




IMPACTS OF COUNTRY-SPECIFIC ASPECTS ON TOURISTS' REVISIT INTENTIONS TO CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF DESTINATION IMAGE

Abstract

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Purpose – The current study seeks to appraise the key factors motivating foreign tourists to revisit cultural heritage sites.

Methodology/Design/Approach – Data were gathered through questionnaires distributed to foreign tourists visiting Jordanian heritage sites, selected using purposive sampling. Of the 350 responses gathered, 309 were deemed suitable for statistical analysis. Structural equation modeling was conducted using SmartPLS.

Findings – Safety, security, and the destination image were revealed to be positively associated with the intention to revisit cultural and heritage places. Contrarily, country knowledge, accessibility, and price reasonableness were insignificant. The destination image significantly mediated the relationship between country-specific aspects and revisit intention. Nonetheless, the mediation effect was insignificant on the relationship between country knowledge, accessibility, and price reasonableness.

Originality of the research – The current study applied a novel approach by incorporating country-specific factors, the destination image, and revisit intention to appraise cultural and heritage tourism. Specifically, a positive destination image formed after visiting cultural and heritage sites significantly influences revisit intention, fostering destination loyalty and contributing to the economic sustainability of the tourism sector.

Keywords Country-specific aspects, destination image, revisit intention, SOR theory, cultural and heritage tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Cultural and heritage tourism (CHT) plays an essential role in global tourism, attracting millions of visitors eager to explore historical landmarks, local traditions and artistic heritage. Per the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2023), cultural tourism accounted for over 40% of international travel, making it a vital driver for developing economies, preserving cultures, and growing sustainable tourism. CHT destinations therefore must ensure visitors satisfaction and encourage repeat visitation, as returning tourist contribute significantly to local economies (Ramkissoon et al., 2011; Chen & Gursoy, 2001). However, despite their growing popularity, many CHT sites face challenges in retaining repeat visitors, raising concerns about destination loyalty and long-term competitiveness (Atsız & Akova, 2021). Understanding why tourists choose to return or not remains a critical issue for both tourism policy makers and tourism operators.

Research on tourists' revisit intention has identified several key factors influencing tourists' return behaviour. Related studies have frequently highlighted destination image, service quality, perceived safety, place dependence and visitor satisfaction as major contributors to repeat visitation (Arif et al., 2024; Hamid et al., 2021; Prayag et al., 2017). Consequently, to strengthen tourist loyalty, tourism stakeholders are encouraged to invest in infrastructure, enhanced visitor experiences, and branding strategies (Pike & Ryan, 2004). While these above-mentioned factors are well documented, what remains underexplored particularly in CHT is the influence of country-specific elements such as national safety levels, accessibility, pricing structures and tourists' familiarity with a country (Al-Sarhan & Al-Azzam, 2023; Cham et al., 2021). Given that tourists' overall impressions of a country itself can significantly impact their decision to return, a more comprehensive investigation is necessary.

The current study sought to investigate this underexplored aspect by analysing how country-specific factors influence tourists' perceptions and ultimately induce revisit intention. While prior research has acknowledged that external environmental factors shape travel decisions, only few studies have systematically examined these elements within a structural behaviour framework (Shatnawi et al., 2023). Additionally, the current study analysed the mediating role of destination image. While destination image is widely recognised as a determinant of tourist behaviour (Stylidis et al., 2017), its mediating role in the relationship between country-specific factors and revisit intention has received little attention. Exploring this relationship will offer valuable insights for improving visitor retention and strengthening the competitiveness of cultural heritage destinations worldwide.

To systematically examine these relationships, this study adopts the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) which provides a structured framework for understanding how country-specific factors, destination image influence tourist perceptions and ultimately shape their revisit intention. This model suggests that external stimuli (S), like safety, accessibility, pricing, and country knowledge, affect internal perceptions (O), which are represented by destination image, ultimately influencing behavioural responses (R), such as revisit intention. In contrast, many previous studies have instead applied the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to predict revisit intention (Abbasi et al., 2021; Soliman, 2021). While TPB is widely used for examining individual attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control, it primarily focuses on personal decision-making processes rather than external environmental factors. Studies such as Han and Kim (2010), Lam and Hsu (2006), and Hsu and Huang (2012) have effectively used TPB to analyse repeat visitation behaviour, yet they have overlooked the role of external country-specific factors in shaping tourist's perception. Pahrudin et al. (2023) used social exchange theory to examine Indonesian locals' perceptions of MotoGP and tourist attractions. For the current study, the SOR model was more appropriate as it captured the influence of a destination's broader environment on tourists' perceptions and decision-making, providing a holistic perspective on revisit intention in CHT.

