in competence (like Germany or Japan for instance) to be relatively more utilitarian and from countries high in warmth (like France, Greece and Thailand for instance) to be relatively more hedonic. Jo (2005) in her study demonstrated that, in the case of weak brands, COO could act as dominant quality cue.

Supanvanij and Amine (2000) have concluded that branded products with a less favorable COO image do not lose their advantage when compared to the branded products with a more favorable COO image. Thus brand image offers a kind of protection against negative COO information. Specifically, brands with initial higher quality images are susceptible to a smaller degree of quality "discounting" (negative changes in quality perceptions) even when associated with countries having a reputation for lower quality (Jo et al., 2005).

These effects vary from product category to product category. Piron (2000) found COO had a significant impact on purchase intentions when considering luxury products and conspicuous (publicly-consumed) goods. There were no significant effects when testing COO evaluations for necessities or privately consumed goods. The researcher concluded that 'product type' has the ability to moderate COO's effect on purchase intentions in some cases. The same is true for product familiarity. Both Lin and Kao (2004) and Insch and McBride (2004) have found that familiarity with the product increases the significance of the COO information positively for more complex products that are irregularly bought and negatively for frequently bought simple products.

Finally, several studies show that consumers' involvement level (high versus low) and involvement type (situational versus enduring) moderates the effect of COO on product quality evaluations (Ahmed et. al. 2004; Lee et al., 2005) as well. The higher and more enduring the involvement level is, the more COO-information and cues become important for customers when evaluating the purchase risk linked to the quality perceptions of the products.

Several empirical studies indicate that the COO effect loses its strength when purchase intentions, and not quality perceptions, serve as a dependent variable (Josiassen, Lukas, and Whitwell 2008; Verlegh

and Steenkamp 1999); indeed, “COO has significantly lesser impact as consumers move closer to the actual purchase situation from belief formation regarding the relative quality of brands” (Agrawal and Kamakura 1999, p. 256). This was later confirmed by Hui and Zhou (2002). COO as a cue has a direct effect on quality perceptions, but influences purchase intention indirectly through perceived value, which in turn influences purchase intentions. This model has been confirmed later by Cervino, Sanchez, and Cubillo (2005). Summarily these studies confirm Peterson and Jolibert's (1995) earlier suspicions that COO evaluations have little or no direct influence on purchase intentions.

But in spite of the acknowledged importance of COO effects and the wealth of studies enumerated, the price-related consequences of COO-effects remain largely neglected, such that “very little is known regarding the influence of COO on pricing decisions” (Agrawal and Kamakura 1999, p. 257).

We will try to give a more detailed overview of the studies executed so far in the next paragraph. We detail this issue more than the previous ones because it is directly related to the problem statement we put forward in Chapter 1.

2.1.3. The relationship between COO and price as a variable

Most research on the COO-effect is related to the quality of the products customers are evaluating before choosing or buying them. Focusing on price rather than quality evaluations or purchase intentions as a dependent variable would however offer a stricter test of COO-effects because price represents “the amount of money we must sacrifice to acquire something we desire”. Focusing on price would moreover allow for the “monetization” of the COO-effect (Nebenzahl and Jaffe, 1993) because it would reveal the extent to which consumers’ perceptions of different COOs are reflected in the differences in the amount that those consumers are prepared to pay for products associated with each COO.

In this context, “intuitively, it should be self-evident that, *ceteris paribus*, a country having a better image than others, especially as a source for a product, has a comparative advantage that should translate to economic value”.

The relationship between COO and price is however clearly not very well understood until now.

Most research studies have found COO to be relatively weak or insignificant variable in explaining either product evaluations or purchase intentions, certainly when investigating the combined influence of price and brand name on them. Price information seems to be more important than COO information when both are known to buyers in some studies (Ahmed et al. 2004; Lin and Kao 2004). Other studies however suggest that price and COO interact to influence consumers' product quality evaluations, but neither of the two variables produces a significant individual influence (Miyazaki, Grewal, and Goodstein 2005). The study of Hui and Zhou (2002) finally suggests that, while price may directly affect purchase intentions, COO does not—although COO can affect the same consumers' perceptions of product “value”.

In contrast to these studies, Teas and Argawal (2000) found COO to directly affect product quality perceptions significantly. They also found that this effect was increased when the quality perception was interacting with the product related variables of price and brand name. While price showed the strongest influence on quality perceptions, brand name and COO were virtually identical in the amount of influence they had, but both were significant.

The evidence of research so far is thus is rather inconclusive.

Research on variable consistency may explain these contradictory results (Miyazaki, Grewal, and Goodstein 2005, Speece and Nguyen 2005). Findings from these studies suggest COO information interacts with price to significantly influence product quality evaluations only when the cues are consistent. When the COO is negative or weak, high prices seem to have no significant impact on product quality perceptions. Similarly, when the price is low, strong positive COO information has no significant product quality effect. When tested together the two variables had to be consistent to produce a significant effect. The authors suggest that inconsistency between the variables of price; brand and COO have led to the differences observed in the results of previous studies. Thus, when a set of different variables influencing consumer perceptions and behavior are present in the research approach, their influence is interactive only when they offer a consistent pattern to the customer (Miyazaki, Grewal, and Goodstein 2005). And then their interactive influence seems to be larger than the individual one as well. This signifies that high quality and the image of a country producing top level products is fortified by a higher price whereas the opposite is also true, which is exactly what we intuitively expected to be the case, as mentioned in the first part of this paragraph.

More recent research attempts have been made in this area to verify this. These research ventures are trying to link the COO and related effects to the willingness to pay by the consumer and to the value customers perceive in the offer made (Han et al., 2001). The major findings of these studies indicate that consumer affinity with the origin of a product is more powerful than consumers' ethnocentric tendencies and other factors in explaining both the perceived purchasing risk and the willingness to spend money that is to buy (Oberecker and Diamantopoulos, 2011). Biswas and Chowdhury (2011) indicated identical results for industrialized nations on the level of COD, COA and COP. This last result is very significant because the COO-image of developing nations which is lower than the one for developed nations did produce an inverse tendency to exaggerate the perception of risk in the eyes of the customers and thus diminished the willingness to buy considerably. These results are in line with what one could expect based on the previously mentioned studies of Miyazaki et al. (2005).

Koschate-Fisher et al. (2012) finally used experimental research to find that in three different studies a high quality COO indeed had a positive impact on the willingness to pay by the customer. Furthermore, the authors found a negative moderating influence of brand familiarity on the COO effect in a high-involvement setting but not in a low-involvement setting, where brands obviously play a lesser role in the eyes of customers. This signifies that for well-known high involvement brands like cars or fashion, a

high quality COO does not only explain the willingness to pay more by customers, the brands helps as well.

Although the evidence is not always pointing in the same direction, we can thus safely conclude that if the COO-effect is linked to countries perceived as high quality countries and brands with a high perceived equity, the effect to pay a larger price is certainly valid in consumers' attitude and behavior vice versa. When however prices and quality influences are not completely in line with one another, such as for instance with quality products coming from developing or less well known nations, the effect seems to get somewhat lost or blurred. This conclusion is one of the basic ideas we want to test in a tourist setting of a nation situated in a region in turmoil of which the overall image with customers, rightly or wrongly, is not necessarily positive or at least linked to sentiments of uncertainty, anxiety or fear.

All the studies mentioned in this section unfortunately looked at the COO-effects in markets offering tangible products of which the quality perception is more simple to measure than in the case of services. For services, more complex factors affect the quality perception of the customers, such as the quality of the staff and the way in which they interact with the customer and the attitude of other customers as well. This is directly linked to what researchers recently have come to call the "service oriented perspective" or "service dominant logic" in marketing. In this view the customers co-produce the final product with the service provider (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). It does not necessarily see the customer as a source of value and ideas, but rather as a resource to be managed next to internal resources. But nowadays, a good dominant marketing logic arguably does not limit the mind-set for seeing the opportunities for co-creation of value with customers and other stakeholders of the firm (Gronroos, 2011).

We are going to look at this phenomenon in a different way, namely by looking at the co-creation of value by the different stakeholders in a setting where the service provided to the tourist customer is the result of the cooperation of a set of different co-creators, all involved in offering an adequate service value to the customer. The customer will co-create partially, but the major stakeholders are governments, accommodation providers, tourist guides and tourist sites offering different things to live and feel at a certain destination. These stakeholders and their specific role will be mentioned in paragraph 2.2.

2.1.4. Country-of-origin effects and studies on services

In paragraph 2.1.2 we mentioned that most studies effectuated so far relate directly to tangible products and that services have been largely neglected in the country-of-origin literature. In this paragraph we try to summarize results of research pertaining to this specific product category. Some researchers have in the past pinpointed at the lack of studies so far and recognize that country-of-origin effects should be examined in relation to services separately (Harrison-Walker, 1995; Javalgi, Cutler and Winans, 2001).

The relationship between country-of-origin and services appears to be similar to that between country-of-origin and products. The effects on quality perception (Ahmed et al., 2002) and purchase intention are identical.

Harrison-Walker (1995) found that the selection of a service provider is dependent on the interaction between service provider nationality and consumer nationality, most of the consumers preferring same-nationality service providers. In general, services that are offered from foreign countries with a high quality can attract a lot of customers although service differs in the necessary level of contact with customers. Kellogg and Chase (1995) have found that services that need a high level of contact show a high level of emotional intensity and intimacy in interaction, such as tourism. While the level of emotional intensity and intimacy is low in the service that needs low contact services such as the one between a bank teller and a customer. In general, they are subject to ethnocentricity and customers will always prefer national services over foreign ones. Thus the COO has a negative effect on purchase intentions (Javalgi et al., 2001).

While the existence of COO effects has already been proven in various settings, only three studies compare COO effects across different service settings.

Pecotich et al. (1996) show that service quality perceptions are influenced by the COO of services and that the level of economic development of the analyzed countries contributes positively to the evaluation of service quality. Using airlines and banks as research models, they found a significant COO-effect for both service categories. Moreover, results revealed potential differences between the strength of COO-effects across different service settings. Using existing brands, however, the effects could not be linked to the service category. Apparently the effect of brands is larger on the evaluation of the expected service quality.

Li and Chen (2006) investigated COO-effects on purchase intentions by service customers and found a significant effect for both catering services (low involvement) and insurances (high involvement). In these cases, corporate reputation and COO differ in nature. Corporate reputation can be influenced by a company itself, but to gain positive effects of COO, companies must rely on the behavior of an entire society or country. With respect to COO, the authors also found that managers have freedom to maneuver. The question of interest is whether they want to make use of the COO as a signal for quality or, in the case of a negative country image, to disguise it.

Finally, Michaelis et al. (2008) investigated the effect of COO information on the perceived risk associated with the buying and consuming of services. They found that company (or brand) reputation and the level of risk associated with the service (high for insurances and low for telecommunications) have an important influence on the trust initially felt by the customer. However, a high COO leads to a higher level of initial trust in all situations.

2.2. Destination branding and the role of the different stakeholders

In this paragraph we will look at destination branding as the basis for any tourist marketing strategy for a country like Jordan. We will first look at the perspective we will take and then focus on the difficulties with which destination marketing is facing in general. In a third section of this paragraph we try to identify the stakeholders involved in the marketing process of a destination before finally looking into the best way to develop such a destination marketing strategy and plan.

2.2.1. Destination branding or nation branding approach?

In our dissertation we are looking at the venture of marketing the tourist image of a country, Jordan in this case. Within the marketing context, this is related to the creation of a country image in the eyes of customers. Country branding literature thus has to be investigated within the destination or tourist marketing literature. There is a lot of confusion about this.

On the one hand, there is a “destination branding” approach. Literature in this field tells us that the branding experience of tourist destinations is applicable to cities, regions, nations and even singular places (Baker and Cameron, 2008). In that respect destination branding refers to “cultural heritage branding” (ex. cultural heritage of cities in Italy), “place branding” (ex. cities as a whole or directly linked to singular points of interest such as the Burj Khalifa in Dubai or the Atomium in Brussels), “region branding” (ex. Shakespeare country in the South-West of the UK or South Tyrol in the North of Italy) and “country or nation branding” (campaigns to promote Macedonia, Jordan or any country...) and is very well influenced by a number of influencing factors, such as the general image a nation portrays to the outside world.

On the other hand the “nation branding” approach takes a vaster perspective (Anholt, 2007) in which tourism will be considered one of the different elements of the image of a nation. In that respect a nation's identity is not only linked to tourism indeed. Kaneva (2011) clearly indicates that nation branding will often be a combination of technical elements (products produced in the country and their image, which is closely related to the country-of-origin effect talked about in paragraph 2.1.), economic elements (to which the tourist sector and its portrayed image belong), political approaches (such as for instance the image a nation portrays in terms of human rights, democracy, corruption and political stability) and cultural elements (for example the role antiquities but also modern architecture might play in it and in its most diverse form, thinking for instance of the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao or the Golden Age, Van Gogh and Anne Frank in the history of Amsterdam).

In cooperation with market research organizations, several “nation brand indices” have thus been proposed, such as the GfK-Anholt NBI index¹ and the Bloomberg BCI-index².

¹ Conducted annually, the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index measures the image of 50 countries, with respect to Exports, Governance, Culture, People, Tourism and Immigration/Investment (the famous hexagon of Anholt

Both approaches are of course complementary as the difference lies in which are part of which. For this dissertation this “nation branding” approach would have the disadvantage to be too vast and to blur the tourist destination approach we have taken when stating our research questions. We will thus limit ourselves to “the destination branding approach”.

2.2.2. The difficulties of destination branding

Tourism managers have long understood that marketing a tourist destination is a difficult enterprise. Scientific literature about the subject is rising rapidly and has taken the view that since tourism is a service, the importance of the involvement of both service providers and service consumers is necessary. This is a logical consequence of the fact that within the “service dominant logic” in marketing (Vargo and Lush, 2004), the final product is co-created by both the consumer and the service personnel involved in offering the service to customers (Gronroos, 2011).

The difficulties in destination branding are situated in different fields. One can subdivide them in difficulties related to the supply side of the tourist offering and difficulties related to the demand side of the offering.

On the supply side of the equation there is first of all the extreme competitiveness of destination among one another. Thus destination marketing and branding should first take under consideration the importance of differentiating the destination from those many of competitors offering the same or equivalent features (Buhalis, 1999).

This differentiation process is psychological in nature since customer’s ideas about destinations are perceptions they form on the basis of the information inputs they get or gather and on the interpretation they form from them based on their purpose when travelling, their past experiences and their educational level. Guaranteeing that attractive sites (such as Petra and Jerash in Jordan) and locations (such as Mount Nebo or the Baptism Site in Jordan), landscapes and sea resorts (such as Wadi

(2007). Every year the researched nations are changed so that every nation is measured bi-annually, with some exceptions. For the 2013 study, a total of 20,445 online interviews were conducted in 20 developed and developing countries with adults age 18 or over. The most up-to-date online population parameters were used to weight the achieved sample in each country, to reflect key demographic characteristics such as age, gender and education of the 2013 online population in that count. The last full overview available is the 2010 overview in which Jordan ranks 75, well below the UAE (28), and Oman (57) and Morocco (60), but in the same league as Saudi Arabia (69), Qatar (70), Lebanon (71) and Bahrain (80). Belgium is ranked by the way as 34th. The influence of economic factors in the measurement is very large.

² According to Bloom Consulting there are 6 different objectives: Experience, Lifestyle, Admiration, Respect, Uniqueness and Advantage, and these can be seen in the Bloom Consulting Country, Region and City Branding Brand Wheel. Annually between 15,000 and 20,000 consumers fill in the enquiry on-line. In the BCI- ranking, Jordan stood on rank 60 in 2012. Saudi Arabia (29), Oman (29) and Lebanon (41) rank much higher in the Middle East, but other countries like Bahrain (77), Qatar (78) and Oman (88) are ranked lower. Belgium is ranked as 28th. The importance of the economy and life-style is larger, but also the political stability and respect for human rights as in the GfK-Anholt measurement.

Rum and the Dead Sea Jordan) are presented in a superior way is quite a challenge in this competitive environment.

Marketers should moreover be aware of the political and economic situation of the destination. Specifically under crisis conditions, the marketing decisions will be difficult. They might be situated at the supply side and then influence the business activity of the tourist market itself (as is the case in the Middle East) or at the demand side and then influence the spending pattern of customers (as was often the case in the last five or six years in Western Europe after the banking crisis) (Buhalis, 1999).

Moreover tourists and travelers have many different needs. This demand side phenomenon makes it paramount to offer to the global market, which is very dynamic, indeed a multi-attributed destination that offers more than just the destination. Buhalis (1999) speaks of the different attributes of a tourist destination as if it was a different marketing mix and uses a set of words, all starting with the letter A.

