Factors Affecting Tourists' Attitude and the Visit Intention Towards the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for Non-Religious Tourism

العوامل المؤثرة على اتجاهات السياح ونية زيارتهم للمملكة العربية السعودية للسياحة لأسباب غير الدينية

by

SALEM NAIF ALENIZI

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA)

at

The British University in Dubai

May 2024

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Abstract

Studying Saudi Arabia as a tourism destination is crucial due to its unique position as a pivotal site for both religious and non-religious tourism. While it has long been revered for its significance in religious tourism, the recent diversification into non-religious attractions highlights its emerging role as a versatile global destination, making a comprehensive analysis of these tourism dimensions increasingly important. This research investigated the impact of conative destination image, perceived security, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), and travel motivation on tourist attitude and the visit intention towards the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) as a tourism destination. The study also examined the mediating role of tourist attitude and the moderating effects of demographic factors like age, gender, education, income, and religious orientation. A quantitative approach utilising surveys was employed to collect data from 536 tourists. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to analyse the relationships presented in conceptual framework integrating the Theory of Planned Behaviour and Self-Determination Theory. The findings revealed that conative destination image, perceived security, and motivations for relaxation and cultural exploration positively influenced tourist attitude, which in turn, positively affected the visit intention. However, e-WOM did not significantly impact attitude or intention. Tourist attitude mediated the relationships between the antecedent factors and the visit intention. Gender and religious orientation moderated the attitude–intention relationship, with women and Muslims exhibiting lower visit intention rates compared to men and non-Muslims, respectively. This research underscores the need for Saudi tourism authorities to strategically manage destination image, enhance safety and security, since KSA is politically stable and crime is the primary risk applicable. The research also addresses diverse travel motivations such as cultural exploration

and relaxation. Key recommendations include refining marketing efforts, improving infrastructure, and implementing inclusive policies to attract a broader tourist demographic, particularly women and non-Muslims. By advancing theoretical insights into tourist decision-making, this study offers actionable guidance for effective destination marketing and policy development, supporting the goals of Saudi Vision 2030's tourism agenda.

Keywords: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, tourism, perceived security, conative destination image, travel motivation, tourist attitude, tourist visit intention

ملخص

يحقق هذا البحث في تأثير صورة الوجهة التقليدية، والأمن المتصور، والكلمة الشفهية الإلكترونية، ودافع السفر على سلوك السائح ونية الزيارة تجاه المملكة العربية السعودية كوجهة سياحية. تناولت الدراسة أيضًا الدور الوسيط للموقف السياحي والتأثيرات المعتدلة للعوامل الديموغرافية مثل العمر والجنس والتعليم والدخل والتوجه الديني. تم استخدام نهج كمي باستخدام الدراسات الاستقصائية لجمع البيانات من 536 سائحاً. تم استخدام نمذجة المعادلة الهيكلية (SEM) لتحليل العلاقات في النموذج المفاهيمي المقترح الذي يدمج نظرية السلوك المخطط ونظرية تقرير المصير. كشفت النتائج أن صورة الوجهة التقليدية، والأمن المتصور، ودوافع الاسترخاء والاستكشاف الثقافي أثرت بشكل إيجابي على سلوك السائح، والذي بدوره أثر بشكل إيجابي على نية الزيارة. ومع ذلك، لم يكن للكلمة الشفهية الإلكترونية تأثير كبير على السلوك أو النية. توسط سلوك السائح العلاقات بين العوامل السابقة ونية الزيارة. أدى الجنس والتوجه الديني إلى اعتدال العلاقة بين السلوك والنية، حيث أظهرت النساء وغير المسلمين معدلات تحويل زيارة أقل مقارنة بالرجال والمسلمين، على التوالي. يسلط البحث الضوء على أهمية إدارة صورة الوجهة بشكل استراتيجي، ومعالجة المخاوف الأمنية، وتلبية دوافع السفر المتنوعة، وخاصة الاستكشاف الثقافي والاسترخاء. ويقدم رؤى للمسؤولين عن السياحة السعودية لتعزيز جهود التسويق، وتطوير البنية التحتية، والاستراتيجيات الشاملة لجذب مجموعة واسعة من السياح، وخاصة النساء والمسافرين غير المسلمين. وتساهم الدراسة في الفهم النظري لعمليات صنع القرار السياحي ولها آثار عملية على تسويق الوجهة، وتطوير المنتجات السياحية، وصياغة السياسات المتوافقة مع الأهداف السياحية لرؤية المملكة العربية السعودية 2030.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المملكة العربية السعودية، الأمن المتصور، صورة الوجهة التقليدية، دوافع السفر، سلوك السياح، نية زيارة السياح

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The tourism industry plays a significant role in influencing a country's economic development. Cárdenas-García et al. (2013) outline that when attracting visitors across the globe, countries experience benefits such as enhanced economies, better infrastructure, and increased employment opportunities, among others. The increasing demand of various products and services related to tourism are contributing further to its development. It is important for the nations to increase security and peace to increase tourism for its economic growth and development. Williams and Baláž (2014) outline that when a country is prone to high risks, people do not intend to visit such locations. Researchers (Cárdenas-García & Pulido-Fernández, 2019; Li et al., 2018) similarly state that there are many factors that contribute to the growth of the tourism industry. In light of this, the current research focused on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) sheds light on how a country's characteristics can contribute to the visit intention of tourists. It is crucial to have an understanding of the factors that influence tourist attitudes and intentions to visit in order to effectively capitalise on the tourism industry. The current chapter outlines an overview of the topic, context, and the research problem, which guided the current study. The chapter also presents the research aim, objectives, and questions, which guide the study. The research gap and contributions are also discussed to understand the gaps in past studies and how those contributed to the development of this study's topic. Lastly, the thesis outline is presented.