While previous studies on tourism have explored factors such as destination image and service quality (Alazaizeh et al., 2024), limited research has systematically examined how country-specific factors collectively shape visitors' perceptions and their likelihood of returning. Understanding these influences is particularly relevant for tourism authorities and policymakers, as they strive to enhance visitor experiences, improve infrastructure and implement sustainable tourism strategies. Moreover, the findings of this study offer valuable for CHT destinations worldwide. Therefore, this research aims to (1) investigate the impact of country specific factors (safety, accessibility, pricing, country knowledge) on destination image and revisit intention and (2) assess the mediating role of destination image in shaping the relationship between country-specific factors and tourists' revisit intentions.

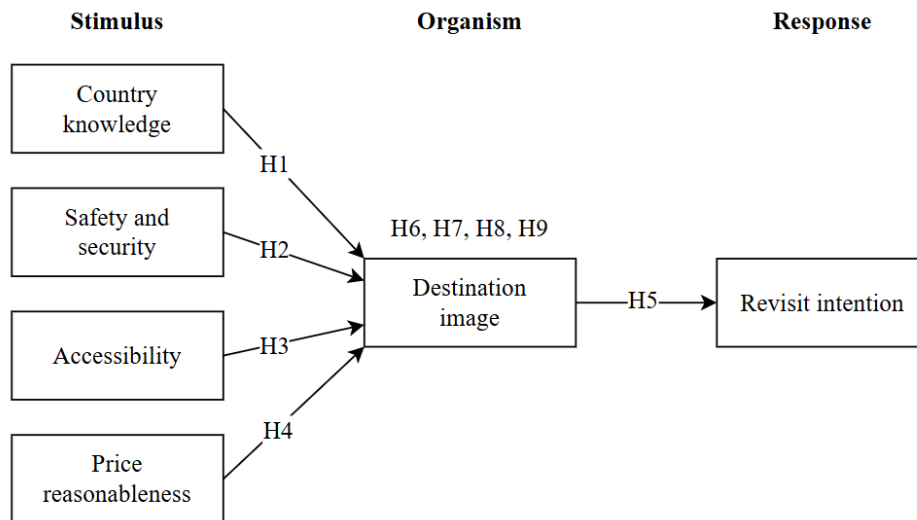
1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. The SOR model

The SOR model developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) elucidates that the external stimuli (S) in a specific environment will impact an individual or the organism's (O) cognitive and affective responses, which results in particular behavioural responses (R). Bagozzi (1986) elaborated on the model, positing that the stimuli include external factors and the organism is the internal process between stimuli and responses. The SOR model has been extensively implemented across different contexts and countries, including tourism. Chang et al. (2014) demonstrated that theme park tourists who perceived the physical environments more authentically exhibited a higher perception of hedonic and utilitarian values and a higher tendency to revisit the park. Nunthiphatprueksa (2017) also discovered that the cognitive and affective aspects of the destination image significantly predicted WOM, e-WOM, and the intention to revisit. Subsequently, Kim et al. (2020) discovered the significant influence of authentic experiences in virtual reality (VR) tourism on cognitive and affective responses. Additionally, Cheng et al. (2022) extended the SOR model by applying service innovation as the stimulus, destination image and tourist satisfaction as the organism, and destination loyalty as the response, which were the functional values. The SOR theory allows flexibility to select pertinent constructs to represent the stimulus, organism, and response, which ensures high applicability in different disciplines.

Accordingly, the present study implemented the framework to identify CHT destination qualities and characteristics (see Figure 1). The stimulus was the country-specific aspects, the destination image was the organism or mediator, and the revisit intention was the response to account for the significance of CHT characteristics. Nonetheless, the SOR theory was limited when measuring the destination image, country-specific aspects, and revisit intention. Despite the increasing acknowledgment of country-specific factors in shaping destination image, the literature often lacks a detailed exploration of how these elements uniquely affect perceptions in specific contexts. Notably, studies by Chaieb and Chaieb (2023) and Cheng et al. (2022) emphasised cultural and economic influences but did not sufficiently address their specific impacts in various locales, while Cham et al. (2021) pointed out that the interactions between these factors and destination image remain underexamined. Thus, this study aimed to bridge this critical gap by examining how country-specific factors influence destination image and revisit intention within a structured behavioural framework. By extending existing theoretical perspectives, this research provides valuable insights applicable to diverse tourism contexts, contributing to a deeper understanding of how external environmental factors shape tourist behaviour and destination competitiveness.