The multi-attributed tourist offering thus comprises:

- Attractions (natural features, man-made or artificial and heritage);
- Accessibility (the entire transportation system, terminals, road and rail access, local transportation and so on...);
- Amenities (accommodation and catering facilities);
- Activities (all activities available at the destination and what consumers will do during their visit, sports accommodation, leisure time offerings and so on...) and
- Ancillary services (services used by tourists such as banking services, telecommunication and mail services).

Not all these elements of the offering are presented to customers by the same companies. In fact many stakeholders are involved in bundling a full offering. Managing destinations is thus more difficult because of the difficulties in the interaction between these various sales companies or stakeholders and because of the variety of the stakeholders involved in the development and production of the tourist product. Their strategic interests and objectives can be different and often even conflicting. As the strategies and plans have to cover almost most of the needs of most of stakeholders, managing destinations is very complex (Buhalis, 1999). This difficulty is situated somewhere between the demand and the supply side of the offering.

Finally, the travel market is not one unified market. It offers different segments with different needs. The major distinction often made is the difference between tourist travel and business travel. But nowadays this distinction gets somewhat blurred, certainly when it comes to the business travel market. Business people might travel for the purpose of pleasure, sightseeing and for doing business at the same time, since they can save time and money in this way. So it becomes harder to segment the behavior of the customers and the activities they will like most. Yet for the companies on the supply side, the rewards and the profits earned can be very different indeed. The price sensitivity of tourist customer is somewhat higher than the price sensitivity of the business traveler and the accessory services wanted

are different. On average leisure travelers are more prices flexible and promotions and the advertising by the travel intermediaries will have a larger effect (Buhalis, 1999).

2.2.3. Stakeholder's involvement in the place marketing process

Since the tourist offering is complex (see previous paragraph) and multi-attributed, many different stakeholders have a big role in the creation, the development and ultimately the ownership of place brands. That's why it is important to have stakeholder who actively participates in the strategic and practical definition of destination marketing and destination branding. This paragraph will emphasize and focus on the reasons why stakeholder's involvement is crucial for place branding to be successful (Kavaratzis, 2012).

There are a lot of factors that show the importance of the involvement of stakeholders in destination branding. In fact, a lot of the place branding frameworks presented in literature is based on determining the role that stakeholders play in place branding. According to Hankinson (2004) place branding necessitates a set of working and positive relationships with different stakeholder groups, who will be involved in spreading the core values of the place brand. Stakeholders therefore need to understand many aspects of the destination in order to be able to define their own significance and place in the development of the destination brand. Some of these aspects are cultural in nature, give places their identity, their role, rights, responsibilities and relationships. (Kavaratzis, 2012)

The Ministry of Antiquities in Jordan has published a graph on the different stakeholders influencing the destination branding of Jordan. We present it in Figure (2.1), also influencing institutions such as educational institutions and government are involved; all is it from a farther distance than the companies and organizations directly involved in offering the product service to the visitors.

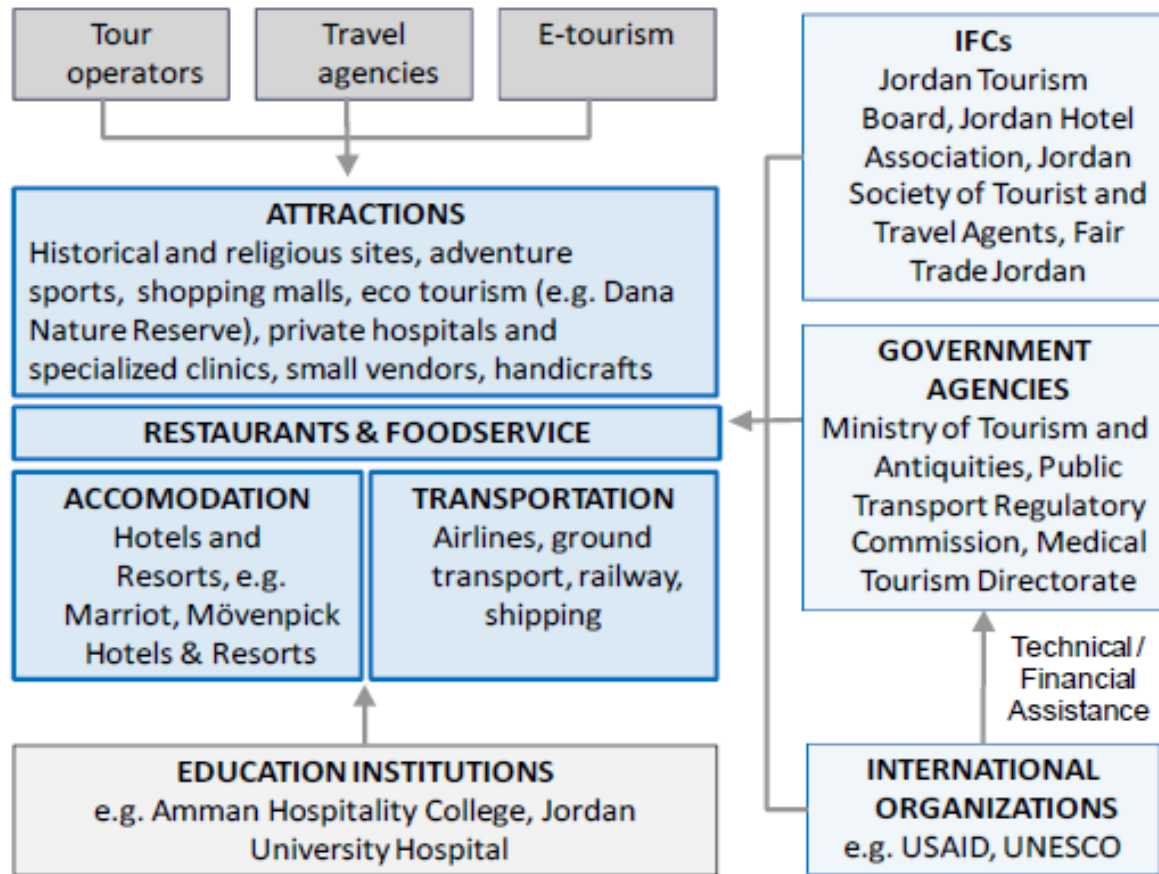


Figure (2. 1): stakeholders in the destination branding of Jordan (Ministry of Antiquities, 2009, p.19)

Multiple stakeholders such as visitors, media, government agencies, residents, institutions and customers play thus a big role in the place branding practice. The aim of place or destination branding practice is to reach the point where a single destination identity is defined in such a way that shows how it is relevant to several audiences so that they become convinced that the place or destination is relevant to them.

In order to achieve these aim different stakeholders will have to be focusing jointly on the communication of the destination brand using logos, slogans and advertising campaigns that are interrelated. We may also not forget the role of the residents and the local community in promoting and marketing the place since they are part of the place and they are accountable for any communicated message about the destination as they are the reality of it. Unfortunately they are often underestimated to some extent in this destination branding effort. Thus they might be projecting different values ruin a whole interrelated marketing package. This implies the necessity of reconsidering the role and participation of them as stakeholders (Kavaratzis, 2012). It is very striking that they are not mentioned by the Ministry of Antiquities in Jordan either by the way.

Three major consequences of this multiple stakeholder approach have to be mentioned here. First, the brand is thus co-created by a multitude of people who encounter and appropriate them. Second the involvement of stakeholders in commercial branding is necessary in order to allow stakeholders to freely be part in creating the brand, (Kavaratzis, 2012). Thirdly, in order to add an economic, environmental and social long term value to the destination brand it is important to have strong relationships with both the private and the public sector. Some of the reasons used to encourage more stakeholders to participate are that they will share and benefit from the knowledge, expertise and resources of their multiple partners which will have a strong influence on their own product development and brand quality (Hankinson, 2009). This last element becomes evident if we look at Figure (2.1).

Finally, the growing importance of online activities is another reason that emphasizes the importance of stakeholders' involvement in place branding. Electronic communication includes internet, online communities, promotions and Web 2.0 applications that support to a large extent the participation of stakeholders in building a uniform image for a certain tourist destination. As Florek (2011, p. 83) states: "Web 2.0 provides services that invite users to engage directly and participate strongly " and "with the advent of user-generated content, every individual might potentially influence the way in which [a place] is perceived and evaluated". This makes sense if the destination branding concept used also involves the active participation of customers (Kavaratzis, 2012) as stakeholders. But so far, this has not been incorporated in any of the stakeholder frameworks in literature.

2.2.4. Tourist destinations: an "integrated" marketing approach, supported by the different stakeholders

Strategic marketing planning is essential to the development of a unified stakeholder approach to destination branding. It tries to create a long-term competitive advantage on the basis of research about global travel tendencies and customer experiences. A proactive and appropriate strategic destination marketing planning process identifies the development objectives and visions, evaluates the target markets through market research and uses market segmentation to maximize return on investment. It determines methods and tools used for each planned action and finally needs to plan the feedback procedure (Baker and Cameron, 2008).

Different aspects should be taken under consideration when developing a marketing strategy and plan for a destination. This paragraph will concentrate on the different aspects that will help in developing an appropriate marketing plan and strategy.

This is in fact a strategic marketing planning process involving both internal and external factors and in which all stakeholders should be satisfied. Moreover, this regional development strategic plan, as it is often called, should also monitor the visitation of the destination and observe the impact that might occur such as overcrowding, environmental problems, visitor safety and security and sensitivity to local culture. This shows that, implementation, monitoring and review are important aspects of a strategic destination tourism plan (Baker and Cameron, 2008).

Destination brand equity is the main objective to be developed in an effective way by such a plan using an appropriate strategy since it reflects the benefits and values that consumers receive by preferring one destination brand over another, which leads to long term competitive advantages. Each destination will try to offer advantages that the other destinations are not offering, benefits which are truly desired by customers. Therefore the more different is the plan and strategy used in destination marketing the more the image of the destination will be different from the image of its competitors. One purpose for differentiating the destination image is to attract customers and create a relationship with them. This connection won't be established unless the destination brand is unique, believable, exciting and convincing to the customers since these elements will lead to create an emotional bond with those customers. There are different possibilities to do so. An example is a highly focused communication campaign such as the "I love NY" campaign. Branding is the most important element in any such marketing plan. Therefore, destination brand building is crucial for developing a destination marketing plan. Destination brand building includes a strategic orientation as it tries to create an identity and image for the destination (Baker and Cameron, 2008) and as it tries to this taking the strengths and weaknesses of itself and competitive destinations into consideration.

Cai (2002) has developed a framework for the development of an integrated brand image for tourist destinations. It is based on the view that also for corporate brands the best ones reflect the corporate values and are rooted in the cultural values of the organization as a whole and acknowledged by both external stakeholders and the organization's staff. In the framework of Cai (2002) brand elements are chosen to identify the place and to start the formation of brand associations that reflect the attributes (the perceptual tangible and intangible features of the place), affective (personal value and benefits attached to the attributes) and attitudes (overall evaluation and motivation for action) components of an image.

These elements have to be *"a shared reality, dynamically constructed through social interaction"* (Ballantyne and Aitken, 2007, p. 365). The co-production of brand meanings by the different stakeholders thus shifts brand ownership from the managerial and legalist sphere of intellectual property rights and trademarks to all the actors in an organization (Payne et al., 2009), as mentioned in the previous section 2.2.3. Therefore, the development of a brand strategy based on a co-created experience empowers the community of stakeholders with all the necessary decisions around the brand's image (Prideaux and Cooper, 2002). For place brand managers this requires a more inclusive, integrative and comprehensive approach to identify the processes that constitute the development of a brand, which actively involves the stakeholders.

Prideaux and Cooper (2002) thus argue that destination marketing should occur not only on the demand side to increase visitor numbers, but also on the supply side to market the destination to intermediaries and to increase the numbers of sellers through investment in accommodation, entertainment and infrastructure, etc... Baker and Cameron (2008) however, note that the supply side of destination marketing is an under researched area, as opposed to demand side marketing. Baker (2007) elsewhere suggests that it is the conflicting voices of different stakeholder groups that contribute to the place brand, arguably adopting a brand-as-dialogue approach. This is emphasized by Houghton and Stevens

(2011, p.52) who conclude that the value of engaging stakeholders lies precisely in the fact that it is difficult and challenging “because it generates disagreement and debate, and from that new perspectives and ideas”.

Hankinson (2007) and Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2009) have indicated five guiding principles along which this supply side marketing effort should be coordinated and integrated and in doing so overcome some of the difficulties mentioned before (overlap of activities, coordination between public and private partners, administrative overlap and accountability specifically with regard to the public partners). These guidelines are:

1. Clear vision of leadership.

Somebody has to co-ordinate the marketing efforts. Rainisto (2003) asserts that this should be a public-private partnership. Konecnik and Go (2008) have indicated that in the case of a country like Slovenia this role has been appointed to a manager with experience in the private sector but employed by a government organization, in this case the Ministry of Tourism. The major advantage of such a model is that at least a common perspective can be developed and through negotiations with the different stakeholders as much as possible followed. Another example in literature (Mishra, 2010) is Hong Kong. Similar leadership roles are described as for Slovenia. Of course, this is not a one person effort. The responsible ‘brand manager’ should get enough resources that is money to spend and staff, at his or her disposal (Fan, 2010).

2. A brand oriented culture has to be created.

Through a process of information provision, training and mentoring, the beliefs, values and behavioral norms associated with the destination brand must be embedded in the hearts and minds of the employees of the various stakeholders (Hankinson, 2007). The importance of “internal audiences” for effective branding is thus recognized and efforts are made to involve these audiences as well (Kavaratzis, 2012). The role of education may thus not be underestimated. In service marketing terms, this is pretty equal to the development of a proper “internal marketing” (Gronroos, 2011) effort by which the service providers are prepared to portray one image only to customers.

3. Process co-ordination and alignment.

Developing agreements about the destination’s brand values can be achieved through established committees and working parties in which individual partners are represented (Hankinson, 2009; Hatch and Schulz, 2009). In that respect Kavaratzis (2012) speak of “participatory branding” efforts. It recognizes the necessity to allow stakeholders to freely participate in and contribute to the creation of the brand and, therefore, the need for empowered stakeholders. The created larger transparency in the branding efforts will lead to a “shared responsibility’ for the nation’s brand.

4. The creation of a consistent communication pattern across the various stakeholders.

Some authors compare this venture with the development of a consistent communication pattern very difficult indeed. If the message has to pass via a number of people or organizations, the danger is definitely there that the information that finally reaches customers may be “polluted” a number of times.

The possibility that creating bridges with the public at large may be insufficient and ineffective is also present. This is due to the fact that the public is likely to disregard the messages if the sender lacks credibility or involvement (Aitken and Compalo, 2009). Widler (2007) speaks in this respect about the “nation-as-people” and not about the “nation-as-state”. She found that, whatever the message to the customers is, people and providers of tourist services should speak with one voice. The example in case is that Estonia while projecting itself as a homogenous nation and South-Africa projecting itself as a case of diversity both try to let all citizens speak about their country, nation and values in one and the same way. The fact that there is a saying in Jordan that when you visit Jordan, “all Jordanians travel with you” is a positive indication that this problem might not be very large in Jordan, probably due to the more collectivist nature of the local culture.

Also, if the stakeholders and officials are not ‘accountable’, they are more likely to disregard the messages as well.

5. Building strong compatible partnerships

A cooperative network between all the stakeholders has to be build (Baker and Cameron, 2008). This is necessary as the different stakeholders may have conflicting interests or think they are not really important in the destination branding venture, which might very well be the case for the many small and medium sized independent companies and services involved (Hankinson, 2007).

Since a chain is as strong as its weakest links, small deviations in the way the destination’s image is projected to the customers may have a large impact on the overall customer evaluation. An example is for instance that unreliability of a tour operator with regard to the hours indicated to customers for transportation may have as a consequence that some tourist attractions are closed when arriving and cannot be visited or the benefits of top accommodation cannot be enjoyed in full anymore because of late arrival in the hotel.

Ashworth and Kavaratzis finally (2009) indicate that the guiding principles are not to be regarded as stand-alone elements. They rather form one integrated package that has to be managed on all five levels to be successful, just as all the marketing elements in a simple marketing process also form an integrated effort.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

This chapter will discuss the research methodology of this thesis in a more detailed way. We will first discuss the methods we used and why they were used then unit of analysis. Next will show how the questionnaire was finally designed.

3.1. Research Methodology

In this paragraph we will indicate whether we use quantitative or qualitative research methods and what the unit of analysis is.