1.2 Research Background

The term *tourism* refers to the industry that deals with people travelling for amusement, relaxation, or business (Camilleri & Camilleri, 2018). Tourism, in general,

plays a crucial role in economic development. Cárdenas-García et al. (2013) also outline that the tourism industry is an essential component of the worldwide economy, exerting a substantial influence on the economic progress of several nations. The industry is diverse and focuses on many operations and services that are interlinked to other industries, such as housing, hospitality, transportation, entertainment, and cultural events (Khan et al., 2020). According to insights provided by Statista (2022a), in 2021 the international travel and tourism industry was estimated to have added about $5.8 billion to the global economy (gross domestic product [GDP]) through direct contributions, which increased in 2023. As stated by Statista (2024), the market size of the global tourism sector increased in 2023 compared to 2022 (1.5 trillion USD) as the 2023 data revealed a total of 1.9 trillion US dollars, which is a huge rise compared to the previous year. UNWTO (2023) also stated that approximately 975 million visitors travelled internationally from January to September 2023, representing a notable 38% surge compared to the same months in 2022. Around $2.19 billion is spent as a leisure fund to enable tourism-related activities, which makes a huge contribution to countries' economic development. However, globally, there was a significant drop around multiple regions of the world due to the pandemic as the global market size reported in 2020 and 2021 was 0.8 and 0.9 trillion USD, compared to 1.5 and 1.9 trillion USD in 2022 and 2023, respectively (Statista, 2024). These statistics show that the tourism sector holds a large significance for the macro-level development of the nation.

Additionally, the tourism industry is benefitting the local economies in terms of generating employment, community development, social inclusion, and economic diversification. Tourists are the key stakeholders of the industry as they spend money in other countries, which further contributes to their local economies. It is important to explore the behaviour of the tourists as their viewpoints can contribute to the development of local economies (Wang et al., 2020). The tourism industry has the capacity to advance

the sustainable development, protection, and preservation of natural and cultural heritage places. The tourism business is continuously changing due to the emergence of digital technology, social media, and shifting consumer behaviours. These factors greatly influence how visitors plan, book, and enjoy their vacations.

1.3 Research Context

The tourism industry has experienced a significant resurgence, attaining 87% of its pre-pandemic levels between January and September of 2023 (UNWTO, 2023), which indicated that by the end of the year, the sector was anticipated to have recovered more than 90%of its previous level. However, out of all regions, the Middle East is the most recovered region with arrivals having a surge of 20% compared to the levels experienced before the pandemic (UNWTO, 2023). Also, as stated by Statista (2022b), the Middle East region suffered significantly due to the pandemic as it saw a 73.1% drop during the pandemic, but in 2022, a 101.6% rise was seen in Middle East tourism. Hence, the Middle East region is significantly boosting its tourism and aiming to reach levels similar to or higher than the levels observed before the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) region, other countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Morocco, and others have significantly experienced leisure tourism over the years. However, this was not the case with the KSA, considering that the nation recently opened its borders for non-Muslim tourists in 2019. Historically, the KSA has heavily depended on its oil reserves as a predominant means of generating revenue (Alsheikh et al., 2021). The Saudi government has acknowledged the necessity of diversifying its economy in light of the fluctuation in oil prices and the worldwide transition towards sustainable energy sources. Leisure tourism has the potential to serve as a notable avenue for economic diversification, given its capacity to facilitate job generation, invigorate local enterprises, and entice foreign investment (Saudi Tourism

Authority, 2022). In terms of tourism also, historically the KSA has only welcomed visitors for the Hajj and Umrah (Eid, 2012); however, with the expansion of travel opportunities, the country has experienced a rise in the number of tourists visiting its shores. Since the KSA is actively working to establish itself as a tourist hotspot, studies of its tourism industry have recently gained in popularity. While the KSA has long been a popular pilgrimage site for Muslims, it has only very recently begun welcoming non-Muslim tourists interested in learning about its rich history, beautiful landscapes, and vibrant culture.

With this shift, the KSA witnessed a notable surge in arrivals, with a 58% increase in 2020 compared to the corresponding period in 2019, while the country witnessed the most substantial growth in international tourism receipts (151%) during the first quarter of 2023 (fDi Intelligence, 2023). The KSA is also considering and developing on the aspect that the tourism sector assumes a crucial position in the economic advancement and facilitation of cultural interaction among many nations around the globe. The KSA has been actively endeavouring to promote tourism as a fundamental catalyst for its Vision 2030 strategy, owing to its rich cultural legacy, varied natural landscapes, and historical importance (Vision 2030, 2022).

Tourism has become an important focus for the KSA, and the country is highly focused on developing its tourism industry for regional development (Alsheikh et al., 2021). Also, as stated in Vision 2030 (2022), the Saudi Government is putting in considerable efforts to enhance Saudi tourism by focusing on the country's natural assets, cultural treasures, and ancient buildings that measure up to tourist standards. Successful tourism can boost a destination's visitor numbers, revenue, and the employment in a country. The New Tourism Law of KSA established in 2016 seeks to regulate the tourism industry with a focus on the issuance of licenses and permits, and to connect the tourism

sector with other service sectors of the Kingdom (Ministry of Tourism, 2023). With the passing of the New Tourism Law, the tourism industry in the KSA is undergoing a dramatic transformation that will spur economic growth, technological advancement, and investment. A new structure for collaboration between the business sector and key government agencies has been established to market the KSA as a top-five destination worldwide (Ministry of Tourism, 2022). It will hasten progress towards the objectives of the KSA's National Tourism Strategy and Vision 2030, which include attracting 100 million additional visitors, increasing tourism's contribution to GDP to 10%, and creating 1 million additional jobs in the sector (Ministry of Tourism, 2022). To do this, it is necessary to have a thorough grasp of the requirements and preferences of various tourist demographics, to design efficient plans, to improve the entire tourism experience, and to provide favourable conditions for tourism investment. By attracting 100 million tourists, the KSA aims to create new job opportunities, stimulate economic growth, and promote cultural exchange and understanding between different nations and people.