Figure 1: The research framework



1.2. Revisit intention

Revisit intention (RI), or a visitor's predisposition to revisit a specific destination, has been the main focus of past scholars (Guan et al., 2022). RI includes various tourist behaviours, including selecting a destination, assessing the experience after visits, and arranging future visits, all based on tourists' satisfaction levels and perceived values, to determine future returns and also recommendations to other individuals (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Bui, 2023). RI is crucial to improving tourism profitability (Foroudi et al., 2021) as it signifies a future commitment to revisit the same attraction (Hallak et al., 2018; Rousta & Jamshidi, 2020; Zhou et al., 2023) depending on the experience, attitude, perceived limitations, and incentives (Ayoub & Mohamed, 2024; Nguyen, 2020). RI derived from positive experiences (Beerli-Palacio & Martín-Santana, 2018) is pivotal to the tourism sector in that it helps to reduce marketing expenditures while promoting the attraction for higher profitability (Alves et al., 2019; Beerli-Palacio & Martín-Santana, 2018; Stylos et al., 2017).

1.3. Country knowledge

Country knowledge refers to the extensive collection of facts and concepts acquired by tourists about a specific destination (Cham et al., 2021). Two categories exist, namely declarative knowledge, encompassing mental models of concepts, relationships, and objects, and procedural knowledge, comprising the details of performing certain operations (Cham et al., 2021). Most tourists possess declarative knowledge about a destination (Kim et al., 2019), obtained from friends, media, commercials, and personal experiences. The association between knowledge and image has been recognised as integral. Individuals' knowledge is said to significantly impact their perception as there is a strong association between the two. So, in tourism context, relevant country knowledge will determine subjective impressions for creating an internal mental representation of the destination (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Chaieb & Chaieb, 2023; Chen et al., 2016; Styliadis et al., 2017). Thus, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H1: Country knowledge has a positive relationship with destination image.

1.4. Safety and security

Safety and security refer to the absence of hazards associated with food, transportation, crime, and natural disasters, which will significantly influence tourists' perceptions of a location and relationships with management (Cham et al., 2021). Safety is a fundamental factor in tourism, as it directly influences tourists' willingness to visit a destination (Araña & León, 2008). Adequate security measures will positively influence destination administration and reputation (Cham et al., 2021; Chetthamrongchai, 2017; Mulwa & Owiyo, 2018). Implementing safety and security measures is critical for continuous tourism growth (Chetthamrongchai, 2017; Hashim et al., 2018; Mulwa & Owiyo, 2018). In a geopolitically sensitive regions, safety and security perceptions play a crucial role in shaping tourist behaviour. While some destinations may be considered safer than many neighbouring regions, broader geopolitical instability can still create negative perceptions among potential tourists (Liu et al., 2022). Promoting accurate safety information and investing in visible security measures at heritage sites is essential (Alfandi, 2020; Alrawadieh et al., 2019). The current study proposed the following hypothesis:

H2: Safety and security have a positive relationship with destination image.

1.5. Accessibility

Accessibility is “the high geographical connectedness among regions facilitated by a seamless travel experience and efficient transportation options” (Ceccato et al., 2020, p. 302). Porto et al. (2018, p. 75) also delineated that accessibility is “the collection of requirements a place must have to maximise use by all, including people with disabilities”, which determines travel choices (Park et al., 2019; Reitsamer & Brunner-Sperdin, 2017). Accessibility is vital to international tourists (Yen et al., 2021). A destination’s accessibility is influenced by travel time and resource availability (Gehrke et al., 2020; Reitsamer & Brunner-Sperdin, 2017; Zhu & Diao, 2020). Past studies have established positive relationship between satisfaction, accessibility, destination choices, and revisit intention (Bianchi et al., 2017; Sangpikul, 2018), highlighting their role in attracting foreign tourists to cultural sites and shaping destination image (Porto et al., 2018). However, many CHT destinations are situated in remote areas, making physical accessibility a challenge. Recent efforts to improve infrastructure, such as enhancing trails in Petra for tourists with disabilities, have shown how accessibility can be improved (Shatnawi et al., 2023). The present study proposed the following hypothesis:

H3: Accessibility has a positive relationship with destination image.

1.6. Price reasonableness

Price will elicit strong sentiments due to multiple subjective and objective factors. The subjective factors include consumers’ perceptions of product value while the objective factors encompass the actual monetary amount (Moon & Han, 2019). Cham et al. (2021) defined price reasonableness as consumers’ perceptions of whether a product or service price is suitable compared to competitors’ offered prices. Accordingly, consumers will compare different prices before purchasing a service or product (Cham et al., 2018). Tourists also consider previous experiences when comparing prices. Expensive costs will be required to be justified with an overall positive experience (Moon & Han, 2019) as pricing is frequently perceived as a sacrifice through the expense of acquiring a product or service (Zeithaml, 1988). Han et al. (2019) discovered that pricing significantly influenced purchasing decisions, wherein customers would prefer reasonable prices based on the actual and benchmarked prices (Kim et al., 2023). Prices and the perceptions of a destination were also revealed to be significantly and positively associated (Cham et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2016). The current study posited the following hypothesis:

H4: Price reasonableness has a positive relationship with destination image.