3.1.1. Research methods used

Taking into consideration the problem and the objective of this study, the best option for data collection is empirical research, which implies the gathering of primary data. In the process of collecting primary data an internet-based questionnaire was used as an instrument because it is an instrument capable of obtaining data in a very structured way. Moreover, very large amounts of data could be gathered given the size of the sample and at a relatively modest cost.

This also means that our research is mostly quantitative in nature. Quantitative methods use scientific methods to describe phenomena through collecting numerical data (Creswell, 1994). Quantitative data are indeed particularly useful to measure the willingness of the potential tourist to choose Jordan as a holiday destination and for which reasons the tourist chooses to do so or not. It is also an appropriate method for investigating whether Jordan is preferred as a holiday destination to comparable destinations offering similar types of holidays. This last comparison is necessary if we want to see whether the situation of Jordan as a country in an unstable region has an influence on the tourist's choice of destination, in spite of the fact that Jordan is one of the safest and most moderate countries in the whole Middle East.

For this aim we selected a number of potential tourist activities and attractions Jordan offers and looked for comparable alternatives. In that sense a visit to the Greek and Roman antiquities in Jordan (such as Jerash) was paired with a visit to ancient turkey, a beach holiday at Aqaba or at the Dead Sea was paired with a beach holiday in Hurghada, Egypt and a more adventurous trip to Wadi Rum (climbing the soaring sand stone towers as Esther Bott calls it) in the Southern desert of Jordan was paired with an adventure holiday in Arizona, USA. These pairings were based on the results of focus group interview about tourism to Jordan, of which the results will be discussed later in this chapter.

The first questions in the survey will be measured through using the nominal and ordinal measurement scale. The opinions, attitudes and values of the respondents will be measured using methods like Likert scales and semantic differentials (Echtner and Ritchie, 2003). A Likert scale can verify the value that the tourist customers attribute to some variables by identifying the level of agreement or disagreement on a

scale of an uneven number of possibilities for a number of statements. The importance of these tourism variables or attributes is measured on a five point Likert scale from “Not important at all” to “Of high of importance”. In the semantic differentiation scales the customers are confronted with statement on which they have to state their opinion.

To complete our research and answer the research questions the SPSS program will be used to help us in making independent t-test and chi-square test. Chi-square is a tool for significance testing which through this method we can address if there will be any relationship in the sample data we can figure, if the significant probability were less than (0.05) then we have a chi-square value which is significant. The independent t-test which is a statistical test that identify if there is a significant differences within the means of two unrelated groups which is in this study will be between any descriptive variables with any of the importance of criteria that potential tourist state when they want to travel to a destination. 95% and 90% confidence level will be used to indicate significant relationships. Adjusted standardized residuals will be calculated, which indicates how far off the observed numbers are from the expected numbers. If the value is greater than 2 would be considered significant, if less than -2 would be insignificant.

3.1.2. Unit of analysis

The study sample for this thesis contains people who are potential tourists to Jordan. The target group of the questionnaire is indeed the potential tourist who is faced with the difficulty of choosing a destination to make a holiday trip to. The major choice we will offer is Jordan or a similar destination offering similar tourist attractions or activities.

3.2. Design of the survey questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed in two stages. In order to have a good overview of the variables needed to be included, we first organized a focus group interview with potential travelers to Jordan. The objective of the focus group interview was to get an overview of the variables that play an important role when selecting a trip to Jordan and the expectations of the travelers with regard to their interplay. The data obtained were used to target the questions in the final questionnaire much better to the opinions of the potential tourists as expressed in the focus group interview.

3.2.1. The focus group interview

The travel agency Wagon Lits in Antwerp helped us in identifying six people willing to participate in the discussion. The focus group discussion took place in Antwerp in the offices of the travel agency (which also offered the six participants a bottle of wine as a present for their cooperation) and was organized in

both English and Dutch since not all participants could always express their ideas in a nuanced way in another language as their mother tongue Dutch. The co-promoter of this dissertation leads the discussion and intervened when Dutch was spoken. The focus group interview took place on May 23, 2014 in the late afternoon. It lasted about 65 minutes of which 10 were also devoted to the services of the travel agency itself and that were not relevant for our research.

The major results of the focus group interview with respect to our topic were the following.

When confronted with the idea of travelling to Jordan, a number of connections were mentioned: Petra, Aqaba and the desert (albeit not specific) which looks red from the film Lawrence of Arabia mentioned by two participants.

In general, traveling to Jordan was considered as something that is interesting to everyone. Since the country is not a European destination, the participants indicated they would prepare the trip in a more detailed way and try to find information on what to do, what to see, which problems they could face and normal prices. Contrary to a self-booking experience most participants would indeed prefer a booking via a travel agency to be surer about the bookings and avoid problems on the spot. Moreover they would resort to help from a travel agency since these would have presumably better opportunities to offer lower prices as individual bookings from Belgium were considered less interesting as not done in a group. Another reason for using the services of a travel agency in this case is avoiding language problems in Jordan and not being asked to pay for services that are in the package price included. Security did not figure high on the agenda of the tourists although they admitted that the region presents more danger than some others in the world.

The criteria the group of tourists mentioned as being important when having a choice between different countries comparable to Jordan were:

- Features of the landscape
- Special historical sites that could be visited
- Level of prices
- The climate
- The eventual possibility to have a few days of rest at attractive beaches in good resorts and to actively experience some things
- The friendliness of the people
- The level of security in the country
- The fairness of the prices
- The quality of tourist services availability

Three variables stand out when comparing tourist destinations: length of stay, type of accommodation and price.

The people in the focus group considered a travel of 7 days and 6 nights to Jordan to be optimal, with a potential extension of one week somewhere at a beach resort. Normal price feelings ranged from 699 € for 6 nights/7 days to something like 1099 € for two weeks, based on a four-star arrangement. It was in general acknowledged that some local trips might have to pay on site if very expensive or exclusive. The people who would have preferred a more active personal engagement would have accepted a three-star arrangement as well, but at a price of some 200 € lower.

The “star” arrangement in itself seems to play a very important role in the idea people seem to have about all the services actually offered. For instance a four or five star arrangement is always interpreted as amenities with air conditioning and swimming pool, a higher standard of food, but also better buses and more convenient accommodation during a day trip. The type arrangement seems to act as a trigger for all those services and can thus be used as a dummy variable for all of them.

Confronted with the possibilities of sightseeing and tourism in Jordan, people believed that Turkey and Egypt would be closest in terms of alternative and/or similar travel destinations, closely followed by Greece (when confronted with a picture of antiquities), the Bahamas (when confronted with a picture of a beach) or the USA (when confronted with a picture of Wadi Rum). A choice between Jordan and those alternative destinations would often lead to doubts about Jordan as a destination because of security concerns, given the troubles in Syria, Iraq and Israel. But not a single person wanted to say explicitly that Jordan would not be considered any more as Turkey and Greece were also considered not 100 % safe. In general, the willingness to travel to Jordan depends on the balance one can strike between on the one hand concerns and the other the uniqueness of what can be seen and visited or done.

The group also expanded on the idea of combining the travel with a trip to the holy places in Israel. Either a second week in Israel or a visit to Jordan starting from Israel (only three days maximum in Jordan) would in that case be preferred. It must be mentioned that not necessarily Israel, but more the attractiveness of Jerusalem in particular played a role here. This was at least mentioned by three of the six people present.

The supplementary activities people expect when traveling to a destination like Jordan are mostly filed under the term “sports”, but the word is something that covers many possible outcomes like just laying at a beach and swimming or diving, but also hiking or adventure trails. These last elements were mentioned only by one participant, the youngest of the focus group people.

3.2.2. The questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to reflect the results of the focus group interview and needed to be short and simple to fill out. It can be found in Appendix 1.

The questionnaire falls apart in two parts.

The first part is more general in nature and asks for identification of the respondent and the reasons for traveling to a destination like Jordan and what they perceive to be important to really enjoy their travel holiday. A question is also added that probes the real interest of the potential tourist and the ideal length of stay. Most of these questions are closed in the sense that the answers contain a number of categories or attributes, but offer no open reply option. We have chosen closed questions because we can get more standardized answers and with open questions the number of answers might be unlimited.

The second part of the questionnaire describes a kind of holiday that people can experience in Jordan and ask the respondents whether if exactly the same offer would be on in a competitive country which country they would select: Jordan or the other country. We added the answer option: it doesn't really matter because for some of the respondents the destination might not play a role at all. For the alternative countries to Jordan we have opted to talk about the competitors mentioned in the focus group interview (Turkey for visiting antiquities, Egypt for a beach holiday and USA for an adventure holiday in the desert). For each of the alternatives we have asked the question several times, changing some of the attributes of the offer like the price, length of stay and type of accommodation. This can give us an indication under which circumstances the situation of Jordan might play the largest role for tourists when choosing a travel destination in a competitive setting.

An English version of questionnaire was given to the potential customers using the online survey program on the internet by the help of travel agents.

We hope that in this way the questionnaire will gather both general information on the target group at first and also indicators of how the customers perceive the image of Jordan, the value that the country has in the customer's mind as a tourist destination and the prices customers are willing to pay when choosing to visit Jordan in comparison to competitive destinations and given the length of stay and type of accommodation.

Chapter 4 Research Findings

In this chapter we will summarize the most important elements of our research findings. We will first give an overview of the sample and its characteristics using descriptive statistics about the respondents. We will then look at the criteria the potential travelers find important when traveling to a destination like Jordan and see whether there is a relationship with the different descriptive characteristics of the sample. Finally, we will investigate whether there is a country-of-origin effect to be discovered for the three types of travel we investigated: cultural heritage travel, beach leisure holidays and outdoor sports holidays, where each time we compare Jordan to a nearby competitor mentioned in the focus group interview for a number of options.

4.1. Population and sample size

The target group of the research project was the potential tourist facing a choice of destination to travel to. One of the options was always Jordan. A questionnaire was given to the potential customers using the survey program on the internet. Online distribution of the questionnaire via travel agents was used. The travel agents were contacted by the author and the co-promoter on the basis of international friends and contacts and are situated in Belgium, Holland, Finland and Denmark. Most of the contacting was done via social media and personal calls. This helped a lot in targeting more respondents and respondents clearly interested in eventually travelling to Jordan. The choice of this contact via social media was made for reasons of cost advantage, but it was clearly a convenience sampling method that we used.

The data collection process was designed in such a way that it was very easy for the respondent to follow the process with minimum effort. The questionnaire was concise with clear written instructions for following the survey process correctly. The questionnaire was as such distributed to approximately 195 people. Travel agents involved send out one reminder only. In total 128 questionnaires were filled out by the recipients.

4.2. Questionnaire and data Management

The questionnaire was explicitly and logically designed to capture all the variables that were to be tested in the research on the basis of the major results of the focus group interview and along the lines presented in chapter 3.

The wording of questions was also clearly stated, with no ambiguous sentences. There was a concise explanation of how the respondent should tackle the completion process. In order to address the information needs of this research, different measurement scales were used. The measurement scale of choice was a 5-point Likert scale and a few ordinal and nominal scales were used for gender, age, monthly income, marital status, main purpose of traveling, kind of leisure activities and preferred length of stay at a tourist destination.

The analysis of the coded data was done using the SPSS software. Major data were collected on excel sheets to make work on it easier. The SPSS analysis contained several statistical tests of significance according to the type of data gathered, such as an independent t-test and a chi-square test.

4.3. Descriptive statistics of the sample

The results of the descriptive statistics are displayed in Table (4.1). Which shows the frequency distributions of the sample in terms of gender, age group, monthly income, marital status, main purpose of traveling to a destination like Jordan, kind of leisure activities and preferred length of stay at a tourist destination like Jordan. The table contains absolute values, percentages and cumulative percentages.

The frequency distributions particularly visualise the extent of non-response and outliers. Out of the 128 respondents, (59.4) percent were male and (40.6) were female. The majority of the respondents were between 35 and 54 years old, married and their income was mostly less than 1500 Euro. Moreover, (53.9) percent of respondents chose leisure as a main purpose of travelling. They also mostly preferred to stay one week at the place of destination.

Table (4.1) Descriptive statistics of the sample

Background Characteristics of Respondents	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender				
Male	76	59.4	59.4	59.4
Female	52	40.6	40.6	100.0
Total	128	100.0	100.0	
Age				
25-34	43	33.6	33.9	33.9
35-54	73	57.0	57.5	91.3
over 55	11	8.6	8.7	100.0
Total	127	99.2	100.0	
Monthly income				
less than 1500 euro	78	60.9	61.4	61.4
1500-3000 euro	39	30.5	30.7	92.1
more than 3000 euro	10	7.8	7.9	100.0
Total	127	99.2	100.0	127
Marital status				
Single	43	33.6	34.1	34.1
Married	76	59.4	60.3	94.4
Divorced	7	5.5	5.6	100.0
Total	126	98.4	100.0	
Main purpose of traveling				
Business	20	15.6	15.6	15.6
Leisure	69	53.9	53.9	69.5
Visiting friends/family	30	23.4	23.4	93.0
Studying	9	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	128	100.0	100.0	
Kind of leisure activities				
Visiting antiquities places	48	37.5	37.5	37.5
Diving in the sea	20	15.6	15.6	53.1
Challenging sports like climbing	15	11.7	11.7	64.8
Relaxing on the beach	45	35.2	35.2	100.0
Total	128	100.0	100.0	
Preferred length of stay				
less than week	14	10.9	11.0	11.0
one week	55	43.0	43.3	54.3
between one and two weeks	44	34.4	34.6	89.0
more than two weeks	14	10.9	11.0	100.0
Total	127	99.2	100.0	

4.4. Importance of criteria for choosing between travel destinations

We tried to find out how important some criteria were for the tourists when choosing a travel destination. Nine different criteria mentioned during the focus group interview were measured on a 5-point Likert scale in order to get to this result. The main results are shown in Table (4.2) and Figure (4.1) below.

Table (4.2) Average and standard deviation on a 5-point Likert scale of the importance of the different travel criteria

	Mean	Stand Deviation
Travel criteria		
Features of its landscape	3,5714	1,12687
Low prices	3,967	0,9481
Rich historical culture	3,6813	0,95311
The climate	3,8352	1,04630
Attractive beaches and good resorts	3,8556	1,04463
Friendly people	4,0989	0,89511
Level of security	4,4176	0,87007
Fair prices	4,1364	0,77581
The quality of tourists services	4,1209	0,92898

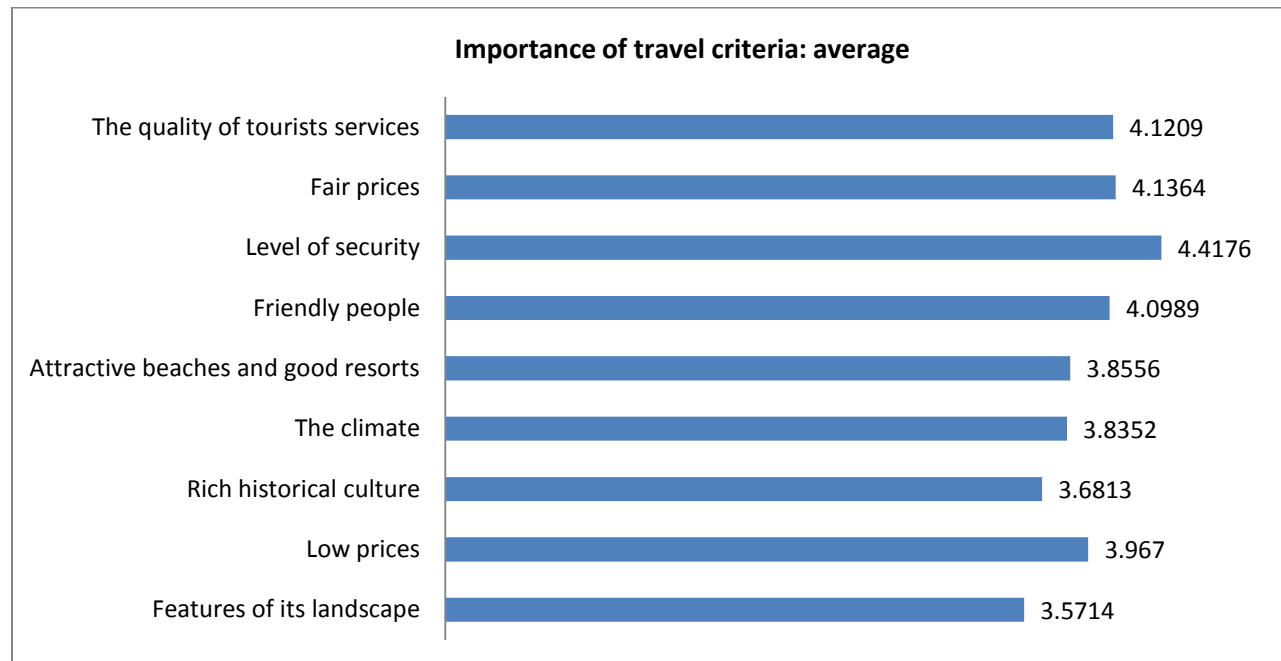


Figure (4. 2): Graph displaying the average of the importance of the different travel criteria in our sample

We can conclude that most criteria are considered to be fairly important, the lowest average being indeed (3, 5714) for features of the landscape. The most important criteria are clearly the level of security (average = 4, 4176), followed by fair prices (average = 4, 1364), quality of the tourist services (average = 4, 1209) and friendly people (average = 4, 0989). Since the standard deviation is mostly around 1, we can also say that in the group of respondents there will have been very few people that have indicated a low importance to any of the criteria. This can be checked in Appendix 2.

