

# Evaluating the relationship between the role of promotional tools in MICE Tourism and the formation of the touristic image of Jordan

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## Abstract

Several factors have been shown to have a vital role in the formation of the touristic image of a destination. Promotional tools are considered a critical factor in destination image formation. This study aims to evaluate the role of promotional tools utilized to promote MICE tourism on the formation of the touristic image of Jordan. The differences in the perceptions of local and international MICE participants on the importance of promotional tools in terms of their sociodemographic characteristics were also examined. The T-test, ANOVA and simple regression analysis are used to test the hypotheses. Results show the significant differences among MICE participants' perceptions on the importance of promotional tools and the role of promotional tools to influence the touristic image of Jordan. The results of the study could be assessed by event planners, event organizers, and other MICE event stakeholders, as well as enriching the limited research in MICE tourism in developing countries.

Key words: MICE tourism, promotion, destination image, cognitive image, affective image

## 1 Introduction

MICE tourism (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) is a fast growing segment of the tourism industry; it is a new segment arising out of the increase in the number of conferences and exhibition enterprises. Meetings refer fewer than 50 participants gathering in hotels, resorts, or convention enterprises. Incentives are a reward trip offered to a participant which includes attending a meeting or a conference. Conferences refer to annual meetings with a large number of delegates. Exhibitions are of two types: Trade shows and consumer shows (Leong, 2007; Ruzic, Turkalj & Racic, 2003). MICE tourism is the most lucrative segment of the tourism industry, one that could take place any time of the year. It is the first segment of the tourism industry in Jordan. Jordan has emerged as a unique destination for hosting MICE events in the Middle East. Khammash and Alkhas (2009) asserted that Jordan realized the importance of MICE tourism for its economy and on promoting its touristic image. Therefore, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) devoted more than half of its budget to promoting MICE tourism. Both public and private sectors are sharing the effort and responsibility of promoting MICE tourism regionally and internationally. MoTA and the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) have launched two informative and interactive websites ([www.visitjordan.com](http://www.visitjordan.com) and [www.tourism.jo](http://www.tourism.jo)) to provide information about tourism products and services and to promote these services and events all over the world. In addition to this, through its offices in Europe, North America and the Middle East, the JTB has been promoting Jordan as a boutique tourism destination (JTB, 2010). Recently, Jordan Inbound Tour Operator Association (JITOA) has launched a website ([www.micejordan.org](http://www.micejordan.org)) devoted to promoting MICE tourism in Jordan. As such, Jordan plans to enhance and develop the MICE tourism industry so that it earns economic returns in the future in addition to promoting its touristic image internationally.

Despite the support and cooperation of Jordan's public and private sectors in developing and promoting MICE tourism, the research on MICE tourism in

Jordan or its touristic image is still dearth. According to Sharpley (2002), research on MICE tourism in Middle East countries such as Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Lebanon is rare.

### 1.1 The study objectives

This study has two main objectives which are as follows: To evaluate the role of promotional tools used in MICE tourism in Jordan on its touristic image formation, and to identify the relative importance of promotional tools as perceived by MICE event participants in Jordan in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics. Generally, the study highlights the importance of promotional tools and their role on the formation of the destination image from the perspective of domestic and international MICE event participants.

## 2 Literature review

### 2.1 Destination image formation concepts, importance and measurements

Destination image have been the core of research in recent years. Countries compete to host MICE events as they consider it as an image-enhancement tool or as the image maker of their modern tourism, in addition to its lucrative benefits (Richard & Wilson, 2004). Yuan and Chong (2007) indicated the role of destination image in destination choice and in the travel decision of potential visitors. Others relate the success or failure of the tourism sector in many countries around the world to the image of the destination (McCartney, Butler & Bennett, 2009). Originally, the concept of image has long been used in marketing and communication science to describe people's perception of tangible products or a corporate identity. Later on, the concept of image has been applied in tourism to refer to the perception or evaluation of a destination (Li, Pan, Smith & Zhang, 2008). Several definitions can be found in the literature for the concept of destination image. Crompton (1979) defined it as a person's beliefs, ideas, or evaluations of a destination. Baloglu

and McCleary (1999) defined it as mental representation of the individual's knowledge, feelings, and global impression about a destination.