The Ministry of Tourism, the Saudi Tourism Authority, and the Tourism Development Fund are the three entities that make up the three pillars of the tourism ecosystem that drives the country's dramatic transformation (Saudi Tourism, 2022). The Ministry of Tourism is working on the infrastructure necessary to sustain the industry by drafting legislation, attracting investment, and generating employment possibilities (Ministry of Tourism, 2022). The Saudi Tourism Authority is actively advertising the KSA as a tourist destination nationally and globally through the implementation of marketing initiatives and the improvement of the country's brand image (Saudi Tourism Authority, 2022). The main goal of the Tourism Development Fund is to provide resources for projects that will increase the tourism industry as a whole by attracting new capital (Tourism Development Fund, 2022). The KSA's Future Vision for 2030 Tourism is essential to the KSA's Vision

2030aims, which include bolstering the Saudi private market to build a prosperous society and creating a successful economy through diversifying and developing methods to position the KSA for world commerce and competitiveness. The KSA has taken some significant measures to improve its tourism industry, including the introduction of the Digital Tourism Strategy, where local tourism is expected to grow; participating in international exhibitions like Dubai Expo 2020, Travel & Tourism Expo London, and other events; and establishing TROJENA, a new worldwide destination for mountain tourists, as part of NEOM's objective to contribute to strengthening the tourism sector in the region (Vision 2030, 2022). In addition, the KSA is currently in 33rd place as it moved up 10 places compared to before, according to the 2021 World Economic Forum (WEF) Travel and Tourism Development Index (Saudi Press Agency, 2022).

In regards to the current research's context, KSA, it has been predominantly recognized for its religious tourism, particularly the annual Hajj pilgrimage, which draws millions of Muslims from around the globe (Eid, 2012). Nevertheless, as part of Vision 2030, the Saudi government is making efforts to broaden its economy and decrease its dependence on oil. An essential element of this goal is the advancement and endorsement of the nation as a non-religious tourism destination. The focus of the current research is to understand what attracts a wider spectrum of foreign tourists to KSA. The study helps to understand tourism behaviour, specifically in the context of non-religious tourism in a market primarily recognized for religious travel, from a theoretical standpoint (Madkhali et al., 2023). The research is important to understand the steps taken to strengthen tourism infrastructure, enhance security measures, and cultivate a favourable perception of KSA as a tourist destination.

Additionally, the KSA also offers a distinct context for examining the impact of travel determinants on tourist visit intention for non-religious purposes, especially within

the transformative framework of KSA's Vision 2030. Researchers focused on the KSA's context have increasingly emphasised on the crucial characteristics of the country, which are the country's cultural history, varied natural landscapes, and important historical monuments (Salah et al., 2023; Saudi Tourism Authority, 2022; Yehia et al., 2022), which present extensive opportunities for tourism beyond the religious tourism of KSA, which is primarily for Muslims. A crucial element is the profound connection between KSA and religious tourism. For many years, the tourist industry in KSA has mostly revolved around Islamic pilgrimages, which have greatly shaped its international reputation as a religious tourism destination, specifically among Muslims (Eid, 2012; Hassan et al., 2022; Henderson, 2011). In its efforts to attract tourists for non-religious reasons, the country is confronted with the task of reforming its global perception in order to emphasize its other appealing features, which does require a thorough analysis of the conative destination image, which reflects travelers' behavioral intentions and the probability of visiting and suggesting KSA to others (Abuhjeeleh, 2019). Gaining a comprehensive understanding of and enhancing this image is of utmost importance for strategically repositioning KSA in the global tourism market. In addition, tourism researchers (Alwahashi et al., 2024; Hawkins, 2023) have expressed concerns related geopolitical dynamics of the Middle East, which have led to apprehensions over safety among prospective travellers. It has been indicated that even when a neighbouring country or a country in a region has poor global reputation then that can impact a country's perceptions about safety or security (Alwahashi et al., 2024). Furthermore, infrastructure development, visa requirements, and policy regulations are universally acknowledged as fundamental prerequisites for a thriving tourism destination (Khan et al., 2020). With a focus of the factors, such as destination image, security, e-WOM and travel motivation, KSA can adopt a strategic approach to marketing and development that can be correlated to understand the direct impact of the

travel determinants on whether tourists see KSA as a feasible destination, even before they assess the logistical aspects of traveling.

1.4 Research Problem

The KSA is implementing significant efforts to boost its tourism by branding itself in terms of culture and heritage. However, past researchers, such as Battour et al. (2018) and Mason (2021), have raised concerns about people negatively perceiving the KSA in terms of safety and security. For instance, Abuhjeeleh (2019) has outlined some of the threats and weaknesses in the context of the KSA, such as the country being conservative, the low dependency on tourism, strict regulations, and challenges related to its destination image, which shows that these aspects can affect the country's tourism. Also, the country faces significant competition from other GCC countries, such as Oman, the UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain, which are perceived as more friendly for tourists compared to the KSA (Abuhjeeleh, 2019). The researcher has also outlined that the country has placed its greatest focus on religious tourism, which can also limit tourists to visit the KSA as they are not aware of the country's attractions. Furthermore, Abuhjeeleh (2019) has outlined that the KSA needs to revamp its destination image if it wants to attract tourists for non-religious tourism. The country has made significant efforts in terms of marketing its tourism, but tourists that have visited also provide mixed opinions about the KSA on social media. For instance, an article by Elliott (2023) has outlined a tourist's experience as a visit to the KSA with a *Do's and Don'ts* list. Not only that, countries such as the United Kingdom (Development Office, 2023) and United States of America (U.S. & Consulates Embassy in Saudi Arabia, 2023) on their portals have provided warnings in the context of visits to the KSA along with steps of action, which can significantly affect a visitor's intention to visit the country. The KSA must take efforts to change its image to attract more tourists to the country for better economic growth and development.

However, even though the country is making significant efforts to boost its tourism, it is important to understand the perspective or behaviour of tourists that are visiting a country for it to tailor its strategies accordingly. An approach to tourism, grounded in the analysis of tourist behaviour, has the potential to make a substantial contribution to the economic expansion of the KSA. Analysing the behaviour of tourists helps to detect new patterns and preferences that are developing in the tourism sector (Prayag et al., 2017). The behaviour of visitors is the principal indicator and predictor of subsequent tourist activity. Given the societal role that tourists play, the behaviour exhibited by a single tourist could potentially provide insight into the behaviour of other tourists (Juvan et al., 2017).