We wanted to know whether a relationship could be detected between the descriptive variables of the respondents in our sample and the importance of the travel criteria. To answer this question, an independent t-test was used on each combination of any of the descriptive variables with any of the variables of which the importance was measured. The results are shown in the next pages in Tables (4.3). They are based on the frequency tables presented in Appendix 3.

Tables (4.3) Indicates that on the 95 % confidence level only a few relationships between the descriptive variables of our sample and the importance of the travel criteria can be found in table (4.3) this significance level is indicated in bold and italics. They are:

- There is a significant relationship between gender and the importance of friendliness of people (women consider this to be more important than men, given the negative value of beta);
- There is a significant relationship between income of the respondents and the importance of low prices (the lower the income, the more low prices are important, given the negative value of beta);
- There is a significant relationship between income of the respondents and the importance of the level of security (the lower the income, the more the level of security is important, given the negative value of beta);
- There is a significant relationship between income and the importance of the climate at the destination (the higher the income, the less important the climate becomes, given the positive value of the beta);
- There is a significant relationship between the purpose of the travel and the importance of the climate on the destination (the more people want to travel for leisure, the more important the climate at the destination site is important, given the negative value of the beta);
- There is a significant relationship between the preferred length of stay and the importance of the attractiveness of the beaches and resorts (the longer the stay, the more important the attractiveness gets, given the positive value of the beta).

In social sciences research also the 90 % confidence level is often used to indicate significant relationships. If we take the significance levels of the t-test into consideration in Table (4.3) between the 95 and 90 % confidence level, a number of other relationships also become statistically relevant. We have indicated this significance level in Table (4.3) only in bold, but not in italics. At 90 % confidence level, there is consequently also a statistically significant relationship between:

- Age and the importance of low prices, attractive beaches and resorts and the level of security

(the older people are, the more important these elements become, given the negative values of the different betas);

- The marital status and the importance of the features of the landscape (the more people are single, the more importance they seem to attach to the features of the landscape, given the positive value of the beta);
- The purpose of the travel and the importance of the friendliness of the people and the quality of the tourist services (the more people travel for the purpose of leisure, the more these two factors become important, given the negative value of the beta); and
- The preferred length of stay and the importance of the quality of the tourist services (the shorter the preferred length of the travel, the more important this quality of services seems to be, given the negative value of the beta).
- The income and the importance of the fair price (the higher the income the higher the importance of fair prices, given positive value of the beta)

Tables (4.3) Results of the t-test on the relationship between the descriptive variables and the importance of the different travel criteria

	Gender					Age				
	Unstand.	Coeff.	Stand.	T	Sig.	Unstand.	Coeff.	Stand.	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			B	Std. Error	Beta		
Features of its landscape	0.011	0.042	0.026	0.263	0.793	0.068	0.053	0.125	1.280	0.203
Low prices	0.094	0.058	0.183	1.625	0.107	-0.130	0.073	-0.203	-1.777	0.078
Rich historical culture	-0.074	0.045	-0.163	-1.653	0.101	0.069	0.055	0.123	1.244	0.216
The climate	-0.008	0.056	-0.017	-0.149	0.882	0.036	0.069	0.059	0.518	0.606
Attractive beaches and good resorts	0.018	0.059	0.037	0.302	0.763	-0.124	0.074	-0.204	-1.677	0.096
Friendly people	-0.142	0.065	-0.237	-2.178	0.031	0.075	0.081	0.101	0.925	0.357
Level of security	-0.015	0.054	-0.030	-0.282	0.778	-0.134	0.068	-0.215	-1.954	0.053
Fair prices	0.095	0.076	0.152	1.251	0.214	0.128	0.094	0.167	1.367	0.174
The quality of tourists services	-0.042	0.061	-0.074	-0.682	0.497	0.077	0.076	0.110	1.005	0.317

(Continued)

	Income					Marital		Status		
	Unstand.	Coeff.	Stand.	T	Sig.	Unstan.	Coeff.	Stand.	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			B	Std. Error	Beta		
Features of its landscape	0.045	0.050	0.080	0.915	0.362	0.088	0.051	0.178	1.730	0.086
Low prices	-0.207	0.069	-0.309	-3.022	0.003	-0.012	0.069	-0.020	-0.167	0.868
Rich historical culture	-0.041	0.053	-0.069	-0.779	0.437	0.008	0.054	0.016	0.151	0.880
The climate	0.140	0.066	0.219	2.118	0.036	0.000	0.067	0.000	0.000	1.000
Attractive beaches and good resorts	-0.016	0.071	-0.025	-0.228	0.820	-0.053	0.072	-0.093	-0.743	0.459
Friendly people	0.064	0.077	0.081	0.820	0.414	-0.055	0.078	-0.079	-0.703	0.484
Level of security	-0.128	0.064	-0.194	-2.006	0.047	-0.029	0.066	-0.050	-0.446	0.657
Fair prices	0.178	0.091	0.219	1.968	0.051	0.091	0.093	0.125	0.985	0.327
The quality of tourists services	0.106	0.073	0.143	1.458	0.148	-0.037	0.074	-0.058	-0.508	0.613

	Purpose Travel					Type of Leisure				
	Unstand.	Coeff.	Stand.	T	Sig.	Unstand.	Coeff.	Stand.	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			B	Std. Error	Beta		
Features of its landscape	-0.004	0.064	-0.006	-0.064	0.949	-0.159	0.109	-0.139	-1.455	0.148
Low prices	0.010	0.088	0.012	0.109	0.913	0.141	0.150	0.104	0.938	0.350
Rich historical culture	-0.065	0.068	-0.090	-0.943	0.347	-0.120	0.116	-0.100	-1.029	0.306
The climate	-0.223	0.085	-0.287	-2.613	0.010	0.147	0.145	0.114	1.015	0.312
Attractive beaches and good resorts	-0.082	0.091	-0.105	-0.899	0.370	0.246	0.155	0.189	1.587	0.115
Friendly people	-0.195	0.100	-0.205	1.940	0.055	-0.190	0.171	-0.120	-1.115	0.267
Level of security	0.074	0.083	0.093	0.895	0.373	-0.171	0.141	-0.128	-1.214	0.227
Fair prices	0.015	0.116	0.016	0.133	0.894	0.229	0.197	0.139	1.158	0.249
The quality of tourists services	-0.165	0.094	-0.185	-1.755	0.082	-0.252	0.160	-0.169	-1.575	0.118

(Continued)

	Length of Travel				
	Unstand.	Coeff.	Stand.	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Features of its landscape	0.074	0.071	0.099	1.040	0.300
Low prices	-0.130	0.097	-0.149	-1.339	0.183
Rich historical culture	0.103	0.075	0.133	1.366	0.175
The climate	-0.011	0.097	-0.013	-0.113	0.911
Attractive beaches and good resorts	0.240	0.101	0.285	2.382	0.019
Friendly people	0.090	0.110	0.087	0.819	0.415
Level of security	0.056	0.091	0.064	0.611	0.542
Fair prices	-0.127	0.128	-0.118	-0.992	0.323
The quality of tourists services	-0.197	0.103	-0.203	-1.905	0.059

4.5. Choice of travel destination and presence of an eventual country of origin effect

Tables (4.4), (4.5) and (4.6) show the frequency distributions of the sample when faced with a choice of travel for different types of tourism in Jordan. Table (4.4) displays the choice between Jordan and Turkey for a trip mainly interested in cultural heritage. Table (4.5) displays the choice between Jordan and Egypt for a beach holiday. Table (4.6) finally shows the choice our respondents would make between the USA and Jordan for an outdoor sports holiday.

Each time respondents were offered 4 different choices or options: a basic option in which the trip would last 7 days and 6 nights in a 4-star arrangement, next to a 5 star arrangement and a higher price and a double length holiday again with the two types of arrangements. These options were chosen on the basis of the travel offer to Jordan available in a number of Belgian tourist agencies and some data of the focus group interview, described in Chapter 3.

The tables show the frequencies, the percentages, the valid percentages and the cumulative percentages. Their main data have been repeated in Figures (4.2), (4.3) and (4.4), which graphically display the frequency of the choices made in our sample.

The results show that for cultural heritage tours Turkey is for all four options chosen as more preferable than Jordan. For beach holidays the preference between Jordan and Egypt is rather equally divided for trips of a short length (one week), but the preference clearly tilts in favour of Egypt for the options including a two-week stay. An identical conclusion can be drawn for out sports holidays: whereas for a one week holiday the choice between the USA and Jordan leads to nearly equivalent results, a two week stay clearly leads to a preference for the USA over Jordan.

Are these choices also statistically relevant?

In the Tables (4.4), (4.5) and (4.6) also contain data on a chi square test are for each of the four options in each of the three choices. The chi square test is done as such because the options in themselves do not represent a single “variable”. They rather combine a number of variables of travel in one option like length of stay and accommodation and price. Thus the chi-square tests have been conducted line per line on the three tables. All chi square results are statistically significant at the 95 % confidence level, some even at the 99 % level.

The ASR (Adjusted Standardized Residuals) results were not reported in the table but were calculated. They show us why this statistical significance is observed. In all cases the ASR for the result: “both choices are equally attractive” are negative and lower than -2. This signifies that in a statistically significant way a less than expected number of people in our sample consider the choices between Turkey and Jordan, Egypt and Jordan and the USA and Jordan to be equally attractive. If this answer “equally important” would have been reported according to the expected values for it, this would have

meant that there was no country-of-origin effect. But the frequency of this answer is clearly significantly less than normally expected in the answers of our sample.

We can thus conclude that there is a country-of-origin effect: for all three types of holiday, the destination is a factor of primordial importance when choosing your holiday.

Moreover, the ASR is also negative and less than -2 for the choice of Jordan and positive and more than +2 for the alternative destination in the following cases:

- For Turkey (cultural heritage tour) for three options, namely the stay of 1 week in a 5-star accommodation and for the two option with a two week length of stay;
- For Egypt (beach holiday) for one option only, namely the two week length of stay in a 5-star accommodation;
- For the USA (outdoor sports holiday) for both options of accommodation combined a two week length of stay.

We can conclude from this that Jordan enjoys a negative country-of-origin effect in nearly all cases versus Turkey for cultural heritage travel and also versus Egypt for beach holidays and the USA for outdoor sports travel in case of a more lengthy period of travel.

Table (4.4) Cultural heritage tourism: choice between Jordan and Turkey

Cultural heritage: Jordan/ Turkey	Country	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum. Percent
Trip 1 week	Turkey	57	44.5	46.3	46.3
4 star accomodation	Jordan	42	32.8	34.1	80.5
699 euros	Equally attractive	24	18.8	19.5	100.0
	Total	123	96.1	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		13,317			
Sign.		0,001			
Trip 1 week	Turkey	69	53.9	54.8	54.8
5 star accomocation	Jordan	38	29.7	30.2	84.9
899 euros	Equally attractive	19	14.8	15.1	100.0
	Total	126	98.4	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		30,333			
Sign.		0,000			
Trip two weeks	Turkey	67	52.3	53.2	53.2
4 star accomodation	Jordan	33	25.8	26.2	79.4
1199 euros	Equally attractive	26	20.3	20.6	100.0
	Total	126	98.4	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		22,905			
Sign.		0,000			
Trip two weeks	Turkey	69	53.9	55.6	55.6
5 star accomocation	Jordan	34	26.6	27.4	83.1
1299 euros	Equally attractive	21	16.4	16.9	100.0
	Total	124	96.9	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		29,823			
Sign.		0,000			

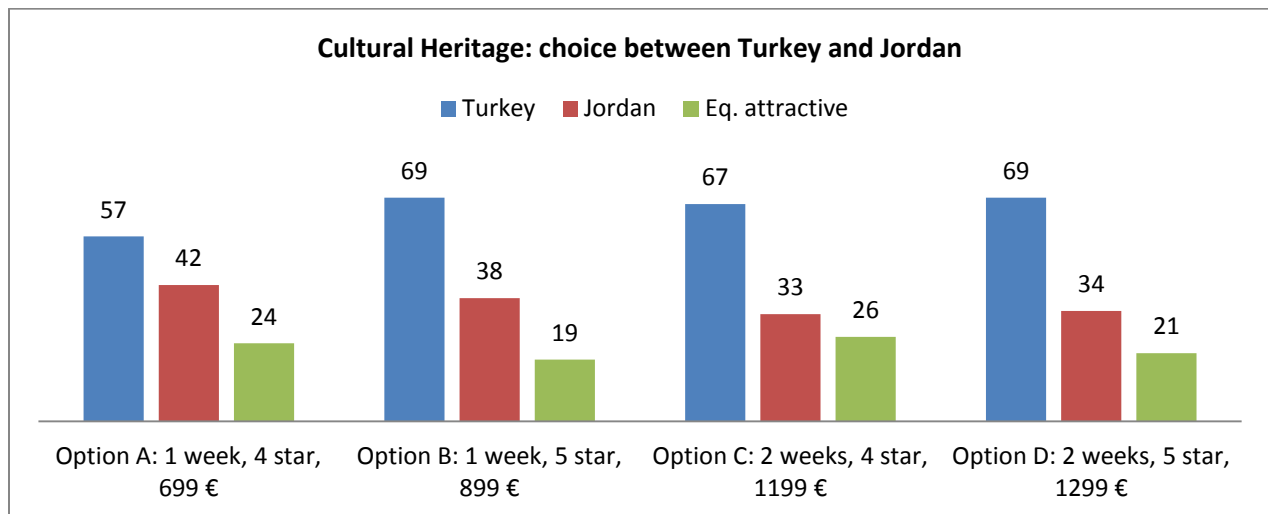


Figure (4. 2): Choice between Turkey and Jordan for cultural travel holiday

Table (4.5) Beach tourism: choice between Egypt and Jordan

Beach holiday: Jordan or Egypt	Country	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum. Percent
Trip 1 week	Egypt	50	39.1	40.0	40.0
4 star accomodation	Jordan	55	43.0	44.0	84.0
699 euros	Equally attractive	20	15.6	16.0	100.0
	Total	125	97.7	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		17,200			
Sign.		0,000			
Trip 1 week	Egypt	55	43.0	43.7	43.7
5 star accomocation	Jordan	52	40.6	41.3	84.9
799 euros	Equally attractive	19	14.8	15.1	100.0
	Total	126	98.4	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		19,000			
Sign.		0,000			
Trip two weeks	Egypt	52	40.6	41.3	41.3
4 star accomodation	Jordan	45	35.2	35.7	77.0
1099 euros	Equally attractive	29	22.7	23.0	100.0
	Total	126	98.4	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		6,619			
Sign.		0,037			
Trip two weeks	Egypt	57	44.5	45.2	45.2
5 star accomocation	Jordan	40	31.3	31.7	77.0
1199 euros	Equally attractive	29	22.7	23.0	100.0
	Total	126	98.4	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		9,476			
Sign.		0,009			