1.7. Destination image and revisit intention

Destination image refers to tourists’ cognitive representations of preferred vacation sites (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012; Nazir et al., 2021). Song et al. (2017) found that golf tourists’ perceptions of the Hainan Area in China significantly influenced their revisit intention (RI). Iranian tourists’ RI was also positively impacted by the perspective on Iran as a preferred sports tourist destination (Allameh et al., 2015). Moreover, Sharma and Nayak (2018) and Bui (2023) demonstrated that the overall perceptions of a destination significantly impacted the RI and the willingness to recommend. Chew and Jahari (2014) also demonstrated that Malaysian tourists having a positive attitude towards Japan were more inclined to revisit in the future and those with negative attitude less willing. The following hypothesis was propounded:

H5: Destination image has a positive relationship with RI.

1.8. Mediation

Mediation analysis will enhance existing models and theories (Nghah et al., 2020). Lockwood and Pyun (2019) posited that the role of a mediator can be performed by an organism variable. In the current study, destination image was selected as the mediator in the relationship between country-specific factors and RI to increase the predictive power of the theoretical framework. Existing studies (Cham et al., 2021; Foster & Sidhartais, 2019; Zhou et al., 2023) have employed numerous mediating variables for the aforementioned relationship and provided evidence to support the analysis (Cham et al., 2021). Theoretically, country-specific factors will also potentially impact individuals’ future behaviours. Cham et al. (2021) and Stylos et al. (2016, 2017) found a significant relationship between destination image, country-specific factors, and RI. Cham et al. (2021) also recommended a positive relationship between country-specific factors and RI to fulfil the requirements of a mediation analysis. Several hypotheses were proposed:

H6: Destination image mediates the relationship between country knowledge and RI.

H7: Destination image mediates the relationship between safety and security and RI.

H8: Destination image mediates the relationship between accessibility and RI.

H9: Destination image mediates the relationship between price reasonableness and RI.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data were collected quantitatively from international tourists at Jordanian CHT destinations through a self-administered survey questionnaire. Purposive sampling was performed owing to the absence of a comprehensive sampling frame. The size of sample was determined via the G*power software by considering the number of predictors (Hair et al., 2017). A minimum sample size of 85 respondents was needed to achieve 80% power with four predictors at a medium effect size of 0.15 and a significance level of 0.05 (Gefen et al., 2011). The sample size of 350 participants was used in the current study, which was more than sufficient.

The questionnaire contained two sections, namely demographic information and questions measuring the study's variables. The measurement items were borrowed from past studies but the content was modified to adapt to the current context while maintaining the original meaning. As a procedural strategy to reduce common method variation (CMV), Podsakoff et al. (2003) recommended utilising different measurement scales when measuring independent and dependent variables. When all items were rated on the same scale, respondents might perceive all items as the same or repetitive, which might lead to lower attention, understanding, remembrance, and evaluation of the items. Thus, the independent variables were examined on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) while the dependent variable was appraised on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). A pilot test was conducted with 30 international tourists to ensure that the measurement items were clear and easily understood by respondents.

The questionnaires were distributed to all first-time international tourists to Jordan, who were at least 18 years old. The locations involved were popular Jordanian tourist destinations, including Wadi Rum, Petra, Madaba Map, Ajloun, Jerash, Maghtas (Baptism), and Um Qais. Data collection took place between June and August 2023, with tour guides and operators providing voluntary assistance. A total of 350 completed sets of questionnaires were collected. However, 41 sets of questionnaires were removed due to straight-line answers and recurrent visits. The remaining 309 questionnaires without missing responses were subjected to analysis.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

Structural equation modelling (SEM) based on variance was conducted using Smart Partial Least Squares (PLS) software v.4.0.9.9. Hair et al. (2019) posited that the software is suitable for testing hypotheses in exploratory research. A normality test was conducted to ensure no significant abnormalities (Hair et al., 2017), although SmartPLS is a non-parametric software. Mardia's multivariate skewness and kurtosis were analysed by adhering to Hair et al.'s (2017) and Halimi et al.'s (2022) recommendations. The findings revealed non-normality ($\beta = 6.35, p < 0.01$; $\beta = 58.67, p < 0.01$), meaning the data were multivariate and deviated from a normal distribution. Thus, the software is suitable for non-normal data. Podsakoff et al. (2012) recommended procedural and statistical approaches to resolve common-method variance (CMV) issues due to a single data collection source. Accordingly, the current study incorporated different measurement scales for independent and dependent variables. A lateral collinearity test was also conducted (Kock, 2015) to determine the variance inflation factor (VIF) value. Any VIF value below 3.3 is considered unbiased. The VIF value as presented in Table 1 was below 3.3, which indicated no CMV issues.