Gunn (1972) conceptualized tourist destination image into the organic image stage that is formed as a result of exposure to non-commercial promotion, such as newspaper reports, TV reports, school courses, etc. and the induced image stage which is formed through exposure to direct touristic promotion. Fakeye and Crompton (1991) postulated that since organic image is formed through the exposure to non-tourism commercial sources, and the exposure to tourist organizations' commercial promotion form the induced image. Therefore, they introduced a third stage: "complex image" which is formed when a tourist has actually experienced the destination. Furthermore, they also indicated that each stage of image formation is connected to a type of promotion: The informative promotion which provides tourists with information of a destination is effective at the organic image stage. Persuasive promotion is utilized to persuade tourists to buy which is effective at the induced image stage, and finally the reminding promotion focuses on those tourists who have experienced the destination to repeat the visit and promote the destination by word of mouth is an effective at complex image stage. Accordingly, the flood of information produced by promotional tools affects the person's decision to travel and the selection of a destination. Thus, promotional literature (posters, travel brochure), WOM from friends and families, and the general media form the image of a destination (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Lawton & Page, 1997). Meanwhile, the image formation process is defined as a mental construct developed through a few selected impressions among the flood of total impressions (San Martin & Bosque, 2008).

Gartner (1993) introduced three components of destination image: Cognitive image which is formulated from external stimuli and refers to the person's knowledge of a destination attributes, the affective image refers to the person's feeling about a destination, and the conative image refers to the person's behavior resulted from cognitive and affective components.

Tasci and Gartner (2007) emphasized the responsibility of destination marketers and other stakeholders to promote, through their promotion techniques, a positive image of their destination and to enhance the existing image. Fakeye and Crompton (1991) exposed the importance of promoting destination images; images of destinations have a critical role in tourist travel decisions and on their selection of a destination. Therefore, the main goal in promoting a destination image is to project the destination image to potential tourists to attract them and also to increase attendance of MICE events. Jayswal (2008) asserted that the destinations that have stronger images have a higher possibility of being chosen by tourists.

San Martin and Bosque (2008) pointed out to the importance of assessing a destination image as perceived by potential tourists, first-time tourists, and repeat tourists to identify the strengths attributes of the image and implement strategies to develop and enhance the weaknesses. Echtner and Ritchie (1993) asserted that most quantitative research methods were utilized in examining the cognitive and affective image components. Pike (2002) reviewed 142 papers on destination image, 80 percent of these papers used structured (quantitative) techniques to measure the destination image. Crompton (1979) stated that many studies on destination image are performed on site and based on a structured method (e.g. the Likert scale or semantic differential scale). Abdul Rashid and Ismail (2008) stated that the combination of cognitive and affective components is strongly related to producing the global image of the destination. Therefore, this study will utilize cognitive image and affective image to evaluate the influence of promotional tools utilized to promote MICE events on the formation of the Touristic Image of Jordan from the perception of MICE participants.

Other researchers have pointed out the factors that influence the perception of the destination image. Baloglu and McCleary (1999) stated that stimulus factors (information sources, previous experience, and distribution), and personal factors form the destination image. Beerli and Martin (2004a, 2004b) assumed that information sources and personal factors or individual

characteristics have a significant role on the perception of destination image formation. Baloglu (1997) stated that most research and models on destination image formation have incorporated information sources as an element which influences destination image formation.

## 2.2 MICE promotional tools

There is a general agreement that sources of information, also known as image forming agents or stimulus factors, are the forces which influence the formation of a destination image (Beerli & Martin, 2004a). MICE promotional tools are seen as essential for both tourism enterprises and destinations to get the competitive advantages in delivering quality services and creating destination image (Mistilis & Dwyer, 1999). Gun (1972) explained the role of nontourism information such as magazines, books, and articles formed the organic image of destination, and the role of direct promotional tools of a destination such as public relations, brochures, travel agents, and advertisements formed the induced image of a destination. Baloglu and McCleary (1999) discussed the influence of promotional tools on the cognitive evaluation of a destination. They hypothesized that cognitive image is formed by external factors such as TV/Radio, brochures, newspapers, and other types of media and social stimuli such as the recommendations of friends and relatives or WOM.