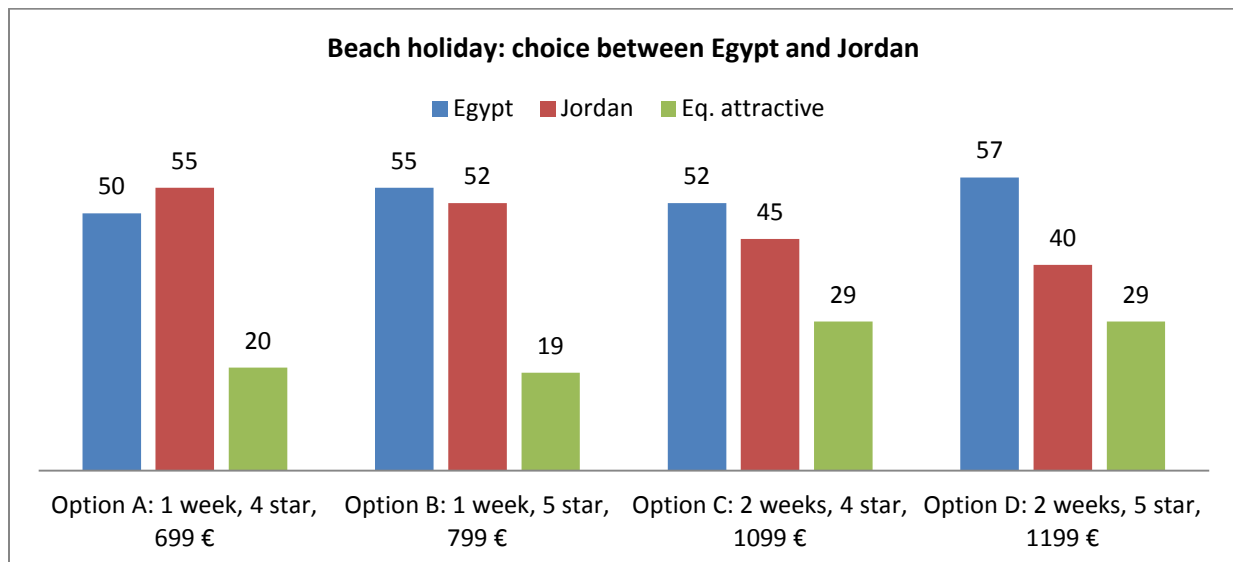


Figure (4. 3): Choice between Egypt and Jordan for beach holiday

Table (4.6) Outdoor sports holiday: choice between USA and Jordan

Outdoor sports: Jordan or USA	Country	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum. Percent
Trip 1 week	USA	55	43.0	44.0	44.0
4 star accomodation	Jordan	49	38.3	39.2	83.2
1099 euros	Equally attractive	21	16.4	16.8	100.0
	Total	125	97.7	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		15,808			
Sign.		0,000			
Trip 1 week	USA	51	39.8	40.5	40.5
5 star accomocation	Jordan	48	37.5	38.1	78.6
1199 euros	Equally attractive	27	21.1	21.4	100.0
	Total	126	98.4	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		8,143			
Sign.		0,017			
Trip two weeks	USA	59	46.1	46.8	46.8
4 star accomodation	Jordan	36	28.1	28.6	75.4
1499 euros	Equally attractive	31	24.2	24.6	100.0
	Total	126	98.4	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		10,619			
Sign.		0,005			
Trip two weeks	USA	57	44.5	45.2	45.2
5 star accomocation	Jordan	36	28.1	28.6	73.8
1599 euros	Equally attractive	33	25.8	26.2	100.0
	Total	126	98.4	100.0	
Pearson chi square (df = 2)		8,143			
Sign.		0,017			

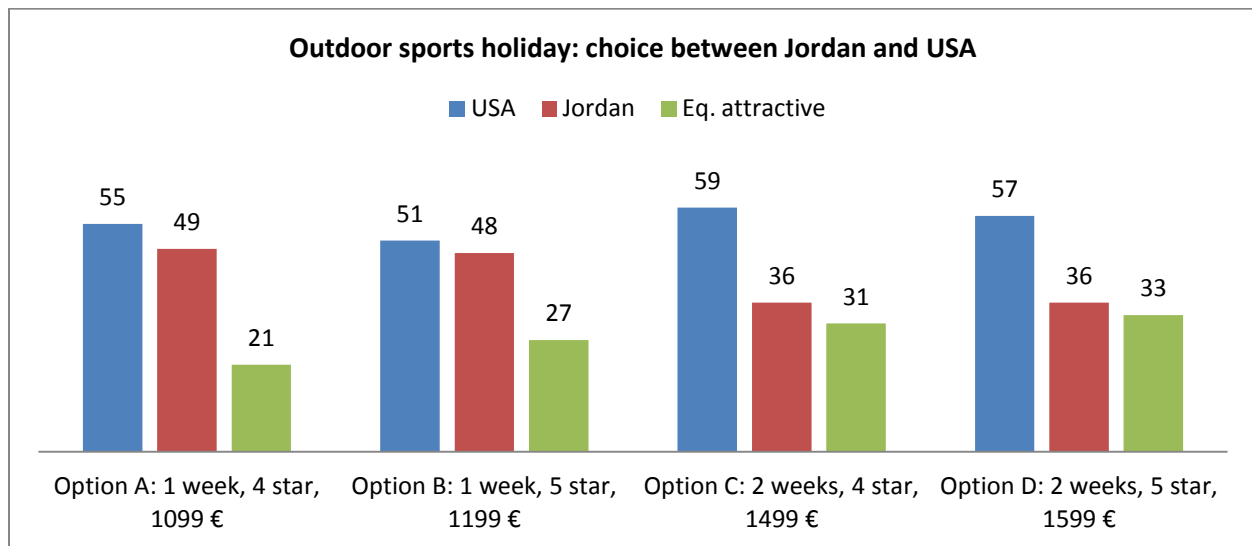


Figure (4. 4): Choice between the USA and Jordan for outdoor sports holidays

Since we have data on the importance of several factors customers take in to consideration when choosing a holiday destination, verifying whether some of these can be tied in a statistically significant way to the choice of holiday destination may give us a hint about the reasons why we observe a negative country-of-origin effect for Jordan. The tables used for this analysis are shown in Appendix 4.

The results of all the different chi square tests for all the option in all three choice situations crossed with the nine variables we also used in paragraph (4.4) are shown in Table (4.7) below.

They show that none of the combinations leads to statistical significance at the 95 % confidence level but two: for outdoor sports the climate is a significant parameter in the eyes of the customer for making a choice for the USA in outdoor sports over Jordan in two of the four options described in the table (option B and C).

However, there are more relationships statistically significant at the 90 % level. If we take as a rule (although it is a deliberate and subjective choice that if in three out four of the options at least a significant relationship has to exist between a travel criteria and a choice in a certain area of travel, then some interesting conclusions can be drawn. We would use the criteria “in three out of four case, because in any such a combination all of the underlying variables of the travel choice (accommodation, length of stay and price) are involved. They are:

- When having to choose between Turkey and Jordan for a cultural heritage travel, both the richness of the historical cultural sites available and the friendliness of people are statistically related to the result of the choice at the 90 % confidence level in three out of four of the options;
- When having to choose between Egypt and Jordan for beach holiday travel, fair prices are statistically related to the result of the choice at the 90 % confidence level in three out of four of the options;
- When having to choose between the USA and Jordan for outdoor sports holidays, the climate is statistically related to the result of the choice at the 90 % confidence level in three out of four of the options.

This indicates in our eyes that the kind of marketing Jordan has to manage when trying to offset the negative country-of-origin effect must be differentiated for the different travel choices.

For cultural heritage travel, the richness of the culture has to be marketed more, which would in our eyes indicate to market more heritage sites actively than only Petra. Moreover, the friendliness of the different stakeholders involved in such travel (bus drivers, guides, local salespeople on bazaars at sites, hotels and so on...) has to be proven. This is a more difficult task as just saying is not enough, proving it is the first step in order to create word-of-mouth about this phenomenon.

For beach holidays (fair prices is the statistically related variable in this case), the prices offered have to be explained better to potential tourists to indicate why they are as they are and that they also contain good value for money. This can be done by indirect communication by indicating clearly what is included in inclusive price packages so that people at least start the trip having the impression that it is good value for money. But word-of-mouth after travel will also play a big role.

Table (4.7) Chi-square test on tables linking the importance of the different travel criteria to the different choice options for travel.

Cultural heritage: Jordan or Turkey	Land	scape	Low	Prices	Rich	Culture
(df = 8)	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.
Option A: 1 week, 4 star, 699 €	10,365	0,240	8,113	0,422	13,687	0,090
Option B: 1 week, 5 star, 899 €	14,373	0,073	9,927	0,270	14,764	0,064
Option C: 2 weeks, 4 star, 1199 €	11,416	0,179	12,592	0,127	13,703	0,090
Option D: 2 weeks, 5 star, 1299 €	10,173	0,253	9,483	0,303	7,488	0,485
Beach holiday: Jordan or Egypt	Land	scape	Low	Prices	Rich	Culture
(df=8)	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.
Option A: 1 week, 4 star, 699 €	7,846	0,499	5,336	0,721	3,936	0,863
Option B: 1 week, 5 star, 799 €	4,471	0,812	9,099	0,334	5,422	0,709
Option C: 2 weeks, 4 star, 1099 €	7,609	0,473	6,289	0,615	5,176	0,739
Option D: 2 weeks, 5 star, 1199 €	6,023	0,645	4,575	0,802	3,778	0,877
Outdoor sports: Jordan or USA	Land	scape	Low	Prices	Rich	Culture
(df=8)	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.
Option A: 1 week, 4 star, 1099 €	6,805	0,558	8,329	0,402	9,262	0,321
Option B: 1 week, 5 star, 1199 €	10,109	0,257	8,109	0,423	12,952	0,114
Option C: 2 weeks, 4 star, 1499 €	11,609	0,170	7,755	0,458	9,001	0,324
Option D: 2 weeks, 5 star, 1599 €	5,123	0,744	7,088	0,527	11,129	0,195

Cultural heritage: Jordan or Turkey	Cli	mate	Attr.	Beach	Friendly	People
(df = 8)	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.
Option A: 1 week, 4 star, 699 €	5,693	0,682	6,800	0,558	14,689	0,065
Option B: 1 week, 5 star, 899 €	8,221	0,412	3,192	0,922	13,402	0,099
Option C: 2 weeks, 4 star, 1199 €	11,047	0,199	9,353	0,313	13,423	0,098
Option D: 2 weeks, 5 star, 1299 €	7,488	0,485	6,071	0,639	11,491	0,175
Beach holiday: Jordan or Egypt	Cli	mate	Attr.	Beach	Friendly	People
(df=8)	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.
Option A: 1 week, 4 star, 699 €	8,719	0,367	11,491	0,175	7,509	0,483
Option B: 1 week, 5 star, 799 €	14,658	0,066	7,646	0,469	10,067	0,260
Option C: 2 weeks, 4 star, 1099 €	5,732	0,677	11,699	0,165	6,994	0,537
Option D: 2 weeks, 5 star, 1199 €	5,071	0,750	7,956	0,438	6,800	0,558
Outdoor sports: Jordan or USA	Cli	mate	Attr.	Beach	Friendly	People
(df=8)	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.
Option A: 1 week, 4 star, 1099 €	13,925	0,084	6,993	0,537	3,557	0,895
Option B: 1 week, 5 star, 1199 €	19,305	0,013	12,491	0,131	7,701	0,463
Option C: 2 weeks, 4 star, 1499 €	21,191	0,007	12,955	0,113	7,139	0,522
Option D: 2 weeks, 5 star, 1599 €	12,1	0,147	9,687	0,288	6,239	0,621

Cultural heritage: Jordan or Turkey	Level	Security	Fair	Prices	Quality	Services
(df = 8)	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.
Option A: 1 week, 4 star, 699 €	7,832	0,450	2,741	0,841	4,301	0,829
Option B: 1 week, 5 star, 899 €	3,813	0,874	4,661	0,588	4,090	0,849
Option C: 2 weeks, 4 star, 1199 €	6,744	0,565	10,444	0,107	13,700	0,090
Option D: 2 weeks, 5 star, 1299 €	5,261	0,729	7,655	0,264	5,796	0,670
Beach holiday: Jordan or Egypt	Level	Security	Fair	Prices	Quality	Services
(df=8)	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.
Option A: 1 week, 4 star, 699 €	8,919	0,349	13,7	0,090	7,466	0,487
Option B: 1 week, 5 star, 799 €	9,815	0,278	11,568	0,072	9,898	0,272
Option C: 2 weeks, 4 star, 1099 €	7,369	0,497	7,554	0,273	8,144	0,420
Option D: 2 weeks, 5 star, 1199 €	9,088	0,335	14,140	0,069	5,912	0,657
Outdoor sports: Jordan or USA	Level	Security	Fair	Prices	Quality	Services
(df=8)	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.	chi square	Sign.
Option A: 1 week, 4 star, 1099 €	6,419	0,600	7,177	0,305	6,600	0,580
Option B: 1 week, 5 star, 1199 €	7,141	0,532	3,704	0,717	5,246	0,731
Option C: 2 weeks, 4 star, 1499 €	10,259	0,247	6,412	0,379	12,059	0,149
Option D: 2 weeks, 5 star, 1599 €	8,440	0,392	8,822	0,184	7,015	0,535

Finally, for outdoor sports travel (the climate is the variable in play), more information on the climate in Jordan may do the job, but a comparison with other destinations can be beneficial as well.

Chapter 5 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to find out how tourists perceive Jordan as a holiday destination and to find out which factors influence the tourist to either choose or not for Jordan as a destination. In that sense the willingness of the tourist to visit Jordan might be linked to what is called a country-of-origin effect, that is the fact that the image of the country as such will influence the choice process of the potential visitors in a positive or negative way and also influence the prices at which one is considering to travel to Jordan.

The main motivation for doing this study is that the tourist sector is considered as a vital element for the Jordanian economy. By studying the factors that affect this sector, especially the eventual COO effect on the services offered; we can see how Jordan can improve its position on the tourist market. The collaboration of the several stakeholders in the tourist sector, from government to private enterprise, is required for that. We wanted to particularly look at the marketing role that those stakeholders play and whether and how they can improve on that level.

This study is among the few that investigate the country-of-origin effect on intangible services. Most research has so far focused on tangible products. Furthermore, the supply side is an under-researched area of destination marketing.

The study wanted to answer three main research questions:

- Is there COO effect on Jordanian tourism?
- How much money does it cost the Jordanian tourist economy to be situated in a crises zone?
- Which guidelines can be given to the stakeholders in the Jordanian tourist industry to minimize the impact of the country-of-origin effect on the income of the industry?

In this chapter we try to see how far we got in answering these questions. The chapter is organized in three parts. The first part relates the findings to the research questions, the second part draws the most important conclusions and indicates some implications and recommendations for managers and researchers, while and the third part will indicate the limitations of this study.

5.1. Relating the findings to the research questions

The main empirical findings were discussed in chapter 4. In this section we relate these findings to the research question and sub questions presented above and in chapter 1. In this section some of the answers to the research questions will of course also be related if necessary to the theoretical chapter of this dissertation, chapter 2. The section is organized alongside the three main research questions.

5.1.1. Is there a country-of-origin effect on Jordanian tourism?

This research question was subdivided in a number of sub questions:

- Which factors are linked in the mind of tourists with Jordan as a destination?
- How does Jordan score on them (what is the actual image of the country as a destination)?
- How does this affect the willingness of tourists to travel to Jordan?

From the focus group interview we could infer factors that were present in the tourist's mind when they were asked to choose for comparable types of travel between countries to visit comparable to Jordan. These factors are: features of the landscape, historical cultures and sites, climate, attractiveness of beaches and resorts, fairness of the prices, quality of the tourist services, level of security, level of prices and friendliness of the people.

According to the data collected from the survey distributed to potential tourists via travel agencies in some European countries, we can see that most of these travel criteria are considered as important. The most important criterion is the level of security with an (average of 4.4176) on a scale of 1 to 5, followed by fair prices (average 4.1364) and quality of the tourist services (average 4.1209). The least important criterion was the features of its landscape with average of only 3.5714, which is still relatively high. This confirmed the data of the focus group interview.

On the basis of these results, one could argue that since Jordan is situated in a rather unstable region of the world, this would negatively affect the image of the country as a tourist destination. Thus the research about a country-of-origin effect clearly makes sense.

In the last three questions of the survey we asked potential tourists whether they would prefer Jordan as a tourist destination or its closest competitor as indicated by the focus group interview for three types of travel holidays. Thus they compared Jordan with Turkey for cultural travel, with Egypt for a beach holiday and with the USA for an outdoors sports (climbing) holiday. Several options combining price with the level of accommodation and the length of stay were each time offered. The results show different things:

1. Since in all of the offered choices the option "both destinations are equally attractive" was statistically less chosen at a 95 % confidence level (chi-square statistics), there is a country of origin effect when having to choose between these destinations as a travel destination;
2. In the case of cultural heritage tours, Turkey was preferred over Jordan in all options and with a statistically relevant difference. The same is true for Egypt for a beach holiday and the USA for outdoor sports holidays, but this difference is only statistically relevant for a longer period of travel. There is thus in most cases a negative country-of-origin effect for Jordan that we observed in our survey.