In addition, Madkhali et al. (2023) have outlined that tourists have been apprehensive to visit the KSA due to their perceptions about the KSA's restrictions, such as the limited access to some cities in the Kingdom, strict cultural and social norms like following a certain type of dress code, segregationof the genders, and other cultural and social norms. Mir and Kulibi (2023) put out another perspective saying that the tourists have limited perceptions about the country, considering their lack of awareness about the nation. To overcome these challenges, the nation is putting in a lot of efforts to change these perceptions and welcome more tourists from around the world.

It is important to understand which factors primarily contribute to tourists visit intention to KSA as there are many factors, such as accessibility, infrastructure, hospitality, service quality, cultural norms, marketing, cost, and visa requirements can also contribute to tourists visit intention (Jones & Haven-Tang, 2005; Khan et al., 2020). However, many of these factors, such as accessibility, infrastructure, hospitality, service quality, and cost can typically be taken into account once initial travel intentions have been established and also when tourists have travelled to KSA. Factors, such as cultural norms and marketing are in line with the study's factors being explored, such as conative destination image and

e-WOM. The study focuses on comprehending the factors that influence the initial choice to visit KSA, rather than evaluating the quality of the experience after arriving. Nevertheless, the conative destination image, perceived security, and travel motivation establish a more straightforward connection to comprehending tourists' behavioural intentions (Jasmi et al., 2024; Hamouda & Yacoub, 2018). The study's emphasis on universally applicable and psychologically rooted characteristics, such as perceived security and travel incentive, guarantees the broader relevance of the findings compared to focus on individual factors, such as cost and affordability. Also, factor like visa and entry requirement can contribute to visit intention of foreign tourists (Khan et al., 2020). However, when prospective visitors are sufficiently driven and possess a favourable disposition towards the destination, they are more inclined to successfully navigate and surmount these practical obstacles.

Furthermore, in order to accomplish this objective, it is crucial to get a thorough comprehension of the factors that impact the visitors' views and intents to come. The objective of this study is to investigate the many elements that influence the views and intentions of visitors while contemplating a visit to the KSA. In the contemporary era of fiercely competitive global tourism, the variables of the destination image and perceived security play a crucial role in shaping the visitors' decision-making processes. The perception of the KSA by visitors is heavily influenced by the conative destination image, which includes several factors such as the cultural attractions, infrastructure, and hospitality. In the context of the KSA, the impression of safety and security has substantial sway over the attitudes of visitors. These components provide the fundamental basis of this inquiry. Also, the current research is primarily focused on tourists whose visit intention towards the KSA is for non-religious purposes, and it holds significant importance for

secular tourists who may not possess familiarity with the cultural norms and traditions of the nation.

1.5 Research Aim, Question, and Objectives

This research seeks to investigate the determinants that impact the assessment of safety and security by prospective secular tourists in the KSA. Through the identification of these factors, it is possible to devise efficacious strategies aimed at mitigating the safety and security concerns, thereby augmenting the overall tourism experience within the nation. This research aims to enhance comprehension regarding the requirements and inclinations of non-religious tourists, thereby facilitating the expansion of the tourism industry in the KSA and accomplishing the goals of the National Tourism Strategy and Vision 2030. The primary focus of the current research is to be in line with the tourism ecosystem activities of the Saudi Government as it is first very important to attract tourists to the country for attracting more investments and developing the back-end processes like hiring more workers, establishing laws and regulations, and other such activities.

The current research primarily focuses on increasing tourists' intention to visit the KSA by identifying the determinants that can enhance their visit intention. Also, the research is underpinned with theory of planned behaviour (TPB) and self-determination theory (SDT). TPB explains that intention can be affected by various factors and provides a structured approach to examining how tourists' attitudes, e-WOM and conative destination image (which is in line with perceived norms of TPB), and perceived security (which is in line with perceived control of TPB) influence their visit intentions. SDT by Deci and Ryan (1985), distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and emphasizes the role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering motivation. SDT theory is particularly pertinent for exploring travel motivation, as it allows for a nuanced understanding of how different types of motivation (e.g., intrinsic motivation for

exploration versus extrinsic motivation for status, which are in line with relaxation, pleasure-seeking, and culture factors of motivation of the current research) influence tourists' attitudes and intention.

In line with the above, the following aim and objectives has been developed.

Aim: To investigate the determinants of tourists' attitudes and the visit intention towards the KSA for non-religious purposes.

The central research question of the current study is:

"What is the impact of conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation on attitude and visit intention of tourists when visiting the KSA for non-religious purposes?"

The research objectives that will guide in achieving the research aim are as follows:

1. To examine the impact of conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation on the tourist attitude to visit the KSA.

2. To assess the influence of tourist attitude on the tourist intention to visit the KSA.

3. To evaluate the mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between tourism-related factors (conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation) and the visit intention towards the KSA.

4. To investigate the moderating role of demographic characteristics (age, gender, education, income, and religious orientation) on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention towards the KSA.

5. To generate and evaluate a model that integrates conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, travel motivation, tourist attitude, and demographic characteristics to predict tourist visit intention towards the KSA.

6. To develop a set of guidelines/recommendations that can be adopted to increase non-religious tourism in KSA.

1.6 Research Gaps

The study will investigate the impact of factors, such as destination image, e-WOM, travel motivation, and security, on tourists' attitudes towards the KSA. Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci (2020) have mentioned that there is a significant need to understand the motivating elements because if tourists are motivated to visit a country, their attitude towards the country and the visit intention will also change. Therefore, it is clear that understanding the behaviour intention of visitors requires focusing on factors like the destination choice, e-WOM, travel motivation of tourists, and the perceived stability of the location. The concept of tourist attitude encompasses the various behavioural aspects that individuals adopt when participating in tourism activities or embarking on journeys to unfamiliar locations. Tourist attitude encompasses the collective disposition, anticipations, and conduct exhibited by individuals while undertaking their travels (Cheng et al., 2014). Also, the current research explains and assesses the impact of determinants on tourist visits. Even though researchers such as Battour et al. (2018), Gannon et al. (2017), and Wu and Murshid (2019), among others, outline the gap in terms of the visit intention and its factors impacting the same, they overlooked factors like security, conative destination image, and travel motivation.