Ruzic, et al. (2003) referred to the idea that MICE tourism promoters should identify the best promotional tools that could be used to attract MICE events and participants. Molina and Esteban (2006) asserted that promotional tools form the basis for images and level of tourist satisfaction. Tasci and Gartner (2007) claimed that non-commercial information sources and promotional tools are the main determinants of destination image. Meanwhile, Harahsheh et al (2010) proposed that positive word of mouth (WOM) recommendations have a substantial impact upon organic images of destinations and consumer decisions to visit a destination while negative WOM recommendations affect tourists in their decision making to select that destination. Govers, Go and Kumar, (2007) concluded

that the media in general have a significant influence on destination image formation.

Tangible products are moved to the consumers, while tourism is characterized as an intangible as well as a perishable service. Therefore, the image of that product or service is moved to consumers. Consequently, promotional tools are important to market that service to the consumers. The failure of some destinations to fulfil their tourism potential is related to their promotional strategies. Promotion is the process of communicating between suppliers of tourism product and the potential tourists; it enhances their demand for travel (Crouch, 2000; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). Bojanic (1991) emphasized the importance of promotional tools for MICE events in conveying and managing the image of the country to potential tourists. Moreover, promoting MICE events could be done through printed materials such as newspapers, magazines, or brochures, or could be through flyers and announcements (direct mail), or broadcast media, such as TV commercials, internet, and advertisements on the radio, or could be done through public relations (Bhatt & Badan, 2005; Pan, 2011; Wicks & Schuett, 1991). Jayswal (2008) asserted the role of printed newspapers, magazines, TV/Radio, WOM, and Internet on promoting MICE events or the image of the host destination. These tools of promotion should cover the activities taken place before the event, during the event and after the event. Miller (1993) stated the critical role of media representatives in promoting MICE events and forming the image of the host destination. Further, Pizam (1990) pointed out the importance of sales-promotional techniques in increasing participation and promoting the image of destinations.

Murphy, Mascardo, and Benckendorff (2007) stressed the importance of the role of WOM in travel decisions, event participation, and in destination selection. The findings of their study revealed that 80 percent of the respondents depend on traditional WOM more than any other source of information. Meanwhile, Zhu and Lai (2009) revealed that the electronic word of mouth (EWOM) has enhanced the source of information for travelers.

Other researchers pointed out the critical role of the Internet in promoting MICE events and images of destinations. Nowadays, the Internet is widely used because it is an inexpensive communication tool presented in multiple languages to provide the delegates with adequate information and could greatly affect consumers' perceived image through creating a virtual experience of a destination. It also connects the three sections of tourism contact; travelers, travel agents, and travel suppliers (Bell, 2008; Law & Wong, 2003; MacKay & Smith, 2006; Mistilis & Dwyer, 1999; Pavlovic & Belullo, 2007; Wei, Ruys, Hoof, & Combrink, 2001). In addition, several studies examined the differences between the perceptions of the importance of promotional tools between tourists in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., Boo et al., 2008; Ho & Dempsey, 2010; Louvieris & Oppewal, 2004; Molina, Gomez & Martin-Consuegra, 2010; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). They assumed that tourists have the same perceptions of the importance of tourism promotional tools. The results of their studies were contrasting.

Evidently, existing studies mainly focus on developed countries around the world. However, little research effort on destination image formation or MICE tourism has been given in the developing countries (Sharpley, 2002; Schneider & Sonmez, 1999). Few studies examined the touristic image of Jordan from different perspectives. For example, Schneider and Sonmez (1999) investigated the the Touristic Image of Jordan formation from the perspective of interregional and intraregional of festival attendees. Harahsheh, Morgan, and Edwards (2010) examined the role of religious belief on the formation of the the Touristic Image of Jordan from the perspective of British and Swedish leisure tourists. However, the role of promotional tools in MICE tourism on the formation of the the Touristic Image of Jordan has not been evaluated. Several researchers have investigated the importance of promotional tools from the perspective of MICE event organizers, event planners, or event participants (Boo, Koh & Jones, 2008; Cheung & Law, 2002; Jayswal, 2008; Mistilis & Dwyer, 1999). Apparently, these previous studies indicated that researchers did not place emphasis on the perceptions of domestic

MICE participants. In addition, the perceptions of participants on the importance of promotional tools in terms of their socio-demographic factors such as age, educational level, gender, and income have not been explored in previous studies particularly in regards to MICE tourism. Therefore, this study was conducted to evaluate the role of MICE promotional tools on the Touristic Image of Jordan formation from the perception of domestic and international MICE attendees. Consequently, the following hypotheses were proposed:

- H1:** There is no difference in MICE participants' perception on the importance of promotional tools in MICE tourism in terms of their gender, nationality, age, income, and educational levels.
- H2:** The role of promotional tools in MICE tourism positively influences the destination image formation of Jordan.