Since we asked the choice of tourists in a combined offer in which price, accommodation and length of stay were changed as variables simultaneously; we cannot however directly and definitely attribute this negative effect to prices and definitely say; potential tourists are not willing to pay the same price as for other destinations for travel to Jordan.

5.1.2. How much money does it cost the Jordanian tourist economy to experience a negative country-of-origin effect?

This research question was subdivided in a number of sub-questions:

- Which value do tourists attach to travelling to Jordan?
- Which prices are they willing to pay for it?
- How are the Jordanian prices evaluated in comparison to competitive destinations?

Our results indicate that there is a negative country-of-origin effect for the Jordanian tourist sector, as many tourists opt for the closest alternative when confronted with the two destinations in most options. The fact that the Jordanian economy depends heavily on financing from the tourism sector makes this research question really important since Hui and Zhou (2002) have proven that price affects the purchase intention of tourists considerably. The major question is thus whether marketers have to lower the price of tourist packages and services offered in Jordan to offset the negative country-of-origin effect and to increase the customers' purchase intention.

We could not definitively infer an influence of price only on the choice of tourists between Jordan and its competitors, as indicated in the subparagraph above. However, we tried to find out whether there was a statistically significant relationship between the criteria tourists use when choosing a travel destination and the choice between Jordan and its closest competitors. Two of those variables are fair prices and low prices. We could only find a statistically significant relationship between fair prices and the choice between Jordan and Egypt for a beach holiday in three of the four options and at the 90 % significance level. The price consequences of the negative country-of-origin effect are thus limited to say the least. Moreover, we must take into account that it is the travel criterion "fair prices" that shows this relationship, not the variable "low prices". We can consequently only conclude that for beach holidays, a closer look at the price/services offered combination has to be paid by the people involved in offering travel to Jordan.

Thus we could not fully answer this second research question. This is also due to the way we organized our survey. We will come back to that in the section on limitations of this study.

5.1.3. Which guidelines can be given to the stakeholders in the Jordanian tourist industry to minimize the impact of the country-of-origin effect?

This question had been answered in more detailed through the literature review in section 2.2.4. The guidelines stakeholders in tourist sectors have to abide by are: having clear vision of leadership, creating a brand oriented culture, co-ordinate processes, co-ordination and consistent communication patterns and build strong compatible partnerships.

The above mentioned chi-square tests to find out whether the travel criteria of the potential tourists are statistically related in a significant way to the choices between Jordan and Turkey, Jordan and Egypt and Jordan and the USA for the three types of travel holidays give us some beginning answer to this question. When we find some significance between one travel criterion and the choices made, this would indeed give some indication on the factors the stakeholders in the Jordanian tourist sector have to take more into account.

For cultural heritage travel, the richness of the culture and friendliness of the people are statistically related at the 90 % significance level in three out of the four offered options. Jordanian tourist stakeholders could infer from this result that the potential tourist consider the variety of the cultural travel offer too limited. Maybe this is due to the fact that potential tourists immediately link Jordan to Petra as all marketing efforts have of course been concentrated mainly on this jewel in the tourist crown of Jordan. But other tourist attractions with cultural heritage effects such as Jerash and Mount Nebo (Mabada) are a lot less well known. Maybe somewhat more diversification in what is shown to potential tourists is needed. The effect of friendliness of people can be interpreted as well. In cultural heritage travel tourists are in contact with many more different people than in beach holidays for instance. We think of guides, bus drivers, donkey trainers (in Petra) and restaurants outside the compound (in beach holidays very often directly linked to the hotel) and so on. Not all these people have been trained in the same way in treating tourist customers, but maybe some small effort could be very beneficial here. After all the chain is as strong as its weakest shackle.

For the beach holidays, fair prices are statistically significant as mentioned in the previous section 5.1.2. We repeat the main conclusion that the fairness of the package offered compared to the prices asked is the most important variable to be managed by all stakeholders. Maybe clearly stating what the package includes and avoiding as much as possible price extras can help in this case.

Lastly, the climate is a statistically significant factor for the outdoor sports travel choice, again at the 90% confidence level. Jordan has the benefit of a relatively moderate climate, which can be attractive for most potential tourists, but maybe marketers have emphasized this point too little.

In any case, since the effects are different for the different travel choices our respondents had to evaluate, a major (but maybe very logical) conclusion for the stakeholders is that there is no single

marketing solution for offsetting the effect we observed, but only a differentiated approach for the different types of travel we researched into.

5.2. Conclusion and implications

5.2.1. Theoretical implications

The theoretical part of this dissertation indicated that a lot of definitions of the country-of-origin effect are related to the image of a country in general in the eyes and minds of the customers and that the image of the country is build on the basis of multiple variables such as national, political, economic and historical characteristics. This image is also related to the quality perception that the customers have about the product and services the country produces. COO becomes more and more important and is used by customer to evaluate products and services they are unfamiliar with (Bilkey and Nes, 1982).

Most of these studies deal with tangible products however (Schooler, 1965; Bilkey and Nes, 1982). In this study we tried to apply this research to intangible services, using a different theoretical approach, with some success.

In our study, COO was considered as a qualified indicator for the choice of tourists to travel to Jordan. Papadopoulos and Heslop (2002) however expressed that the COO effect is not such a qualified indicator and cannot be used as a single indicator of customer choice. On the other hand, our findings are supported by other researchers (Leifeld, 1993; Peterson and Jolibert, 1995; Samiee, 1994), who agree that COO effects play an important role on how consumer asses their perception about a country.

Our findings are also supported by a couple of other studies. We found that age and genders are significantly related with the way people want to travel and thus which eventual COO-effect is felt by them (although we did not research this relationship on the level of significance). This supports findings by Gurhan-Canli and Maheswaran (2000), who have found that the COO-effect is much stronger felt by people who are aged and partly those of Samiee et al., 2005 who state that gender explains COO effects in more masculine cultures. Our study partly deals with more masculine cultures (Belgian answers), but also contained answers from feminine cultures (Scandinavia).

5.2.2. Practical implications

Baker and Cameron (2008) have proven that branding a destination is applicable to cities, regions, nations and places and that coordinated marketing by the stakeholders is essential in getting some success in tourism. Jordan has to apply this theory and use marketing strategies as intensively as possible by using a diversified approach. This was our main conclusion of the answers we found for the

third research question. It is also important because apparently there is a negative country-of-origin effect.

Managing tourist destinations is however very difficult and complex as the strategies have to cover all the stakeholder's needs. The multi attributed tourist offerings that Buhalis (1999) mentions activities (all activities available at the destination and what consumers will do during their visit, sports accommodation, leisure time offerings and so on...) as well as attractions (natural features and heritage places). Our findings say that they are all important when we look at the criteria used for selecting a travel destination. However, we split the types of holidays in our study when trying to find out whether Jordan faces a country-of-origin effect.

Yet we are fairly confident in stating that our results point at a differentiated marketing approach for the different types of travel we studied. For heritage travel, focusing on marketing more than one heritage place and not only on marketing mainly the site of Petra might offer wider opportunities to Jordan to sell cultural heritage travel. For beach travel, the offering of fair prices seems to be the most important marketing variable. This signifies the indication of value for money as the major marketing strategy in which for instance the combination of attractions and activities will be very important (Buhalis, 1999). Low prices are not to be seen as an attraction point in this case, they might be an indicator of lower quality (although we cannot say this with certainty). For outdoor activities, it also seems logical that information about the climate is a primordial factor in the marketing.

The stakeholder approaches indicates that everyone involved in marketing Jordan as a tourist destination should be made aware of these differences and apply them rigorously. The role of an individual player is minimal, but one has to reckon with the fact that the chain is as strong as its weakest shackle. The Ministry of Antiquities, travel agencies, shopping malls, hotels, transportation agencies, local shops at tourist destinations all have to know this and pull one string. For instance the significant effect we found of friendliness of the people on the choice in cultural heritage tours is such a factor in which all involved parties are implied. A grumpy bus driver or an angry local tourist shop owner can ruin the efforts of all others in terms of marketing and set off a negative word-of-mouth spiral. Since Jordanians are known for their friendliness, maybe indicating to all of them that they represent a country they are all proud of, might be the right track. Our results can thus help different stakeholders and marketers to present Jordan in an attractive way by focusing on the activities that will jointly be marketed.

In general, the theory of the stakeholders, indicated in Chapter 2, is valid according to our study. The five guidelines for the supply side of the tourist equation mentioned by Hankinson (2007) and Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2009) have to be used to overcome the difficulties that Jordan is facing when marketing itself as a destination. A proactive and appropriate strategic destination marketing planning process that identifies the development objectives, evaluates the target markets through market research and uses market segmentation to maximize return on investment is needed. More specific advice to improve the brand equity of Jordan can only be given on the basis of further research.

5.3. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

In this section the limitations of this study will be mentioned. Moreover, recommendations will be given for future research to fill these gaps or to build on the results of this study with new research. In spite of the care we took to design this research study, it still shows some major limitations.

First, the lack of time and money limited our study to a rather small sample. Only 195 potential tourists were targeted in this study and 126 answered. This is a very small number when compared to the number of tourists visiting Jordan every year and the number of potential tourists in total. Moreover, the generalization of the results of only 126 valid answers has to be made very careful.

Second, we finally decided to measure the choice of customers between two alternatives each time using different offers, but using a combination of three major variables, namely price, type of accommodation and length of stay. This has given us a first idea of whether a country-of-origin effect was present, but it is not performed enough as research methodology. Using more variables and their interplay as input for the choices would have yielded better results. This would have meant using conjoint analysis and an orthogonal array of options offered to respondents. The use of a survey would still have been possible, but within a much more difficult scheme. But the results would have been more significant and one would have had the opportunity to calculate the utility of some offerings and have an estimate of the size of the country-of-origin effect when present.

Third, part of the research had to be performed with Belgian potential customers. Not all of them are extremely familiar with the English language whereas at the same time the researcher from Jordan did not master the Dutch language. Specifically for the focus group interview, the help of the co-promoter who knows both languages was necessary, but it clearly did not facilitate everything. We might have missed some important elements. For the same reason, we have distributed the survey also via Scandinavian friends active in the travel sector of the author. But we are of course not sure whether the same criteria act in the same way in the choice of tourists in different European countries. For instance the influence of prices might be different. Thus, due to the language problem our sample might not have been homogenous enough for the research.

Finally limited research has been found on COO effect on services it is recommended to complete more research in this field and to make more comparisons. Studies in similar tourist conditions and on the canvas of the same and expanded research will be needed in the future to verify or nullify the results of our infant study.

Future research should concentrate on a more homogenous sample, the use of more and more performing research methodology such as conjoint analysis, be oriented on more variables in the projected offering and certainly have even more support from tourist agencies themselves.

Nevertheless, our first study has indicated that there might be a negative country-of-origin effect for Jordanian tourism and given some indications of what some of the causes might be. Our study can help Marketers in measuring their destination performance in comparison with their competitors and give them some insight into good strategies for branding their destination. Moreover, they can separate

place brands from country tourist brands so that they can differentiate their destination branding and make it more unique. Strategies can be made more specific as well based on better data on who visits Jordan, why and for which kind of tourism. Future research has to confirm whether our idea that a more diversified approach to marketing Jordanian tourism by the different stakeholders will still be valid.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire:

For reasons of clarity we have indicated the two parts we talked about in our third chapter in paragraph 3.2.2.

Part 1 General information:

1-Gender: male ☐ Female ☐

2- Age: 15-34 ☐ 35-54 ☐ over 55 ☐

3- Monthly income: less than 1500 euro ☐ 1500-3000 euro ☐ more than 3000 euro ☐

4-Marital status: Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐

5- Which would be your main purpose of traveling to a destination like Jordan?

- 1- Business
- 2- Leisure
- 3- Visiting friends/family
- 4- Studying

6- What kind of leisure activities do you prefer during your holidays?

- 1-Visiting antiquities
- 2-Diving
- 3-Challenging sports like climbing
- 4-Relaxing on the Beach

7- How much time do you prefer to stay at a tourist destination?

- 1- Less than week
- 2- one week
- 3- between one week and two weeks
- 4- More than two weeks

8- Which criteria do you perceive important when you choose a destination to travel to?	Not Important	Not so important	Somewhat important	Very important	Of the highest importance
1-Features of its landscape	1	2	3	4	5
2-Low prices	1	2	3	4	5
3-Rich historical culture	1	2	3	4	5
4-The climate	1	2	3	4	5
5-Attractive beaches and good resorts	1	2	3	4	5
6-Friendly people	1	2	3	4	5
7-Level of security	1	2	3	4	5
8-Fair prices	1	2	3	4	5
9-The quality of tourists services	1	2	3	4	5

Part 2 Comparisons between Jordan and competitive destinations



Turkey



Jordan

During your travel you will have the opportunity of visiting unique antiquities sites. As shown in the pictures above. The trip lasts **1 week** (6 nights, 7 days) and **costs 699 euro** for accommodation in a **4-star** hotel. The trip may go to Turkey or Jordan.

I would select	Turkey	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive
As described above			
If the trip would last one week with a price 899 euro in 5-star accommodation hotel.			
If the trip would last two weeks with a price of 1199 euro in 4-star accommodation.			
If the trip would last two weeks with a price of 1299 in 5-star accommodation hotel.			



Egypt



Jordan

During your travel you will have the opportunity of relaxing at the beach and diving in the sea, as shown in the pictures above. The trip lasts **1 week** (6 nights, 7 days) and **costs 699 euro** for accommodation in a **4-star** hotel. The trip may go to Egypt or to Jordan.

I would select	Egypt	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive
As described above			
If the trip would last one week with a price of 799 euro in a 5-star hotel			
If the trip would last two weeks with a price of 1099 euro in accommodation in a 4-star hotel.			
If the trip would last two weeks with a price 1199 euro in accommodation in a 5-star hotel.			



Jordan



USA

During your travel you will have the opportunity of seeing the wonderful mountains and climbing them under guidance of experts, as shown in the picture above. The trip lasts **1 week** (6 nights, 7 days) and **costs 1099 euro** for the accommodation in a **4-star** hotel. The trip may go to the USA (Arizona) or to Jordan.

I would select	USA	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive
As described above			
If the trip would last one week with a price of 1199 euro in accommodation in a 5-star hotel.			
If the trip would last two weeks with a price of 1499 euro in accommodation in a 4-star hotel.			
If the trip would last two weeks with a price 1599 euro in accommodation in 5-star hotel.			