Table 1: Full collinearity testing

Construct	DI	PR	ACC	CK	RI	SAF
VIF	1.268	1.561	1.818	1.729	1.229	1.844

Note. DI = Destination Image, PR = Price Reasonableness, ACC = Accessibility, CK = Country Knowledge, RI = Revisit Intention, SAF = Safety and Security.

3.1. Descriptive analysis

An 88.3% response rate was achieved after 309 valid responses were statistically analysed via the SPSS 26.0 software. Most participants were women (50.5%) and aged 18 to 29 years old (32%). Most participants were from European countries, including Spain, Italy, Germany, France, and England (81.9%), followed by North America—the United States of America, Canada, and Mexico (11.9%), Asia (5.9%), and Australia (0.3%). More than one-third of the participants (36.9%) possessed a master's degree and approximately two-thirds were employed (63.1%). A total of 34.6% of participants earned \$2,001 to \$3,000 monthly. Table 2 presents respondents' demographic characteristics.

Table 2: The demographic attributes of respondents (n = 309)

Attribute	Frequency	%	Attribute	Frequency	%
<i>Gender</i>			<i>Employment status</i>		
Male	153	49.5	Employed	195	63.1
Female	156	50.5	Self-employed	22	7.1
<i>Continent of origin</i>			Unemployed	32	10.4
Europe	253	81.9	Retired	21	6.8
North America	37	11.9	Student	39	12.6
Asia	18	5.9	<i>Monthly income</i>		
Australia	1	0.3	Below \$1000	37	12.0
<i>Age</i>			\$1,001-\$2,000	66	21.4
18-29 years old	99	32.0	\$2,001-\$3,000	107	34.6
30-39 years old	92	29.8	\$3,001-\$4,000	66	21.4
40-49 years old	42	13.6	\$4,001-\$5,000	11	3.6
50-59 years old	49	15.9	Above \$5,000	22	7.1
60 years old and above	27	8.7	<i>Visited CHT site</i>		
<i>Marital status</i>			Petra	278	90.0
Single	133	43.0	Wadi Rum	269	87.0
Married	124	40.1	Jerash	260	84.1
Divorced	52	16.8	Ajloun	96	31.0
<i>Education</i>			Madaba Map	160	51.8
High school	41	13.3	Um Qais	32	10.4
Diploma	41	13.3	Maghtas (Baptism)	72	23.3
Bachelor's	113	36.6			
Master's or above	114	36.9			

3.2. Measurement model assessment

For hypothesis testing, a two-step method was employed, which involved assessing the measurement model followed by structural models. The measurement model assesses the relationships between items and constructs, whereas the structural model evaluates the relationships between exogenous and endogenous constructs (Ngah et al., 2014). Both convergent validity and discriminant validity should also be determined. Convergent validity is required to validate that the items effectively measure respective constructs. Specifically, convergent validity will be considered adequate if loading and average variance extracted (AVE) values equal to or exceeding 0.5 and the composite reliability (CR) value exceeds 0.7 (Hair et al., 2019). The AVE is a statistical measure assessing the variation of components inside a structure while CR appraises the reliability and validity of variables describing a latent structure. Table 3 demonstrates that all convergent validity criteria were fulfilled, indicating no concerns regarding convergent validity. In addition, Henseler et al.'s (2015) method was adhered to when examining discriminant validity through the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio. Table 4 illustrates that all HTMT values were below 0.85, which suggested sufficient discriminant validity (Franke & Sarstedt, 2019).

Table 3: Convergent validity testing results

Construct	Code	Item	Loading	CR	AVE
Accessibility	ACC1	Jordan offers direct flights from where I live.	0.568	0.852	0.540
	ACC2	Jordan has a good transportation system.	0.834		
	ACC3	Information for tourists at entry points is available.	0.761		
	ACC4	The check-in/check-out process at the airport is easy and smooth.	0.683		
	ACC5	Accessibility to tourist attractions is easy.	0.796		
Country Knowledge	CK1	I can easily obtain information about Jordan.	0.623	0.803	0.506
	CK2	I have knowledge about Jordan.	0.775		
	CK3	I know how to travel around Jordan.	0.684		
	CK5	The quality of cultural and heritage tourism services in Jordan is excellent.	0.754		
Destination Image	DI1	Jordan has a quality cultural and heritage tourism infrastructure.	0.700	0.761	0.523
	DI3	Jordan is safe and stable.	0.875		
	DI4	Jordan is rich in cultural and heritage tourism.	0.560		
Revisit Intention	RI1	I would visit Jordan again in the near future.	0.890	0.918	0.694
	RI2	I am interested in revisiting Jordan again.	0.883		
	RI3	I will come back again to Jordan.	0.754		
	RI4	There is a likelihood that I would visit Jordan in the future.	0.764		
	RI5	I have a strong intention to visit Jordan again.	0.863		
Price Reasonableness	PR1	I think the price for cultural and heritage tourism services in Jordan is fair.	0.783	0.902	0.649
	PR2	The price for various cultural and heritage tourism facilities and services in Jordan is appropriate.	0.833		
	PR3	The price of products and services at cultural and heritage sites is reasonable.	0.849		
	PR4	The price for a cultural and heritage tour package is appropriate with the quality of facilities and services provided.	0.831		
	PR5	Overall, the price charged by the cultural and heritage tourism service provider(s) in Jordan is inexpensive.	0.726		
Safety and Security	SAF1	It is safe to travel alone in Jordan.	0.736	0.884	0.605
	SAF2	Jordan is politically stable.	0.798		
	SAF3	Jordan has a safe environment.	0.823		
	SAF4	Jordan is not targeted by terrorists.	0.787		
	SAF5	Jordan has a safe transportation system.	0.740		