## 3 Method

### 3.1 Study site

Two cities, Amman, the Capital City, and the Dead Sea, were chosen as the sites of this study because Amman has the majority of hotels in addition to large convention enterprises such as Zara Expo Amman, Royal Culture Center, and Amman International Motor Show. Meanwhile, The Dead Sea has a range of high-class hotels in addition to the biggest convention center in Jordan (King Hussien Bin Talal Convention Center) which is famous for hosting the World Economic Forum for the fifth time.

### 3.2 Research design, sample, and procedure

This research utilized correlational design by using a quantitative approach; a personal survey method through a structured questionnaire was conducted to assess the role of promotional tools of MICE tourism on the formation of the Touristic Image of Jordan. More specifically, this research attempted to determine the relationships among the promotional tools and image formation that were perceived by MICE tourism participants, and to highlight the importance of

each promotional tools as perceived by participants in terms of their sociodemographic characteristics. The self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from the selected respondents.

The survey instrument was a three-page questionnaire. To ensure the content validity, the researcher discussed the items in the questionnaire with eight experts in tourism field in Jordan. The questionnaire was pilot tested on a sample of MICE participants to ensure the reliability and validity of the instrument.

The study was conducted between May 2011 and October 2011. The questionnaire was personally administered to each subject during the events. Subjects were selected using cluster random sampling techniques. MICE events were divided into four clusters: Meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions. Twelve MICE events were chosen. 1060 questionnaires were distributed; finally, 857 questionnaires were valid after deleting outliers. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS, version 16.0. *T-test* and ANOVA were used

to test the first hypothesis. Simple linear regression was employed to test the second hypothesis.

### 3.3 Measurement

The first section of the questionnaire was composed of two questions. The first question was designed to evaluate the importance of each promotional tool on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important). In the second question, respondents were asked to identify the role of the promotional tools that they use in general to get information about Jordan. Eleven items, a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) were chosen after revising previous studies (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Molina & Esteban, 2006; Molina et al., 2010)

The second section of the questionnaire consisted of two questions which were utilized to measure the Touristic Image of Jordan formation from the per-

**Table1:** Profile of Respondents

Variable f %			f %	
Gender			Marital status	
Female	351	41.0	Single	230 26.8
Male	506	59.0	Married	557 65.0
Nationality		59.0	Divorced	49 5.7
National	310	36.2	Widow	21 2.5
International	547	63.8	Occupation	
Age			Student	40 4.7
< 30	134	15.6	Homemakers	30 3.5
31-40	235	27.4	Clerical worker	58 6.8
41-50	258	30.1	Salesperson	111 13.0
51-60	139	16.2	Professional	90 10.0
>60	91	10.6	Executive/ Manager	135 15.8
Educational level			Unemployed	29 3.4
High School Education	74	8.6	Self-employed worker	105 12.3
College Diploma	166	19.4	Worker	62 7.2
Bachelor Degree	380	44.3	Retired	47 5.5
Master Degree	124	14.5	Civil servant	110 12.8
Doctoral Degree	113	13.2	Others	40 4.7
Monthly income				
<\$1000	178	20.8		
\$1001-\$2000	317	37.0		
\$2001-\$3000	134	15.6		
\$3001-\$4000	123	14.4		
>\$4000	105	12.3		

spective of MICE participants. The cognitive image consisted of 30-items developed after reviewing other measurement scales on destination image formation (Beerli & Martin, 2004a, 2004b; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991, 1993, 2003; McCartney et al., 2009; Molina et al., 2010; Schneider & Sonmez, 1999). Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To measure the affective component of image, a 5-bipolar scale, four emotional attributes: arousing-sleepy, unpleasant-pleasant, boring-exciting, and distressing-relaxing were adapted from previous studies (Beerli & Martin, 2004a, 2004b; Baloglu & Love, 2005; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). The third section included sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents such as gender, nationality, income, and level of education.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Profile of respondents

Table 1 lists the demographic profile of respondents which includes gender, nationality, age, income, and level of education. The total number of respondents was 857, 41% were females and 59% were males. The nationality of respondents was almost distributed with 36.2% local and 63.8% international. Most of the respondents had bachelor's degrees (44.3%) and 37% of participants have a monthly income which ranged between \$1001 - \$2000. The respondents who participated in this study represent all age groups, the largest age groups were between 41-50 (30.1%).