Researchers have examined the factors influencing visitors' attitudes and, by extension, their decision to go there. For instance, Hosseini et al. (2021) explained that although past research focused on the tourist's real-life experience, recent studies have concentrated on customer satisfaction, marketing tactics, and service improvement. Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci's (2020) analysis emphasised that more discourse on the impact of material sources, individual characteristics, and participation on social media is required, as well as mindsets, each of which could play a significant role in the decision to visit a certain location. Hence, the current research will take advantage of using social media (e-WOM) to develop the positive attitude and intentions of tourists. The research also

provides insight on the possible effects of social media on travel choice, as well as the influence of e-WOM as a situational marketing method for enhancing tourist visitation to the KSA. Having an appropriate social media marketing strategy and developing a brand image, putting efforts into changing the perception of tourists regarding the safety within the country (Abuhjeeleh, 2019; Alsheikh et al., 2021), the KSA can really focus on developing the visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA. Alsheikh et al. (2021) specifically indicated the need to explore the perceptions of international tourists and explore the linkages between e-WOM and the intention to visit the KSA.

In terms of destination image, there are various elements, as Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020) point out: conative (human behaviour linked with purpose and intention), affective (human experience associated with feelings and emotions), and cognitive (human understanding based on perception, knowledge, and thinking). The current research is primarily focused on assessing the conative destination image, which can be explained as the perception of a person related to the inclination or behaviour he/she has when travelling to a specific destination in the context of the KSA, as it influences the visit intention more than other characteristics (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). Furthermore, in terms of the aspects of destination image and their relationship with the visit intention, multiple researchers like Yamaguchi et al. (2015) and Khan et al. (2017), among many others, have mostly focused on only the cognitive and affective destination image and their relationship with the visit intention. Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020) called for the need for research regarding focusing on the conative destination image, and the link between the conative image and planned behaviour has yet to be well documented or studied. The conative destination image will allow focus on people's propensity to promote, explore, and engage in other forms of activity, highlighting the need for greater research into the topic. The

conative image is also about whether tourists will actively consider a location to travel to or not, which will definitely guide the tourist attitude and the visit intention.

Furthermore, Dang and Weiss (2021) clearly indicated that broad socioeconomic, demographic, and interpersonal parameters such as age, gender, profession, and revenue should be explored as controlling or regulating factors to evaluate how these affect the determinants and linkages being investigated in the research. Focusing on these factors would allow the tourist industry's stakeholders to focus on demographic characteristics while developing their strategies to attract more tourists and develop the country's reputation at the same time. Likewise, Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas (2019) conducted a study on the relationship between travel motivation and the behavioural intention, and they called for a need to explore the moderating effects of other variables like gender and age, given that these factors have already been shown to affect tourist behaviour in other settings.

Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci (2020) note that further research is needed from the consumer standpoint across demographics to better understand the underlying motivations and attitudes that shape their choices. Another of the primary focuses of the investigation is on the role that demographic profiles play as moderators in the tourist business in the KSA. The KSA ought to prioritise the cultivation of a favourable reputation for the nation by accentuating its distinct tourist destinations, cultural legacy, and amicable atmosphere. Based on this, the KSA is rapidly expanding its tourism industry since it has recently begun welcoming foreign visitors. Hence, ensuring a secure and safe environment for tourists is imperative to enhancing the tourism industry in the KSA. Based on this, the tourism sector in the KSA must pay attention to factors like e-WOM, security, travel motivation, and attitudinal destination attributes, as well as the interaction between these factors and tourists' attitudes and intentions while in the country. Most of the researchers, such as Ran

and Zhengpeng (2021) and Shehaba and Som (2020), have considered demographics in their study. Still, they mention that they did not consider international tourists from various countries, which is not the case in the current study. This study focuses on tourists from around the world irrespective of their demographic characteristics, but these characteristics can play a significant role in impacting the visit intention. Huaman-Ramirez, Merunka, and Maaninou (2021) also state that future researchers must consider tourists of different nationalities to generalise findings and explore the boundary conditions and their impact on their visit intention.

In addition, past researchers (Hattani & Khoumssi, 2020; Hussein, Mohamed, & Gaber, 2020) have explored relationships among variables, such as e-WOM, motivation, destination image, and security, and the tourist visit intention in many other Middle Eastern settings such as Egypt and Morocco. However, the findings are not generalisable in the KSA's context because the country recently opened its tourism borders in 2019. In addition, the current research also outlines that most of the researchers have considered tourists visiting the KSA for religious purposes (Gannon et al., 2017; Wu & Mursid, 2019), and a limited number of studies have assessed how non-Muslims perceive the KSA and whether they intent to visit that location or not. For example, Wu and Mursid (2019) have performed their study in the context of visiting the KSA for pilgrimage purposes, and researchers have considered Indonesian tourists and have focused on rewards, enjoyment in helping others, perceived value, travellers' participation, travellers' satisfaction, and travellers' loyalty. Similarly, other researchers, such as Gannon et al. (2017), have focused on elements such as cosmopolitanism, self-identity, desire for social interactions, perceived destination image, and the behavioural intention. Furthermore, these authors outline that there is a gap in terms of focusing on the non-religious attributes of the country to develop its destination image. Battour et al. (2018), in their research, also found through interviews

that the participants (non-Muslims) have a limited perspective about the KSA as they think it is restrictive and have a negative perception of safety. In addition, participants in the research by Battour et al. (2018) also showed concern about security in the KSA. There is a significant contextual gap in regard to the country's perceived attributes and what tourists think about the KSA, as the country recently initiated tourism for non-religious purposes in 2019, which did not exist before.