Table 4: Discriminant validity testing results via the HTMT ratio

Construct	ACC	CK	DI	RI	RP	SAF
ACC						
CK	0.740					
DI	0.337	0.432				
RI	0.382	0.449	0.270			
PR	0.626	0.590	0.355	0.400		
SAF	0.676	0.704	0.515	0.376	0.563	

3.3. Structural model assessment

The VIF values were investigated at a threshold of below 3.3 to reduce multicollinearity (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2006). All VIF values were below 3.3, which indicated no severe multicollinearity issues (see Table 5). Subsequently, hypotheses were tested via bootstrapping and a 5,000-resampling approach. Hypotheses were considered supported if beta values were consistent with the hypothesis direction, in which t-values exceeded 1.645, p-values were below 0.05, and the bias-corrected confidence interval (Lower Level and Upper Level) did not include zero (Hair et al., 2019). The current study developed five direct hypotheses and four intermediate hypotheses. The first hypothesis (H1) postulated a positive relationship between CK and DI. The results corroborated H1 with a statistically significant relationship between CK and DI ($\beta = 0.128, p < 0.036$), which supported H1. Moreover, a significant relationship was demonstrated between SAF and DI (H2; $\beta = 0.311, p < 0.00$), which supported H2. Nevertheless, this study revealed inadequate evidence to support the relationships between ACC and DI ($\beta = 0.003, p = 0.485$) and PR and DI ($\beta = 0.097, p = 0.051$), which did not support H3 and H4. Comparatively, H5 was supported by the significant relationship between DI and RI ($\beta = 0.235, p < 0.001$). Table 5 depicts the direct hypothesis testing results.

Table 5: Direct hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis	β	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LL	UL	R ²	f ²	VIF	Decision
H1: CK → DI	0.128	0.071	1.803	0.036	0.003	0.237	0.207	0.012	1.659	Supported
H2: SAF → DI	0.311	0.085	3.643	0.000	0.167	0.450		0.071	1.719	Supported
H3: ACC → DI	0.003	0.067	0.038	0.485	-0.122	0.101		0.000	1.810	Not supported
H4: PR → DI	0.097	0.060	1.636	0.051	-0.002	0.194		0.008	1.518	Not supported
H5: DI → RI	0.235	0.065	3.603	0.000	0.122	0.322	0.055	0.058	1.000	Supported

Preacher and Hayes's (2008) bootstrapping of the indirect impact were implemented to investigate the mediation effects. Three out of the four tested hypotheses were unsupported. Accordingly, no significant mediation effect was observed between CK and DI ($\beta = 0.030, p = 0.075, t = 1.441, LL = 0.000, UL = 0.067$). The relationship between ACC and DI also did not produce a significant mediation effect ($\beta = 0.001, p = 0.486, t = 0.035, LL = -0.029, UL = 0.026$). Furthermore, no statistically significant relationship existed between PR and DI ($\beta = 0.023, p = 0.073, t = 1.453, LL = -0.001, UL = 0.051$). Resultantly, H6, H8, and H9 were not supported. Contrarily, DI significantly and positively mediated the relationship between SAF and RI. No zero values were observed between the lower level (LL) and upper level (UL) of the confidence interval, which meant that SAF and DI were significantly associated ($\beta = 0.073, p \leq 0.007, t = 2.482, LL = 0.032, UL = 0.125$). Hence, H7 was supported. The R² values of 0.207 for DI and 0.055 for RI indicated that the combination of CK, SAF, ACC and PR accounted for 20.7 % of the variance in DI. Meanwhile, DI explained 5.5% of the variance for RI. Cohen (1988) identified 0.02 as a small effect size, 0.15 as medium, and 0.35 as large for (f²). This study revealed that the effect sizes of all factors were small. Table 6 presents the indirect hypothesis testing results.