### 4.2 Principal component analysis and reliabilities

Coefficient Alpha procedure was used to examine the internal consistency of the instrument. Table 2 exhibits the overall Coefficient Alpha for the role of MICE promotional tools which is 0.809. Item-total correlation for the items of the scales shows relationship from moderate to high, which is 0.453 to 0.603. The role of MICE promotional tools scale used in this study contains seven items. Four original items were

**Table 2:** Pilot Study Subscale for Coefficient Alpha of the roles of MICE promotional tools

Item/factor	Item-total Correlation	Total Coefficient Alpha
MICE promotional tools		0.809
Provide necessary information about Jordan	0.516	0.7
Provide information agree with the actual reality of Jordan	0.582	
Meet the expectative image of Jordan	0.603	
Generate positive image of the destination	0.515	
Increase tourists' intention to revisit the destination	0.453	
Influence tourists on choosing the destination	0.498	
Influence tourists on travel decision	0.477	

ignored in this study because the item-total correlation value of these items was less than 0.45.

To reduce the scales' dimension and identify their determinant factors, an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was also applied on the scales referring to the cognitive and affective image. The factor analysis of cognitive items, through the principal component method using the varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization, shows that there are six factors extracted. All 30 items had been allocated to the six factors of cognitive image attributes (atmosphere, political and social factor, tourist facilitation, natural resources, general infrastructure, and economic and cultural factor) and explained 61.9% of the variance. Four original items were ignored in this study because either the item-total correlation of these items was less than 0.45 or the factor loading value of these items was less than 0.40. Twenty-six items were retained to measure the cognitive image. One affective image factor extracted which explained 62.5% of the variance. The results of these analyses in addition to the results of Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scales are shown in Table 3 and Table 4.

### 4.3 Hypotheses testing, discussion and conclusion

The results in Table 5 showed the international respondents perceived magazine, brochure, WOM, travel agents, tourist information center, guidebooks, and

**Table 3:** Summary of factor analysis of cognitive image

Items/Factor s	Factor Loading	Eigenvalues	Variance Explained
Factor 1: Atmosphere (0.877) <sup>a</sup>			
Jordan is a fashionable location	0.797	10.297	34.325
Jordan is an exotic destination	0.778		
Jordan is a luxury location	0.693		
Jordan offers many facilities to get touristic information	0.615		
Jordan is a well known location with a good reputation	0.599		
Factor 2: Political and Social Factors (0.861) <sup>a</sup>			
Jordan enjoys political stability	0.821	2.447	8.158
The people in Jordan are friendly and hospitable	0.802		
Jordan is a safe place to visit	0.698		
Factor 3: Tourist Facilitation (0.772) <sup>a</sup>			
There is wide variety of products on offer to buy in Jordan	0.772	1.788	5.961
There are good facilities for families in Jordan	0.652		
There is a good quality of life in Jordan	0.594		
Jordan has places to do business	0.592		
Jordan is a clean location	0.468		
Factor 4: Natural Resources (0.816) <sup>a</sup>			
Jordan has nice weather	0.736	1.552	5.174
Jordan has a great variety of flora and fauna	0.716		
Jordan has a lovely landscape	0.595		
Factor 5: General Infrastructure (0.837) <sup>a</sup>			
Jordan has good substructure of hotels and apartments	0.803		
There are well developed infrastructures in Jordan	0.759	1.362	4.538
There are facilities for training sports, leisure and amusement activities (golf, diving, tennis, etc.)	0.701		
Jordan has places to have meetings/ exhibitions	0.556		
Factor 6: Economic and Cultural Factor (0.774) <sup>a</sup>			
Jordan offers different ways of living	0.619		
Jordan offers many cultural events	0.572	1.150	3.833
Jordan is a rich location with great economic development	0.560		
The food in Jordan is good	0.528		
Jordan is a good place to go shopping	0.452		
Jordan has many interesting historic and cultural venues	0.425		
<b>Total Variance Explained</b>	<b>61.989</b>		

<sup>a</sup> Reliability score (Cronbach alpha) for each factor grouping is shown in parentheses.

public relations higher than local respondents, whereas local respondent had higher means for TV/Radio, and newspaper. Female respondents had higher means on Internet and newspaper while Male respondents rated magazine, brochures, and travel agents higher than female respondents.