Moreover, this study's findings can affect the KSA's tourism sector by offering a framework for evaluating such effects. It will help to better understand the elements that influence travellers' decisions to travel to a specific country and how to predict their travel plans. Every person who makes their living in the tourist sector will be affected by this study since it will shed light on the sector's strengths and flaws, and suggest ways to strengthen the industry as we advance (Battour et al., 2018). Because it clarifies how to make tourism more appealing for potential visitors, the study can potentially affect international relations. As a result, it will strengthen ties between the KSA and other nations, and encourage more people to travel there. Improving the quality of the tourist experience is an important part of growing the tourism industry and drawing more people to the area. Furthermore, based on the insights from the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), it suggests that attitudes can mediate the relationship between determinations and the behavioural intention because tourist attitudes can be influenced by travel determinants, which can further impact their intention to visit the KSA. Hence, there is a significant need to understand the mediating effect of tourist attitudes between travel determinants and the visit intention (Choirisa et al., 2021). The research will evaluate the mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between tourism-related factors and the visit intention towards the KSA. This will provide insights into how these factors impact the tourist visit intention through their influence on attitudes.

The KSA has been a pilgrimage destination for Muslims for many years. Still, only recently has it opened its doors for non-Muslims to visit the country and explore its culture, heritage, nature, and other such elements. For instance, various past researchers, such as Alsini, Ekiz, and Hussain (2019), Wu and Murshid (2019), and Gannon et al. (2017), have focused on various factors that explore the visit intention of foreign tourists to visit the KSA for Umrah, Hajj, and other religious activities. The factors that have been focused upon by Alsini, Ekiz, and Hussain (2019) are destination quality, Umrah quality packages, and Islamic life and beliefs. The current research will attempt to guide the KSA's tourism sector to increase future visitors to the KSA in terms of non-religious tourism, which will lead to an enhanced tourist experience in the KSA, especially for tourists who are visiting the country for non-pilgrimage purposes.

Liu et al. (2018) emphasised the travel intentions, behaviour, and influencing factors of Muslim travellers to a country. However, Liu et al. (2018) failed to concentrate on the broad characteristics of elements influencing the tourist attitude and the visit intention of a large audience, so limiting its scope to comprehend the tourist intention and the tourist visit intention on an overall basis. Also, Reza Jalilvand et al.'s (2012) study did not target a particular audience or deliver results based on a particular culture or diverse environment. The results of the study were based solely on the comprehension of the questionnaire and samples, but they failed to establish how e-WOM is successful for a particular audience or circumstance.

Similarly, in terms of motivation, a study conducted by Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas (2019) only accounts for *pull* factors in terms of the intention to travel to the Swiss Alps for a nature vacation. Also, most researchers have explored the overall impact of motivation on attitude and the visit intention. However, Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019) have explored the three determinants of tourist motivation, such as relaxation, pleasure-seeking,

and culture, in regard to their impact on intention, but it is important to explore that effect on attitude.

Additionally, the study does not account for the impact of other modifiable factors, such as age, gender, and background. The research conducted by Woosnam et al. (2015) focused specifically on Texas and New Mexico, two states in the United States. The study largely focused on terrorist attacks and safety issues that have increased in the United States over the past few decades, and it represented the perspectives on safety and security only in this region. From a demographic's standpoint, there was a gap because no data were collected from Americans who had never read internet reviews or who had never been to China (Ran et al., 2021). Additionally, foreign visitors from other countries were not included in this analysis. It can be said that more empirical research is needed to determine what sets U.S. visitors apart from those from other countries. The methodology employed by Pereira, Gupta, and Hussain (2019) to perform the study was limited to the collection of data from first-time visitors, as opposed to the entire travelling population. Therefore, the results of this study can only be prejudiced based on the perceptions of individuals who have travelled for the first time and not those who have travelled in general. In addition, the study was limited to Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh, limiting the applicability of the findings to other regions. The literature focusing on factors impacting the tourist visit intention of visiting the KSA is very limited, and the literature does not account for factors like religious aspects in regard to leisure tourism. In addition, Zamani-Farahani and Eid (2016) also outlined that tourism industry have a high potential in many Muslim countries, but there is limited research that is focused on in this context. Also, considering the research context that is the KSA, it is important to explore these factors as there is a significant contextual gap as there is very limited research on the KSA

compared to other countries, considering that it is regarded as a religious destination and has recently implemented efforts to incorporate more leisure tourism.

It can be understood that main knowledge gap is to comprehend the psychological variables that impact non-religious tourism in the KSA. Even though there are a very few studies that focus in the KSA's context, there is scarcity of research that investigates tourists' perceptions of KSA as a potential non-religious tourist destination. This gap is crucial as KSA undertakes its Vision 2030 to expand and diversify its tourism industry. This study is among the first to focus explicitly on non-religious tourism in KSA. While previous research has predominantly centred around religious tourism, this study shifts the focus to understand what drives tourists to visit KSA for non-religious purposes. Also, these variables individually are explored and their relationship with visit intention has also been explored, however, the conceptual model developed in the study is novel and has not been explored before in research.

1.7 Research Contributions

Prior research, including the work of Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci (2020) emphasized the importance of understanding the motivating elements that influence tourists and indicated that tourists are motivated to visit a country, their attitudes and visit intentions will also change, highlighting the need for a comprehensive understanding of these motivational factors. Despite the significant contributions of researchers such as Battour et al. (2018), Gannon et al. (2017), and Wu and Murshid (2019), there remains a gap in understanding the specific factors influencing visit intentions. These studies often overlook critical determinants like security, conative destination image, and travel motivation. By addressing these overlooked factors, the current research aims to provide a more comprehensive explanation and assessment of the determinants that influence tourist visits.