Appendix 2

Distribution of answers on the question about the importance of the different travel variables

Travel criteria		Not importa nt	Not so importa nt	Somewh at importa nt	Very importa nt	Of Highest importa nt	Total	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Deviation
Features of its landscape	Frequency	8	15	36	40	29	128	3,5714	0,11813	1,12687
	Percent	6.3	11.7	28.1	31.3	22.7	100			
Low prices	Frequency	2	7	33	47	39	128	3,967	0,09939	0,9481
	Percent	1.6	5.5	25.8	36.7	30.5	100			
Rich historical culture	Frequency	6	16	40	43	23	128	3,6813	0,09991	0,95311
	Percent	4.7	12.5	31.3	33.6	18	100			
The climate	Frequency	4	4	23	40	57	128	3,8352	0,10968	1,04630
	Percent	3.1	3.1	18	31.3	44.5	100			
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Frequency	3	5	24	35	61	128	3,8556	0,11011	1,04463
	Percent	2.3	3.9	18.8	28	46.9	100			
Friendly people	Frequency	1	3	18	55	51	128	4,0989	0,09383	0,89511
	Percent	0.8	2.3	14.1	43	39.8	100			
Level of security	Frequency	2	5	23	35	63	128	4,4176	0,09121	0,87007
	Percent	1.6	3.9	18	27.3	49.2	100			
Fair prices	Frequency	2	2	19	42	60	128	4,1364	0,0827	0,77581
	Percent	1.6	1.6	13.2	32.8	48.4	100			
The quality of tourists services	Frequency	2	3	14	46	63	128	4,1209	0,09738	0,92898
	Percent	1.6	2.3	10.9	35.9	49.2	100			

Appendix 3

Frequency tables of the descriptive variables and the importance of the criteria used by travelers to choose a travel destination

Criteria travelers perceive important when they choose a destination to travel to		Gender			
		Male		Female	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Features of its landscape	Not important	4	5.3%	4	7.7%
	Not so important	9	11.8%	6	11.5%
	Somewhat important	24	31.6%	12	23.1%
	Very important	24	31.6%	16	30.8%
	Of the highest importance	15	19.7%	14	26.9%
Low prices	Not important	1	1.3%	1	1.9%
	Not so important	5	6.6%	2	3.8%
	Somewhat important	24	31.6%	9	17.3%
	Very important	25	32.9%	22	42.3%
	Of the highest importance	21	27.6%	18	34.6%
Rich historical culture	Not important			6	11.5%
	Not so important	9	11.8%	7	13.5%
	Somewhat important	27	35.5%	13	25.0%
	Very important	24	31.6%	19	36.5%
	Of the highest importance	16	21.1%	7	13.5%
The climate	Not important	3	3.9%	1	1.9%
	Not so important	1	1.3%	3	5.8%
	Somewhat important	15	19.7%	8	15.4%
	Very important	20	26.3%	20	38.5%
	Of the highest importance	37	48.7%	20	38.5%
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Not important	1	1.3%	2	3.9%
	Not so important	4	5.3%	1	2.0%
	Somewhat important	16	21.1%	8	15.7%
	Very important	17	22.4%	18	35.3%
	Of the highest importance	38	50.0%	22	43.1%

Friendly people	Not important			1	1.9%
	Not so important	1	1.3%	2	3.8%
	Somewhat important	11	14.5%	7	13.5%
	Very important	29	38.2%	26	50.0%
	Of the highest importance	35	46.1%	16	30.8%
Level of security	Not so important	1	1.3%	1	1.9%
	Somewhat important	3	3.9%	2	3.8%
	Very important	15	19.7%	8	15.4%
	Of the highest importance	17	22.4%	18	34.6%
Fair prices	Not so important	40	52.6%	23	44.2%
	Somewhat important	1	1.4%	1	2.0%
	Very important	13	17.6%	6	11.8%
	Of the highest importance	27	36.5%	15	29.4%
The quality of tourists services	Not important	33	44.6%	29	56.9%
	Not so important			2	3.8%
	Somewhat important	3	3.9%		
	Very important	10	13.2%	4	7.7%
	Of the highest importance	24	31.6%	22	42.3%

Criteria travelers perceive important when they choose a destination to travel to		Age					
		25-34		35-54		over 55	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Features of its landscape	Not important	5	11.6%	2	2.7%		
	Not so important	7	16.3%	4	5.5%	4	36.4%
	Somewhat important	13	30.2%	18	24.7%	5	45.5%
	Very important	11	25.6%	28	38.4%	1	9.1%
	Of the highest importance	7	16.3%	21	28.8%	1	9.1%
Low prices	Not important	1	2.3%	1	1.4%		
	Not so important	1	2.3%	3	4.1%	2	18.2%
	Somewhat important	10	23.3%	19	26.0%	4	36.4%

	Very important	18	41.9%	26	35.6%	3	27.3%
	Of the highest importance	13	30.2%	24	32.9%	2	18.2%
Rich historical culture	Not important	3	7.0%	3	4.1%		
	Not so important	4	9.3%	11	15.1%	1	9.1%
	Somewhat important	14	32.6%	21	28.8%	4	36.4%
	Very important	16	37.2%	23	31.5%	4	36.4%
	Of the highest importance	6	14.0%	15	20.5%	2	18.2%
The climate	Not important	2	4.7%	1	1.4%	1	9.1%
	Not so important	1	2.3%	3	4.1%		
	Somewhat important	9	20.9%	11	15.1%	3	27.3%
	Very important	15	34.9%	22	30.1%	3	27.3%
	Of the highest importance	16	37.2%	36	49.3%	4	36.4%
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Not important	2	4.7%	1	1.4%		
	Not so important	1	2.3%	3	4.2%	1	9.1%
	Somewhat important	6	14.0%	14	19.4%	4	36.4%
	Very important	14	32.6%	20	27.8%	1	9.1%
	Of the highest importance	20	46.5%	34	47.2%	5	45.5%
Friendly people	Not important			1	1.4%		
	Not so important	1	2.3%	2	2.7%		
	Somewhat important	7	16.3%	10	13.7%	1	9.1%
	Very important	22	51.2%	28	38.4%	5	45.5%
	Of the highest importance	13	30.2%	32	43.8%	5	45.5%
Level of security	Not important			1	1.4%	1	9.1%
	Not so important	1	2.3%	3	4.1%	1	9.1%
	Somewhat important	10	23.3%	10	13.7%	3	27.3%
	Very important	9	20.9%	23	31.5%	3	27.3%
	Of the highest	23	53.5%	36	49.3%	3	27.3%

	importance						
Fair prices	Not so important	1	2.4%	1	1.4%		
	Somewhat important	8	19.0%	9	12.7%	2	18.2%
	Very important	15	35.7%	22	31.0%	4	36.4%
	Of the highest importance	18	42.9%	39	54.9%	5	45.5%
The quality of tourists services	Not important			2	2.7%		
	Not so important	2	4.7%	1	1.4%		
	Somewhat important	8	18.6%	5	6.8%	1	9.1%
	Very important	13	30.2%	29	39.7%	4	36.4%
	Of the highest importance	20	46.5%	36	49.3%	6	54.5%

Criteria travelers perceive important when they choose a destination to travel to		Monthly income					
		less than 1500 euro		1500-3000 euro		more than 3000 euro	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Features of its landscape	Not important	6	7.7%	2	5.1%		
	Not so important	5	6.4%	9	23.1%	1	10.0%
	Somewhat important	26	33.3%	9	23.1%	1	10.0%
	Very important	22	28.2%	12	30.8%	6	60.0%
	Of the highest importance	19	24.4%	7	17.9%	2	20.0%
Low prices	Not important	1	1.3%	1	2.6%		
	Not so important	3	3.8%	1	2.6%	3	30.0%
	Somewhat important	17	21.8%	13	33.3%	3	30.0%
	Very important	31	39.7%	14	35.9%	2	20.0%
	Of the highest importance	26	33.3%	10	25.6%	2	20.0%
Rich historical culture	Not important	2	2.6%	4	10.3%		
	Not so important	6	7.7%	8	20.5%	2	20.0%
	Somewhat important	23	29.5%	13	33.3%	4	40.0%
	Very important	32	41.0%	10	25.6%	1	10.0%
	Of the highest importance	15	19.2%	4	10.3%	3	30.0%

The climate	Not important	4	5.1%				
	Not so important	3	3.8%	1	2.6%		
	Somewhat important	20	25.6%	3	7.7%		
	Very important	24	30.8%	13	33.3%	2	20.0%
	Of the highest importance	27	34.6%	22	56.4%	8	80.0%
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Not important	2	2.6%	1	2.6%		
	Not so important	4	5.2%	1	2.6%		
	Somewhat important	18	23.4%	5	12.8%	1	10.0%
	Very important	28	36.4%	6	15.4%	1	10.0%
	Of the highest importance	25	32.5%	26	66.7%	8	80.0%
Friendly people	Not important			1	2.6%		
	Not so important	3	3.8%				
	Somewhat important	15	19.2%	3	7.7%		
	Very important	32	41.0%	20	51.3%	3	30.0%
	Of the highest importance	28	35.9%	15	38.5%	7	70.0%
Level of security	Not important			1	2.6%	1	10.0%
	Not so important	3	3.8%	2	5.1%		
	Somewhat important	12	15.4%	10	25.6%	1	10.0%
	Very important	17	21.8%	13	33.3%	5	50.0%
	Of the highest importance	46	59.0%	13	33.3%	3	30.0%
Fair prices	Not so important			2	5.1%		
	Somewhat important	17	22.7%	1	2.6%	1	10.0%
	Very important	30	40.0%	9	23.1%	2	20.0%
	Of the highest importance	28	37.3%	27	69.2%	7	70.0%
The quality of tourists services	Not important	1	1.3%	1	2.6%		
	Not so important	3	3.8%				
	Somewhat important	11	14.1%	2	5.1%	1	10.0%
	Very important	33	42.3%	12	30.8%	1	10.0%
	Of the highest importance	30	38.5%	24	61.5%	8	80.0%

Criteria travelers perceive important when they choose a destination to travel to		Marital status					
		Single		Married		Divorced	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Features of its landscape	Not important	5	11.6%	3	3.9%		
	Not so important	8	18.6%	6	7.9%	1	14.3%
	Somewhat important	11	25.6%	25	32.9%		
	Very important	9	20.9%	25	32.9%	4	57.1%
	Of the highest importance	10	23.3%	17	22.4%	2	28.6%
Low prices	Not important			2	2.6%		
	Not so important	4	9.3%	3	3.9%		
	Somewhat important	9	20.9%	22	28.9%	1	14.3%
	Very important	18	41.9%	25	32.9%	3	42.9%
	Of the highest importance	12	27.9%	24	31.6%	3	42.9%
Rich historical culture	Not important	3	7.0%	3	3.9%		
	Not so important	6	14.0%	9	11.8%	1	14.3%
	Somewhat important	11	25.6%	26	34.2%	2	28.6%
	Very important	13	30.2%	27	35.5%	2	28.6%
	Of the highest importance	10	23.3%	11	14.5%	2	28.6%
The climate	Not important	1	2.3%	3	3.9%		
	Not so important			4	5.3%		
	Somewhat important	6	14.0%	16	21.1%		
	Very important	14	32.6%	23	30.3%	3	42.9%
	Of the highest importance	22	51.2%	30	39.5%	4	57.1%
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Not important	1	2.3%	2	2.7%		
	Not so important			4	5.3%		
	Somewhat important	6	14.0%	18	24.0%		
	Very important	11	25.6%	20	26.7%	3	42.9%
	Of the highest importance	25	58.1%	31	41.3%	4	57.1%
Friendly	Not important			1	1.3%		
	Not so important			3	3.9%		
	Somewhat important	3	7.0%	14	18.4%		

people	Very important	23	53.5%	27	35.5%	4	57.1%
	Of the highest importance	17	39.5%	31	40.8%	3	42.9%
Level of security	Not important	1	2.3%	1	1.3%		
	Not so important	1	2.3%	3	3.9%		
	Somewhat important	9	20.9%	14	18.4%		
	Very important	9	20.9%	20	26.3%	5	71.4%
	Of the highest importance	23	53.5%	38	50.0%	2	28.6%
Fair prices	Not so important	1	2.4%	1	1.4%		
	Somewhat important	5	11.9%	12	16.2%		
	Very important	15	35.7%	25	33.8%	2	28.6%
	Of the highest importance	21	50.0%	36	48.6%	5	71.4%
The quality of tourists services	Not important			2	2.6%		
	Not so important	1	2.3%	1	1.3%	1	14.3%
	Somewhat important	5	11.6%	9	11.8%		
	Very important	14	32.6%	28	36.8%	2	28.6%
	Of the highest importance	23	53.5%	36	47.4%	4	57.1%

Criteria travelers perceive important when they choose a destination to travel to		Main purpose of traveling to a destination like Jordan							
		Business		Leisure		Visiting friends/family		Studying	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Features of its landscape	Not important			5	7.2%	3	10.0%		
	Not so important	2	10.0%	11	15.9%	1	3.3%	1	11.1%
	Somewhat important	5	25.0%	20	29.0%	11	36.7%		
	Very important	5	25.0%	20	29.0%	11	36.7%	4	44.4%
	Of the highest importance	8	40.0%	13	18.8%	4	13.3%	4	44.4%
Low prices	Not important					2	6.7%		
	Not so important	1	5.0%	3	4.3%	3	10.0%		
	Somewhat	5	25.0%	19	27.5%	8	26.7%	1	11.1%

	important								
	Very important	6	30.0%	28	40.6%	11	36.7%	2	22.2%
	Of the highest importance	8	40.0%	19	27.5%	6	20.0%	6	66.7%
Rich historical culture	Not important			5	7.2%	1	3.3%		
	Not so important	2	10.0%	11	15.9%	2	6.7%	1	11.1%
	Somewhat important	7	35.0%	17	24.6%	12	40.0%	4	44.4%
	Very important	5	25.0%	25	36.2%	11	36.7%	2	22.2%
	Of the highest importance	6	30.0%	11	15.9%	4	13.3%	2	22.2%
The climate	Not important			1	1.4%	2	6.7%	1	11.1%
	Not so important			1	1.4%	3	10.0%		
	Somewhat important	2	10.0%	10	14.5%	10	33.3%	1	11.1%
	Very important	4	20.0%	23	33.3%	7	23.3%	6	66.7%
	Of the highest importance	14	70.0%	34	49.3%	8	26.7%	1	11.1%
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Not important			1	1.4%	1	3.4%	1	11.1%
	Not so important	1	5.0%	2	2.9%	1	3.4%	1	11.1%
	Somewhat important	2	10.0%	10	14.5%	10	34.5%	2	22.2%
	Very important	4	20.0%	21	30.4%	8	27.6%	2	22.2%
	Of the highest importance	13	65.0%	35	50.7%	9	31.0%	3	33.3%
Friendly people	Not important					1	3.3%		
	Not so important			3	4.3%				
	Somewhat important	2	10.0%	8	11.6%	6	20.0%	2	22.2%
	Very important	11	55.0%	30	43.5%	13	43.3%	1	11.1%
	Of the highest importance	7	35.0%	28	40.6%	10	33.3%	6	66.7%

Level of security	Not important			2	2.9%				
	Not so important			3	4.3%	2	6.7%		
	Somewhat important	5	25.0%	13	18.8%	5	16.7%		
	Very important	3	15.0%	20	29.0%	10	33.3%	2	22.2%
	Of the highest importance	12	60.0%	31	44.9%	13	43.3%	7	77.8%
Fair prices	Not so important			1	1.4%	1	3.6%		
	Somewhat important	3	15.0%	6	8.7%	10	35.7%		
	Very important	6	30.0%	24	34.8%	10	35.7%	2	25.0%
	Of the highest importance	11	55.0%	38	55.1%	7	25.0%	6	75.0%
The quality of tourists services	Not important			1	1.4%	1	3.3%		
	Not so important			2	2.9%			1	11.1%
	Somewhat important	2	10.0%	4	5.8%	7	23.3%	1	11.1%
	Very important	3	15.0%	26	37.7%	13	43.3%	4	44.4%
	Of the highest importance	15	75.0%	36	52.2%	9	30.0%	3	33.3%

Criteria travelers perceive important when they choose a destination to travel to		kind of leisure activities							
		Visiting antiquities places		Diving in the sea		Challenging sports like climbing		Relaxing on the beach	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Features of its landscape	Not important			2	10.0%	1	6.7%	5	11.1%
	Not so important			7	35.0%	2	13.3%	6	13.3%
	Somewhat important	21	43.8%	2	10.0%	3	20.0%	10	22.2%
	Very important	13	27.1%	4	20.0%	6	40.0%	17	37.8%
	Of the highest importance	14	29.2%	5	25.0%	3	20.0%	7	15.6%

Low prices	Not important	1	2.1%					1	2.2%
	Not so important	5	10.4%					2	4.4%
	Somewhat important	9	18.8%	7	35.0%	3	20.0%	14	31.1%
	Very important	17	35.4%	7	35.0%	6	40.0%	17	37.8%
	Of the highest importance	16	33.3%	6	30.0%	6	40.0%	11	24.4%
Rich historical culture	Not important	1	2.1%	2	10.0%			3	6.7%
	Not so important	3	6.3%	2	10.0%	2	13.3%	9	20.0%
	Somewhat important	14	29.2%	5	25.0%	7	46.7%	14	31.1%
	Very important	20	41.7%	6	30.0%	4	26.7%	13	28.9%
	Of the highest importance	10	20.8%	5	25.0%	2	13.3%	6	13.3%
The climate	Not important	2	4.2%	1	5.0%			1	2.2%
	Not so important	2	4.2%					2	4.4%
	Somewhat important	15	31.3%	1	5.0%			7	15.6%
	Very important	16	33.3%	7	35.0%	3	20.0%	14	31.1%
	Of the highest importance	13	27.1%	11	55.0%	12	80.0%	21	46.7%
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Not important					1	6.7%	2	4.4%
	Not so important	3	6.4%	2	10.0%				
	Somewhat important	16	34.0%	1	5.0%	2	13.3%	5	11.1%
	Very important	14	29.8%	6	30.0%	2	13.3%	13	28.9%
	Of the highest importance	14	29.8%	11	55.0%	10	66.7%	25	55.6%
Friendly people	Not important							1	2.2%
	Not so important	2	4.2%					1	2.2%
	Somewhat important	7	14.6%	1	5.0%	2	13.3%	8	17.8%
	Very important	22	45.8%	7	35.0%	5	33.3%	21	46.7%
	Of the highest importance	17	35.4%	12	60.0%	8	53.3%	14	31.1%
Level of security	Not important			1	5.0%			1	2.2%
	Not so important			2	10.0%			3	6.7%