Results of ANOVA revealed that the group aged 61 years and above perceived the Internet and magazines, significantly highly, while the group age 30 and below

showed significant differences regarding TV/Radio and magazines. Furthermore, groups with a monthly income of less than \$1000 and \$1001-\$2000 perceived TV/Radio to be significantly high. The group of more than \$4000 perceived Internet, magazines, and public relations as significantly high compared to other monthly income groups. In addition, respondents with a doctoral degree significantly perceived promotional tools more highly than other educational



**Table 4:** Summary of factor analysis of affective image

Items/Factor s	Factor Loading	Eigenvalues	Variance Explained
Factor: Affective Image (0.853) <sup>a</sup>			
Arousing/ sleepy	0.870	2.501	62.530
Unpleasant/pleasant	0.815		
Boring/exciting	0.854		
Distressing/relaxing	0.860		
<b>Total Variance Explained</b>	<b>62.530</b>		

<sup>a</sup> Reliability score (Cronbach alpha) for the factor is shown in parentheses.

level groups regarding the Internet, magazines, travel agents, guidebooks, and public relations compared to other groups, although, they placed less significance on WOM. Meanwhile, the high school education level group perceived TV/Radio and on newspaper as significantly high. Based on these findings, the first hypothesis was rejected.

A simple linear regression method was employed to explore the role of promotional tools on the formation of the touristic image of Jordan. A simple linear regression is used as a statistical technique to predict the relationship between a single dependent variable and one independent variable (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998). Several assumptions should be met when utilizing multiple regression analysis such as linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity of the residuals (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Normality probability plot of the regression and residual scatterplot grid were employed to examine the assumption of normality. Results showed the normality probability plots of residuals suggesting no major deviation from normality. Linearity was also checked through examining the residual plots of linear regression and no nonlinear pattern was found between the independent and dependent variables. The residual scatterplot grid was utilized to check the assumption of normality. This grid shows that if 95% of residuals have fallen between -2 and + 2, then the errors are normally distributed. The results revealed that the normality distribution of data was not violated and there was no multicollinearity in this analysis. Therefore, the data were considered adequate for regression analysis.

The influence of the role of promotional tools on cognitive and affective image was tested to support the influence of MICE destination attributes on the overall destination image of Jordan (cognitive and affective components) as the hypothesis required. Results of simple linear regressions are presented in Table 7. Thus, the third hypothesis was accepted.

#### 4.4 Discussion and conclusion

This study sought to explore the role of promotional tools on the Touristic Image of Jordan formation; how the participants of MICE events perceived the importance of each promotional tool. Therefore, the results of this study revealed that significant differences existed between the locals' perception of promotional tools and the international participants' perceptions except for the Internet which showed no significant differences in the perception between local and international respondents. The Internet was rated as the most important promotional tool in searching and promoting information about MICE tourism (Boo et al., 2008; Molina et al., 2010).

Local respondents perceived newspaper and TV/ Radio higher than the international respondents. TV/ Radio and newspaper are national media using Arabic language during their publishing and transmission. Meanwhile, international respondents rated public relations, WOM, magazine, travel agents, guidebooks, brochures, and tourist information center higher than local respondents did.

Furthermore, females viewed the internet and newspaper highly, while males had positive perceptions