This study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge by offering new insights into how destination image, e-WOM, travel motivation, and perceived security shape tourists' attitudes and visit intentions towards KSA. The enhanced understanding is particularly relevant for destinations like KSA, which are actively seeking to diversify their tourism offerings and attract a broader range of visitors for non-religious purposes. The study will also contribute to the existing body of knowledge by examining the influence of social media, specifically electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), on tourists' attitudes and visit intentions towards the KSA. The study also the perspectives of international visitors, in line with the stated gap by Alsheikh et al. (2021) to analyze the connections between e-WOM and KSA in the KSA's context. This study aims to gather empirical data on the impact of social media on travel behavior. It seeks to provide a detailed understanding of the various elements that influence tourists' attitudes and decision-making processes. In addition, the current research will be significant in terms of exploring the destination image of the KSA to enhance tourists' visit intention towards the KSA. The current research contributes to primarily evaluate the impact of the conative destination image on the tourist visit intention, which is not a well-explored relationship in the literature.

The extent to which demographic variables such as age, gender, ethnicity, income, and education can moderate the impact of experience and exposure on first-time visitors' intentions regarding their behaviour in a foreign land (Ran & Zhenpeng, 2021) like the KSA is among the novel contributions of the current research. In addition, this research will focus on the specific gap in knowledge that has been identified by previous studies conducted by Hattani & Khoumssi (2020) and Hussein, Mohamed, & Gaber (2020). These studies examined the relationships between variables such as e-WOM, motivation, destination image, and security in various Middle Eastern contexts, but did not specifically investigate these relationships in the context of KSA. This study aims to offer novel

insights into the distinctive characteristics and impressions connected with Saudi Arabia as a non-religious tourism destination, considering that the country only began allowing non-religious travelers in 2019. The emphasis on this aspect is crucial, given that prior studies have mostly focused on religious tourism, disregarding the non-religious elements that are now gaining greater significance.

The results of this study will have important consequences for the tourism industry in KSA. The research will provide a framework for analyzing and enhancing tourism initiatives by identifying the crucial aspects that impact tourists' attitudes and intents, which will assist stakeholders in the tourism sector, such as destination management organizations, government agencies, and private sector investors, in creating specific strategies that improve the overall tourist experience and increase visitor numbers. The study will also elucidate the advantages and disadvantages of KSA's tourism sector, offering practical suggestions for resolving these problems and cultivating a favorable reputation for the country.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential impact on how the KSA can shape and enhance its tourism industry. The investigation focuses on understanding how travel motivation affects tourists' attitudes towards KSA. According to UlkerDemirel and Ciftci (2020), understanding what motivates tourists is crucial because it directly influences their attitudes and intentions regarding travel to a destination. Therefore, examining factors such as destination choice, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), travel motivation, and perceived security is essential for predicting tourist visit intention. KSA can focus on enhancing its security that can make every tourist feel safe while visiting the country.

Tourist attitudes, which encompass behaviors, expectations, and actions during travel, play a significant role in influencing travel decisions (Cheng, Jin, & Wong, 2014).

Tourist attitude explains tourists' real-life experiences, recent studies have shifted focus to aspects like customer satisfaction, marketing strategies, and service improvements (Hosseini, Macias, & Garcia, 2021). KSA's tourism industry can focus on improving its tourism strategies that can develop a positive attitude of the nation among tourists, which can benefit the country's image and economy. UlkerDemirel and Ciftci (2020) highlight the importance of considering material sources, individual characteristics, and social media engagement in shaping tourists' decisions. Thus, tourism authorities can leverage social media (e-WOM) to foster positive tourist attitudes and intentions is a promising approach.

The research also explores the destination image of KSA, which includes various elements: conative (intentional behavior), affective (emotional experiences), and cognitive (perceptions and knowledge) (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). This study focuses on the conative aspect of the destination image, which relates to the deliberate behavior or perception of potential visitors and is a strong predictor of visit intention. The tourism industry of KSA can understand and develop its conative image that can reveal insights into tourists' willingness to promote and engage with the destination.

Incorporating broad socioeconomic and demographic factors, such as age, gender, profession, and income, is also crucial (Dang & Weiss, 2021). These parameters can help stakeholders tailor strategies to attract diverse tourist segments and enhance the country's reputation. Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas (2019) emphasize the importance of considering moderating variables like gender and age, which affect tourist behavior and should be factored into marketing strategies. KSA should target specific demographics and leverage that information to develop tailored marketing strategies.

In addition, the research is significant for various stakeholders, such as destination management organisations (DMOs), tour operators, hospitality businesses, KSA's public sector organisations (i.e. Saudi Ministry of Tourism, Saudi Commission for National

Heritage, and Ministry of Culture), local communities, and private sector investors as it will benefit them in a long run. To be specific, the findings related to visit intention and other variables can allow DMOs to develop more focused marketing strategies that successfully showcase the distinctive cultural legacy and contemporary attractions of the KSA. The findings can also inform the development of advertising campaigns that improve the attractiveness of the KSA, which will also handle challenges related to security-related perceptions of the country worldwide. The research emphasises the need of ensuring that product creation for tour operators and hospitality businesses is in line with the interests of various tourist market segments, including those who are interested in cultural experiences, adventure tourism, and relaxation in the KSA. Tour operators and hospitality businesses can create tailored packages that accommodate a variety of tourists, including Muslim travellers interested in religious tourism and non-Muslim visitors seeking leisure and cultural experiences. Research findings can be used by policymakers of the government organisations to formulate tourism policies that promote economic diversification in alignment with Saudi Vision 2030. The study emphasises the need of cultivating a favourable perception of the visitor destination, tackling security issues, and enhancing the infrastructure for tourism. Furthermore, policymakers can use the results to further cultural diplomacy and soft power by cultivating international connections via tourism. The study highlights the necessity of engaging cultural specialists and local communities in order to guarantee that tourism offers faithfully represent Saudi customs and values. The findings can be used by the private sector and investors to discover potential areas for investment, particularly in expanding product offerings such as resorts, adventure tourism, and eco-tourism projects. The findings of the study about visitor preferences can provide valuable guidance for investment choices and product advances, thereby facilitating the attraction of diverse tourist groups, prolonging their visit, and enhancing overall satisfaction.