	Somewhat important	6	12.5%	2	10.0%	2	13.3%	13	28.9%
	Very important	17	35.4%	4	20.0%	5	33.3%	9	20.0%
	Of the highest importance	25	52.1%	11	55.0%	8	53.3%	19	42.2%
Fair prices	Not so important			1	5.0%			1	2.3%
	Somewhat important	11	23.9%	2	10.0%	1	6.7%	5	11.4%
	Very important	15	32.6%	9	45.0%	4	26.7%	14	31.8%
	Of the highest importance	20	43.5%	8	40.0%	10	66.7%	24	54.5%
The quality of tourists services	Not important	1	2.1%					1	2.2%
	Not so important					1	6.7%	2	4.4%
	Somewhat important	7	14.6%	1	5.0%			6	13.3%
	Very important	21	43.8%	4	20.0%	3	20.0%	18	40.0%
	Of the highest importance	19	39.6%	15	75.0%	11	73.3%	18	40.0%

Criteria travelers perceive important when they choose a destination to travel to		Time tourist prefers to stay at a tourist destination like Jordan							
		less than week		one week		between one and two weeks		more than two weeks	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Features of its landscape	Not important	1	7.1%	2	3.6%	4	9.1%		
	Not so important	2	14.3%	8	14.5%	4	9.1%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	5	35.7%	15	27.3%	11	25.0%	5	35.7%
	Very important	3	21.4%	20	36.4%	13	29.5%	4	28.6%
	Of the highest importance	3	21.4%	10	18.2%	12	27.3%	4	28.6%
Low prices	Not important					1	2.3%	1	7.1%
	Not so important			2	3.6%	4	9.1%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	3	21.4%	13	23.6%	13	29.5%	3	21.4%
	Very important	7	50.0%	22	40.0%	13	29.5%	5	35.7%
	Of the highest	4	28.6%	18	32.7%	13	29.5%	4	28.6%

	importance								
Rich historical culture	Not important	1	7.1%	3	5.5%	2	4.5%		
	Not so important	1	7.1%	10	18.2%	5	11.4%		
	Somewhat important	6	42.9%	17	30.9%	11	25.0%	5	35.7%
	Very important	4	28.6%	16	29.1%	17	38.6%	6	42.9%
	Of the highest importance	2	14.3%	9	16.4%	9	20.5%	3	21.4%
The climate	Not important	1	7.1%			1	2.3%	1	7.1%
	Not so important					3	6.8%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	4	28.6%	12	21.8%	4	9.1%	3	21.4%
	Very important	5	35.7%	20	36.4%	12	27.3%	3	21.4%
	Of the highest importance	4	28.6%	23	41.8%	24	54.5%	6	42.9%
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Not important			1	1.8%	1	2.3%	1	7.1%
	Not so important	2	14.3%	2	3.6%	1	2.3%		
	Somewhat important	4	28.6%	12	21.8%	7	16.3%		
	Very important	4	28.6%	16	29.1%	11	25.6%	4	28.6%
	Of the highest importance	4	28.6%	24	43.6%	23	53.5%	9	64.3%
Friendly people	Not important					1	2.3%		
	Not so important	1	7.1%			2	4.5%		
	Somewhat important	5	35.7%	6	10.9%	5	11.4%	1	7.1%
	Very important	4	28.6%	30	54.5%	12	27.3%	9	64.3%
	Of the highest importance	4	28.6%	19	34.5%	24	54.5%	4	28.6%
Level of security	Not important					2	4.5%		
	Not so important	1	7.1%	1	1.8%	2	4.5%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	5	35.7%	12	21.8%	4	9.1%	1	7.1%
	Very important	2	14.3%	16	29.1%	12	27.3%	5	35.7%
	Of the highest importance	6	42.9%	26	47.3%	24	54.5%	7	50.0%
	Not so important	1	7.1%			1	2.3%		

Fair prices	Somewhat important	4	28.6%	6	11.3%	3	7.0%	5	35.7%
	Very important	4	28.6%	14	26.4%	17	39.5%	7	50.0%
	Of the highest importance	5	35.7%	33	62.3%	22	51.2%	2	14.3%
The quality of tourists services	Not important					2	4.5%		
	Not so important			1	1.8%	1	2.3%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	2	14.3%	5	9.1%	2	4.5%	4	28.6%
	Very important	6	42.9%	23	41.8%	11	25.0%	6	42.9%
	Of the highest importance	6	42.9%	26	47.3%	28	63.6%	3	21.4%

Criteria travelers perceive important when they choose a destination to travel to		Preference of time at a tourist destination like Jordan							
		less than week		one week		between one and two weeks		more than two weeks	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Features of its landscape	Not important	1	9.1%	1	2.7%	3	10.7%		
	Not so important	1	9.1%	4	10.8%	1	3.6%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	5	45.5%	8	21.6%	10	35.7%	5	35.7%
	Very important	2	18.2%	17	45.9%	6	21.4%	4	28.6%
	Of the highest importance	2	18.2%	7	18.9%	8	28.6%	4	28.6%
Low prices	Not important					1	3.6%	1	7.1%
	Not so important					2	7.1%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	3	27.3%	8	21.6%	6	21.4%	3	21.4%
	Very important	4	36.4%	15	40.5%	11	39.3%	5	35.7%
	Of the highest importance	4	36.4%	14	37.8%	8	28.6%	4	28.6%
Rich historical	Not important			1	2.7%	1	3.6%		
	Not so important	1	9.1%	3	8.1%	3	10.7%		

culture	Somewhat important	5	45.5%	11	29.7%	5	17.9%	5	35.7%
	Very important	3	27.3%	14	37.8%	14	50.0%	6	42.9%
	Of the highest importance	2	18.2%	8	21.6%	5	17.9%	3	21.4%
The climate	Not important	1	9.1%			1	3.6%	1	7.1%
	Not so important					3	10.7%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	4	36.4%	11	29.7%	4	14.3%	3	21.4%
	Very important	4	36.4%	16	43.2%	11	39.3%	3	21.4%
	Of the highest importance	2	18.2%	10	27.0%	9	32.1%	6	42.9%
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Not important			1	2.7%	1	3.7%	1	7.1%
	Not so important	2	18.2%	2	5.4%	1	3.7%		
	Somewhat important	4	36.4%	11	29.7%	7	25.9%		
	Very important	3	27.3%	13	35.1%	10	37.0%	4	28.6%
	Of the highest importance	2	18.2%	10	27.0%	8	29.6%	9	64.3%
Friendly people	Not important					1	3.6%		
	Not so important	1	9.1%			2	7.1%		
	Somewhat important	5	45.5%	6	16.2%	4	14.3%	1	7.1%
	Very important	2	18.2%	18	48.6%	6	21.4%	9	64.3%
	Of the highest importance	3	27.3%	13	35.1%	15	53.6%	4	28.6%
Level of security	Not so important	1	9.1%	1	2.7%	1	3.6%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	4	36.4%	4	10.8%	1	3.6%	1	7.1%
	Very important	1	9.1%	7	18.9%	6	21.4%	5	35.7%
	Of the highest importance	5	45.5%	25	67.6%	20	71.4%	7	50.0%

Fair prices	Not so important					1	3.7%		
	Somewhat important	4	36.4%	5	14.3%	3	11.1%	5	35.7%
	Very important	3	27.3%	12	34.3%	15	55.6%	7	50.0%
	Of the highest importance	4	36.4%	18	51.4%	8	29.6%	2	14.3%
The quality of tourists services	Not important					2	7.1%		
	Not so important			1	2.7%	1	3.6%	1	7.1%
	Somewhat important	2	18.2%	4	10.8%	2	7.1%	4	28.6%
	Very important	5	45.5%	17	45.9%	9	32.1%	6	42.9%
	Of the highest importance	4	36.4%	15	40.5%	14	50.0%	3	21.4%

Appendix 4

Frequency tables for the importance of the criteria used by travelers to choose a travel destination and the specific conditions to choose (Price at a given duration for stay and type of accommodation) by country

Travel criteria	Scale	Conditions to choose between Jordan and Egypt (Price at a given duration for stay and type of accommodation)															
		If the accommodation would be in a 4-star hotel and the price 699 euros			Total	If the price would be 799 euros			Total	If the trip would last two weeks with a price of 1099 euros			Total	If the accommodation would be in a 5-star hotel and the price 1199 euros			Total
		Egypt	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive		Egypt	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive		Egypt	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive		Egypt	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive	
Features of its landscape	Not important	5	3		8	5	3		8	4	4		8	6	2		8
	Not so important	6	8	1	15	8	6	1	15	7	6	2	15	5	6	4	15
	Somewhat important	17	14	4	35	16	15	5	36	18	10	8	36	18	11	7	36
	Very important	11	18	9	38	14	17	7	38	13	16	9	38	16	13	9	38
	Of the highest importance	11	12	6	29	12	11	6	29	10	9	10	29	12	8	9	29
Low prices	Not important	1	1		2	1	1		2		2		2	1	1		2
	Not so important	2	5		7	2	5		7	3	3	1	7	3	3	1	7
	Somewhat important	11	16	5	32	15	9	9	33	11	14	8	33	12	12	9	33

	Very important	22	16	8	46	20	19	6	45	22	13	10	45	19	14	12	45
	Of the highest importance	14	17	7	38	17	18	4	39	16	13	10	39	22	10	7	39
Rich historical culture	Not important	2	3	1	6	2	3	1	6	2	1	3	6	3	1	2	6
	Not so important	7	8	1	16	6	8	2	16	5	8	3	16	7	6	3	16
	Somewhat important	16	18	6	40	17	19	4	40	19	13	8	40	20	12	8	40
	Very important	19	15	7	41	22	12	7	41	16	16	9	41	18	15	8	41
	Of the highest importance	6	11	5	22	8	10	5	23	10	7	6	23	9	6	8	23
The climate	Not important	1	3		4	1	1	2	4	1	2	1	4	2	1	1	4
	Not so important	1	3		4	1	3		4	1	3		4	2	2		4
	Somewhat important	13	7	3	23	12	5	6	23	10	6	7	23	12	5	6	23
	Very important	14	14	9	37	18	14	7	39	14	15	10	39	16	11	12	39
	Of the highest importance	21	28	8	57	23	29	4	56	26	19	11	56	25	21	10	56
Attractive	Not important	1	2		3	1	2		3		3		3	2	1		3

beaches and good resorts	t																
	Not so important	5			5	4		1	5	4		1	5	3		2	5
	Somewhat important	10	8	6	24	13	7	4	24	12	6	6	24	13	4	7	24
	Very important	14	15	4	33	14	13	6	33	13	14	6	33	15	12	6	33
	Of the highest importance	20	29	10	59	23	29	8	60	22	22	16	60	23	23	14	60
Friendly people	Not important	1			1	1			1		1		1	1			1
	Not so important	2		1	3	1		2	3	1		2	3	1		2	3
	Somewhat important	10	5	3	18	10	6	2	18	8	7	3	18	10	6	2	18
	Very important	20	24	9	53	23	22	9	54	25	18	11	54	22	18	14	54
	Of the highest importance	17	26	7	50	20	24	6	50	18	19	13	50	23	16	11	50
Level of security	Not important		2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2
	Not so important	3	2		5	4	1		5	2	3		5	4	1		5
	Somewhat important	11	9	3	23	12	8	3	23	9	8	6	23	10	7	6	23

	Very important	11	20	4	35	11	19	5	35	17	9	9	35	15	9	11	35
	Of the highest importance	25	22	13	60	28	22	11	61	24	23	14	61	28	21	12	61
Fair prices	Not so important	2			2	2			2		2		2	1	1		2
	Somewhat important	9	7	3	19	6	8	5	19	10	5	4	19	8	4	7	19
	Very important	18	15	7	40	20	12	9	41	20	13	8	41	21	12	8	41
	Of the highest importance	19	32	10	61	24	32	5	61	20	24	17	61	25	22	14	61
The quality of tourists services	Not important	1	1		2	1	1		2		2		2	1	1		2
	Not so important	2	1		3	2	1		3	2	1		3	1	2		3
	Somewhat important	7	4	3	14	6	3	5	14	8	4	2	14	8	3	3	14
	Very important	14	20	11	45	18	18	9	45	16	15	14	45	19	12	14	45
	Of the highest importance	26	29	6	61	28	29	5	62	26	23	13	62	28	22	12	62

Travel	Scale	Conditions to choose between Jordan and USA (Price at a given duration for stay and type of accommodation)
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criteria		If the accommodation would be in a 4-star hotel and the price 1099 euros			Total	If the price would be 1199 euros			Total	If the trip would last two weeks with a price of 1499 euros			Total	If the accommodation would be in a 5-star hotel and the price 1599 euros			Total
		USA	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive		USA	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive		USA	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive		USA	Jordan	Both destinations are equally attractive	
Features of its landscape	Not important	2	3	3	8	1	4	3	8	2	3	3	8	3	2	3	8
	Not so important	7	5	3	15	7	3	5	15	6	3	6	15	6	4	5	15
	Somewhat important	18	13	4	35	16	15	5	36	20	7	9	36	19	7	10	36
	Very important	17	13	8	38	18	11	9	38	20	9	9	38	17	11	10	38
	Of the highest importance	11	15	3	29	9	15	5	29	11	14	4	29	12	12	5	29
Low prices	Not important	1	1		2	1	1		2		1	1	2	1		1	2
	Not so important		5	2	7		5	2	7	1	4	2	7	1	4	2	7
	Somewhat important	17	9	6	32	13	10	10	33	17	6	10	33	16	6	11	33
	Very important	21	17	8	46	20	17	8	45	22	13	10	45	21	14	10	45
	Of the highest importance	16	17	5	38	17	15	7	39	19	12	8	39	18	12	9	39

Rich historical culture	Not important	2	1	3	6	1	1	4	6	2		4	6	2		4	6
	Not so important	5	7	4	16	5	7	4	16	3	7	6	16	4	6	6	16
	Somewhat important	19	14	7	40	18	12	10	40	21	12	7	40	20	13	7	40
	Very important	21	16	4	41	17	20	4	41	19	13	9	41	18	12	11	41
	Of the highest importance	8	11	3	22	10	8	5	23	14	4	5	23	13	5	5	23
The climate	Not important	3	1		4	1	2	1	4	2	1	1	4	2	1	1	4
	Not so important		4		4		4		4		4		4	1	3		4
	Somewhat important	12	9	2	23	12	9	2	23	13	9	1	23	13	8	2	23
	Very important	17	16	4	37	18	17	4	39	20	11	8	39	19	11	9	39
	Of the highest importance	23	19	15	57	20	16	20	56	24	11	21	56	22	13	21	56
Attractive beaches and good resorts	Not important	1	2		3	1	2		3	1	2		3	2	1		3
	Not so important	3	1	1	5	2	2	1	5	3	2		5	2	3		5
	Somewhat important	13	9	2	24	11	9	4	24	15	6	3	24	13	7	4	24

	Very important	13	16	4	33	14	17	2	33	15	12	6	33	15	11	7	33
	Of the highest importance	25	20	14	59	23	17	20	60	25	13	22	60	25	13	22	60
Friendly people	Not important		1		1		1		1		1		1	1			1
	Not so important	2	1		3	2		1	3	2	1		3	2		1	3
	Somewhat important	9	7	2	18	8	9	1	18	11	5	2	18	10	6	2	18
	Very important	24	19	10	53	20	19	15	54	22	15	17	54	21	15	18	54
	Of the highest importance	20	21	9	50	21	19	10	50	24	14	12	50	23	15	12	50
Level of security	Not important		1	1	2		1	1	2		1	1	2		1	1	2
	Not so important	3	2		5	2	3		5	3	2		5	3	2		5
	Somewhat important	10	7	6	23	8	7	8	23	9	4	10	23	9	4	10	23
	Very important	17	12	6	35	17	12	6	35	19	8	8	35	18	9	8	35
	Of the highest importance	25	27	8	60	24	25	12	61	28	21	12	61	27	20	14	61
Fair prices	Not so important	1	1		2	1	1		2	1	1		2	2			2

	t																
	Somewh at importan t	10	9		19	8	9	2	19	9	7	3	19	7	9	3	19
	Very importan t	17	17	6	40	17	16	8	41	22	12	7	41	21	11	9	41
	Of the highest importan ce	26	20	15	61	24	20	17	61	26	14	21	61	26	14	21	61
The quality of tourists services	Not importan t		2		2		2		2		2		2	1	1		2
	Not so importan t	1	2		3	1	2		3	2	1		3	2	1		3
	Somewh at importan t	8	5	1	14	5	6	3	14	8	5	1	14	7	6	1	14
	Very importan t	20	18	7	45	20	15	10	45	24	12	9	45	21	13	11	45
	Of the highest importan ce	26	22	13	61	25	23	14	62	25	16	21	62	26	15	21	62

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