Table 5: Analyses of difference among participants on MICE promotional tools

Participants Profile	Promotional tools									
	Internet	Magazines	Brochures	Word of Mouth (WOM)	Travel Agents	T.V/Radio	Newspaper	Tourist Information Center	Guidebooks	Public Relations
<b>Nationality</b>										
Local(n=310)	4.72	3.84	3.90	4.34	4.06	4.48	4.60	3.71	3.97	4.39
International(n=547)	4.78	4.39	4.09	4.48	4.23	3.06	3.34	3.95	4.12	4.50
Mean Differences	-.056	-.553	-.186	-.137	-.169	1.425	1.256	-.232	-.151	-.161
t	1.714	12.753	2.699	2.749	2.913	25.369	24.865	3.663	.003*	2.433
Sig.	.087	.000*	.007*	.006*	.004*	.000*	.000*	.000*	2.638	.015 *
<b>Gender</b>										
Female	4.80	4.13	3.94	4.41	4.09	3.65	3.91	3.88	4.05	4.44
Male	4.73	4.24	4.07	4.44	4.23	3.52	3.72	3.85	4.07	4.48
Mean Differences	.076	.107	.128	.028	.138	.128	.183	.037	.022	.038
t	2.539	2.262	2.056	.580	2.425	1.664	2.629	.612	.371	.806
Sig.	.011*	.024*	.040*	.552	.016*	.097	.009*	.541	.711	.421
<b>Age</b>										
Below 30	4.67	3.99	4.00	4.41	4.14	4.01	4.12	3.88	4.11	4.44
31-40	4.73	4.19	3.98	4.41	4.22	3.65	3.83	3.97	4.01	4.44
41-50	4.79	4.25	4.03	4.50	4.21	3.39	3.72	3.81	4.01	4.47
51-60	4.77	4.22	3.96	4.40	4.07	3.37	3.56	3.79	4.06	4.45
Over 60	4.85	4.29	4.20	4.34	4.14	3.56	3.84	3.79	4.22	4.55
df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
F	2.759	3.818	1.145	1.345	.926	8.602	5.963	1.531	1.397	.501
sig	.027*	.004*	.334	.252	.448	.000*	.000*	.191	.233	.142
<b>Monthly income</b>										
Less than \$1000	4.69	4.03	4.01	4.41	4.19	3.88	4.11	3.92	4.03	4.48
\$1001-\$2000	4.72	4.09	3.98	4.50	4.26	3.74	3.95	3.90	4.05	4.37
\$2001-\$3000	4.81	4.37	4.12	4.57	4.25	3.37	3.69	4.04	4.17	4.57
\$3001-\$4000	4.80	4.23	3.93	4.20	3.92	3.39	3.58	3.61	3.98	4.37
More than \$4000	4.89	4.50	4.14	4.33	4.09	3.04	3.23	3.71	4.06	4.68
df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
F	4.479	12.644	1.418	6.624	4.513	13.956	17.558	5.331	.954	5.830
sig	.001*	.000*	.226	.000*	.001*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.432	.000*
<b>Educational levels</b>										
High School Education	4.70	3.76	3.61	4.64	4.28	4.05	4.23	3.54	3.84	4.48
College Diploma	4.73	4.07	3.89	4.37	4.19	3.63	3.78	3.77	3.88	4.37
Bachelor Degree	4.73	4.17	4.05	4.47	4.21	3.64	3.93	3.94	4.13	4.57
Master Degree	4.70	4.33	4.20	4.50	4.22	3.28	3.53	3.85	3.94	4.37
Doctoral Degree	4.97	4.58	4.17	4.19	4.88	3.28	3.41	3.96	4.35	4.68
df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
F	8.070	21.009	7.171	6.667	4.209	8.275	12.047	4.278	8.000	2.858
Sig.	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.002*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.000*	.023*

\*Significant at 0.05 level.

**Table 6:** Regression analyses for the prediction of Jordan touristic image from the role of promotional tools

Promotional tools	Cognitive Image			Affective Image			Overall Image		
	$\beta$	t	p	$\beta$	t	p	$\beta$	t	p
The role of promotional tools	.719	30.212	.000	.428	13.831	.000	.668	26.252	.000
	F=912.715, p<.000, adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =.516			F=191.284, p<.000, adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =.182			F=689.160, p<.000, adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =.446		

regarding magazines, brochures, and travel agents. The group aged above 60 viewed the Internet as a very important promotional tool that they utilized to search and access information about MICE events compared to the group aged 30 year and below who rated TV/ Radio and newspaper higher than the other age groups.

The study findings also revealed that the Internet, magazines, and public relations were rated as very important by the monthly income group of more than \$4000, while WOM and tourist information center were highly rated by the monthly income groups of \$2001-\$3000. TV/Radio and newspaper were important for the monthly income groups of less than \$1000 and \$1001-\$2000. Furthermore, the Internet, magazines, travel agents, guidebooks, and public relations were rated highly by MICE participants who had doctoral degrees. WOM was mostly a very important promotional tool for both high school level and master’s degree holders. TV/Radio were important promotional tools for those participants who had a high school education.

Meeting planners, organizers, stakeholders and other destination marketers should realize that these tools can play an effective role in reaching important tourist groups. Therefore, to target the local and international delegates, the best use of these promotional tools should be achieved. They need to target first-time meeting attendees and encourage them to become regular attendees for future meetings held in that destination.