Table 6: Indirect hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis	β	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LL	UL	Decision
H6: CK → DI → RI	0.030	0.021	1.441	0.075	0.000	0.067	Not supported
H7: SAF → DI → RI	0.073	0.029	2.482	0.007	0.032	0.125	Supported
H8: ACC → DI → RI	0.001	0.017	0.035	0.486	-0.029	0.026	Not supported
H9: PR → DI → RI	0.023	0.016	1.453	0.073	-0.001	0.051	Not supported

3.4. PLSpredict

Evaluating the predictive power of the theoretical framework is the primary research objective. According to Shmueli et al.'s (2019) recommendation, the predictive relevance (Q²) value should exceed 0. Hair et al. (2017) posited that a model has strong predictive significance if the Q² value is greater than 0. This study examined prediction errors via root-mean-square errors (RMSEs) for both naïve linear modelling (LM) and PLS-SEM. A higher RMSE value indicates lower model efficacy. Shmueli et al. (2019) concluded that the corroborated predictive capacity is insufficient if the data reveal that PLS-SEM consistently produces more mistakes than LM. Most items in Table 7 displayed negative values, which signalled a moderate predictive power (Shmueli et al., 2019).

Table 7: **PLSpredict**

Item	Q ² Predict	PLS-SEM_RMSE	LM_RMSE	PLS-LM	Decision
DI1	0.044	0.621	0.625	-0.004	
DI3	0.179	0.607	0.623	-0.016	High
DI4	0.002	0.639	0.663	-0.024	
RI1	0.052	1.414	1.386	0.028	
RI2	0.040	1.292	1.304	-0.012	
RI3	0.066	1.736	1.552	0.184	Moderate
RI4	0.039	1.347	1.406	-0.059	
RI5	0.051	1.715	1.67	0.045	

4. DISCUSSION

The present study analysed the factors contributing to foreign tourists' revisit intentions by applying the SOR model. In the analysis, five direct and four mediating hypotheses were examined, with the results supporting only four hypotheses. In particular, country knowledge (CK) significantly impacted international tourists' perceptions of Jordan as a CHT site (H1), which was consistent with previous studies' findings (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Cham et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2016). Conversely, the finding contradicted that of Setiawan et al. (2022), who observed that knowledge regarding Indonesia destination image (DI) in terms of Formula E electric car racing did not significantly influence the intention to revisit. Hahm and Tasci (2020) also discovered that CK produced a lower influence than DI, with the relationship between CK and revisit intention (RI) remaining constant regardless of DI. The results signal that a positive DI can assist a tourism destination in attracting more tourists, despite negative information about the destination. Meanwhile, a positive relationship was demonstrated between SAF and DI (H2), which corresponded to prior works' findings (Cham et al., 2021; Chetthamrongchai, 2017; Mulwa & Owiyo, 2018). These findings suggest that safety and security is essential to ensuring positive DI and tourists' relationship with the management. Tourists who perceive high security and safety will regard an attraction as more appealing (Vujičić et al., 2020). In addition, a significant positive relationship was discovered between DI and RI, which supported (H5) and was consistent with findings by prior researchers (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Sharma & Nayak, 2018; Song et al., 2017; Styliadis et al. 2017). These findings suggest an integral role of DI in increasing tourists' revisit intentions. Additionally, local authorities should concentrate on reinforcing key determinants of positive DI.

An insignificant relationship was discovered between ACC and DI (H3), which was not in line with findings by Porto et al. (2018), Cham et al. (2021), and Yen et al. (2021) that revealed a positive relationship. Nonetheless, Ariesta et al. (2020) discovered that ACC did not significantly impact the DI of the Wakatobi Regency, implying that ACC was not a key determinant in shaping tourists' perception of a destination despite offering convenience. These findings suggest that the ACC value tends to be different depending on the tourist types and travel purposes. Catering to the specific requirements and preferences of different tourist types will assist the tourism sector in effectively and efficiently fulfilling respective needs while offering unique experiences. Furthermore, an insignificant relationship was demonstrated between PR and DI (H4), which did not correspond to findings by prior scholars (Cham et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2016). Moon and Han (2019) also discovered that the PR's impact on tourists' satisfaction was insignificant with negative DI, which could be due to a certain independence degree in decision-making among participants aged at least 18 years old. At the same time, the mixed results could be owing to the variations in demographics across different studies. Past research demonstrating positive relationships did not specifically concentrate on international tourists, whereas studies with insignificant findings investigated specific study populations and nationalities (Cham et al., 2021). Meanwhile, DI significantly mediated the relationship between country-specific factors and RI, although the mediation impact was only significant on the relationship between SAF and RI (SAF→DI→RI) with a small effect size.