In addition, the results indicated that the role of promotional tools did influence the cognitive image formation of Jordan as it explained about 51.6% of the variance and accounted for 18.3% of the variation in the affective image. Based on the mean scores of the cognitive image and affective image, it explained about

44.6% of the variance in the overall image formation. The results revealed that it influenced the overall image and. Govers et al., (2007) asserted that the role of promotion in tourism is the critical component of destination image formation.

The study findings provided insight into promotional tools and their role on the formation of destination image from the perspective of MICE event participants. The study has added improved assessment of the promotional tools on destination image components (cognitive and affective). Furthermore, the study has contributed to the understanding of the most beneficial promotional tools in MICE industry from the perspective of MICE participants. The research findings revealed the differences between the participants in terms of their gender, nationality, age, educational level, and monthly income. Therefore, based on the findings of this study, the preferences of participants in terms of their sociodemographic characteristics should be considered while planning a MICE event in order to attract more attendees and successfully meet their expectations.

This study was a part of a wider doctoral research into the role of MICE tourism on the Touristic Image of Jordan formation. The results of this study provide theoretical contributions which enables an exploration and understanding of the relationships among the role of MICE promotional tools, socio-demographic characteristics, and destination image. Another theoretical contribution of this study is the development of an instrument which can be used for future studies related to MICE tourism and destination image based on studies in the context of Jordan. The instrument was developed based on relevant previous studies and was refined through a pilot study. The validity and reli-

ability of the instrument were insured and thus could be utilized for future related studies.

Managerial contributions have been provided. The study findings of the statistical analysis are considered effective for event planners, event organizers, event managers, and host destinations by addressing the perceptions and attitudes of MICE participants in their marketing strategies. Thus, it is hoped that the information obtained in this study is beneficial and useful in developing Jordan's MICE destination attributes, and promoting and enhancing its touristic image in the competitive MICE industry internationally.

The findings of this study have paved the way for government and private tourism sectors to set out their strategies of planning, developing, and marketing MICE industry as well as a promotional strategy of the touristic image of Jordan.

However, as expected in any research, several limitations were involved in this study; the lack of academic

attention to MICE tourism in Jordan; secondary data concerning this important sector were scant. It is therefore recommended that all bodies involved in the tourism industry document information related specially to the demographic characteristics of tourists, the purpose of their visit, number of meetings, conferences, etc., to be able to recognize the target market and set future plans and strategies. Another limitation involved in this study was the language used in the research instrument of the study; the questionnaire was written in English and translated into Arabic. English and Arabic versions were distributed to the participants. Due to the translation into Arabic, deeper meanings of the questions might not be parallel to that of the English version. However, taking into consideration the limitations of this study, the suggestion is to encourage scholars' inquiries to further the body of knowledge contributed by this study. Future research should explore the role of promotional tools on each segment of MICE industry; Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, or Exhibitions.

## Povezava med vlogo promocijskih orodij v segmentu MICE turizma in oblikovanjem turistične podobe Jordanije

### Povzetek

Pri oblikovanju podobe turistične destinacije igrajo pomembno vlogo številni dejavniki. Eden izmed ključnih dejavnikov so promocijska orodja. Namen pričujoče študije je opredeliti vlogo promocijskih orodij, ki se uporabljajo za promocijo segmenta MICE, pri oblikovanju turistične podobe Jordanije. Analizirali smo tudi, kakšen pomen pripisujejo promocijskim orodjem lokalni in mednarodni udeleženci MICE dogodkov z vidika njihovih družbeno-demografskih značilnosti. Pri preverjanju hipotez smo uporabili metode T-test, ANOVA in enostavno regresijsko analizo. Rezultati so pokazali, da obstajajo med udeleženci MICE dogodkov bistvene razlike pri dojetanju pomena promocijskih orodij in njihove vloge pri oblikovanju turistične podobe Jordanije. Rezultati študije bi lahko koristili načrtovalcem in organizatorjem dogodkov in ostalim deležnikom MICE dogodkov, predstavljajo pa tudi pomemben prispevek k sicer slabo raziskanemu področju MICE turizma v državah v razvoju.

Ključne besede: MICE turizem, promocija, podoba destinacije, kognitivna podoba, afektivna podoba

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