4.1. Implications

4.1.1. Theoretical implications

The current study bridged the existing CHT literature gap, where previous studies neglected country-specific aspects by primarily focusing on DI and tourist demeanours (Zhou et al., 2023). The current applied the SOR model, with country-specific aspects as the stimulus, DI as the organism, and RI as the response to improve the predictive power of the model, thus contributing valuable insights into future research and supporting sustainable behaviours. The present findings may be leveraged by future academicians to improve existing approaches and enrich the current research corpus. Meanwhile, it was found that CK, ACC, and PR did not significantly impact RI mediated by DI, which could be owing to young foreign tourists' higher tourism knowledge, accessibility, and affordability levels in shaping distinctive perceptions of Jordanian CHT destinations. Furthermore, personal experiences and pricing could be the contributing factors (Cham et al., 2021). This study applied the SOR theory to explain how country-specific variables influence the formation of destination image and revisit intention. External stimuli in the CHT

context shape tourists' internal perceptions of destination image, which in turn drive their revisit intentions as a behavioural response. While previous research has validated the SOR framework in exploring post-behavioural intentions and loyalty in various tourism settings (Kim et al., 2020; Nunthiphatprueksa, 2017), its application in this specific context remains limited. By addressing this gap, the study has extended the theoretical framework and deepened the understanding of these relationships. In summary, the current study scrutinised a distinctive topic and significantly contributed to existing literature. Future scholars can leverage the results to obtain more comprehensive findings on DI and RI while refining existing methods in collecting, examining, and communicating the key determinants.

4.1.2. Practical implications

Understanding international tourists' behaviours can assist cultural and heritage site management to increase the revisit rate. The current findings related to international tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention could educate CHT industrial managers about these aspects. For instance, to cater to foreign tourists' needs, punctual public transportation schedules can be achieved by tour operators and the government by providing sufficient details on accessible options, including public transportation and rental vehicles, to ensure that the information is effectively communicated. To enhance tourists' experience value, tourism developers should also proactively promote appealing activities with more positive impacts on tourists' perceptions. For example, a wide range of options can be offered beyond nature-based or outdoor activities. Furthermore, to elevate tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention, tourist site managers should focus on delivering superior value and high-quality services. Notably, this study demonstrated that ACC and PR produced insignificant effects, which suggest the existence of other factors that significantly attract tourists and influence their intention to revisit. Therefore, local communities and individuals must collaborate in preserving, developing, and promoting the native culture of the tourist location for tourists to enjoy memorable and fulfilling vacations while establishing a high association and loyalty to the attractions with positive DI. An unpleasant event during a trip may reduce the revisit intention. The DI can be improved by enhancing visitor facilities, safety, and cleanliness, government and local enterprises can cooperate to boost the DI. Malik (2020) also argued that creative tourism must be integrated with CHT to be sustainable, suggesting the importance of collaboration and unique experiences.

4.2. Limitations and further research

Several limitations exist in the current study. First, the data were collected from only seven specific places in Jordan popular with foreign tourists, which might not fully represent the opinions and characteristics of all international tourists to Jordan. Future research can employ a more diverse sample and include a wider range of locations. Secondly, the theoretical model utilised in this study contained a modest number of variables, namely four independent variables, one mediator, and one dependent variable. Future scholars are encouraged to include more relevant aspects to their studies' framework to increase the analysis breadth and depth. Thirdly, the study was a cross-sectional survey, whereas a longitudinal method can be employed to fully understand the complexities involved in understanding tourists' DI and behavioural intentions. Lastly, the theoretical model did not encompass all possible variables that may contribute to the RI. Future studies can incorporate other factors, such as digital marketing and WOM, when analysing tourists' RI to enhance the predictive capability of the original SOR framework. Most users also prefer accessing social networking sites and other platforms through mobile internet. Including mobile users can potentially determine the significant role of social media networks in predicting DI and RI toward CHT sites.

CONCLUSION

The rapid growth of tourism in many CHT destinations necessitates a comprehensive and sustainable strategy to increase visits from both domestic and international tourists. As tourism continues to be a vital sector for economic development, regulatory bodies must identify key factors that influence tourists' satisfaction, which will in turn subsequently increase the likelihood of repeat visits. The present findings also affirmed that tourists' positive perceptions following their visits directly impact their intention to return. Therefore, exploring the country-specific factors, destination image, and revisit intention factors serve as the foundation for developing effective tourism strategies.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

In preparing this paper, the author(s) used ChatGPT for improving the readability and language of the manuscript. Following the use of this tool/service, the author(s) have reviewed and edited the content as necessary and take full responsibility for the content of the published article.

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