The study's significance extends to KSA's efforts to establish itself as a diverse, non-religious tourist destination. By addressing factors such as security perceptions, destination image, and aligning marketing with tourists' goals, the study provides actionable recommendations for KSA's tourism sector. Enhancing the security and safety of the tourist experience will be vital for the KSA as it expands its tourism industry. The research highlights the need for the KSA to focus on e-WOM, security, travel motivation, and destination attributes to effectively influence tourists' attitudes and intentions.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is discussed in terms of unit of analysis, methodological considerations, contextual considerations, temporal scope, and exclusions of the research.

The unit of analysis refers to the specific entity or level of observation that is being studied or analyzed in a research study or analysis (Kumar, 2018). The unit of analysis in this research are tourists around the world, which implies that the main emphasis of gathering and examining data is focused on the actions, attitudes, motivations, and impressions of individual tourists who visit KSA. The research seeks to obtain insights into the personal characteristics that influence the travel intentions, preferences, and general attitudes of tourists towards non-religious tourism in the country.

The study encompasses various crucial factors that are vital to comprehending the factors that influence visitors' opinions and intention to visit the KSA. The study focuses on including a population of any tourist, irrespective of their religion, nationality, or region they belong it, considering that the focus is only on them intending to visit KSA for non-religious purposes only. It is also important to understand that Muslims, even though they are a significant part of the study's sample, the emphasis is placed on their non-religious travel reasons and experiences rather than their religious objectives.

The study investigates the determinants that influence visitors' perceptions and inclinations to visit the KSA. The criteria encompass the conative destination image, perceived security, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), and travel incentive. The study seeks to comprehend the influence of these factors on tourists' overall perspective and decision-making process. The study also investigates how demographic variables, such as age, gender, education, income, and religious inclination, influence the results. This analysis aids in comprehending the impact of these variables on the correlation between visitors' attitudes and their visit intentions. The study examines how tourist attitudes operate as a mediator in the relationship between conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, travel motivation, and visit intentions. This offers a thorough perspective on how attitudes influence travel behavior.

The research approach establishes specific constraints that delineate the extent of the study in terms of methodology. The study used a combination of purposive and convenience sampling strategies. Purposive sampling guarantees that participants meet specified criteria that are pertinent to the study's aims. However, the utilization of convenience sampling, which involves selecting participants through easily accessible channels such as social media or travel groups, may add bias and restrict the capacity to apply the findings to a broader population. Data is gathered via online surveys, which may limit participation to people who have internet connectivity and proficiency with digital platforms.

The data gathering for this project spanned six months, specifically from January to June 2023. This timeframe enables the collection of data on travelers' attitudes and intents over various seasons and events, leading to a fuller comprehension of their travel behavior. The research is situated within the recent endeavors of KSA to encourage secular tourism.

This entails analyzing the way tourists perceive and intend to visit the country, taking into account the country's efforts to expand its tourism offers beyond religious pilgrimages.

The study specifically excludes tourists who only visit KSA for religious purposes, such as Hajj and Umrah, from the category of religious tourism. The primary emphasis is exclusively on secular visitors and their underlying reasons for visiting the country for activities unrelated to religion. The study does not encompass the perspectives and intentions of locals or residents in the KSA. It is solely focused on visitors who are visiting the country. Although the study recognizes the significance of elements such as infrastructural development, visa requirements, and policy rules, these tangible issues are not the main emphasis. The focus of the research is on psychological aspects, including attitudes, motivations, and perceptions. The study did not examine the potential alterations in tourists' views and intentions over a prolonged duration. It offers a concise representation based on data gathered during the specified six-month timeframe.

1.10 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis is described as follows:

Chapter 1 presents a clear overview of the topic, along with the problem statement that highlights the motivation to conduct this research. The aim, objectives, and questions are articulated in a way that guides the research. The research significance, gaps, and contributions are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive literature review of the main constructs of the study, which include conative destination image, e-WOM, perceived security, travel motivation, tourist attitude, and the tourist visit intention. The variables are conceptualised and analysed to gain a deeper understanding of their involvement in the current research. Additionally, the chapter explains the underlying theories of the study, namely TPB and self-determination theory (SDT).

Chapter 3 presents the hypothesis development and conceptual framework model. This chapter outlines a detailed discussion and review of the linkages between the variables that guided the development of the hypotheses.

Chapter 4 outlines the research methodology adopted for the current study, indicating the adopted research philosophy, approach, method, design, and strategy. It also covers the population and sampling, along with the chosen sample, data collection, and data analysis method.

Chapter 5 presents the data analysis that reflects the results of the survey. The results of various tests, such as descriptive analysis, demographic statistics, reliability analysis, and hypothesis testing, are presented.

Chapter 6 outlines the discussion of the findings in comparison to the conducted literature review. A discussion of each of the relationships is outlined to explain the linkages between them underpinned by existing theories

Chapter 7 outlines the conclusion, limitations, future recommendations, and the theoretical and practical contributions of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The focus of the current research is to evaluate the impact of factors on the intention of tourists who plan to visit the KSA for leisure purposes. In this chapter, various latent constructs are conceptualised, such as tourist visit intention and tourist attitude, based on the review of the literature and theoretical frameworks, such as the TPB and SDT. Following the conceptualisation, there is a discussion of the underpinning theories. The TPB was chosen as it provides a framework to study the interplay among the variables that shape tourist attitude and the visit intention. This theory would also allow the researcher to delve into the underlying psychological and social factors influencing these behaviours, providing valuable insights for the tourism industry and its stakeholders. Furthermore, the underpinning of SDT allowed to explore the motivation of tourists that impact tourists' intention to visit a destination. Factors impacting tourist attitude and the visit intention were explored through a critical review of the literature. Discussion of the factors identified for the current research, which are conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation, is done in this chapter. Lastly, a chapter summary is outlined.

2.2 Review of Related Theories

Common theories, such as the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and TPB, outline the impact of determinants on the behavioural intention of tourists.

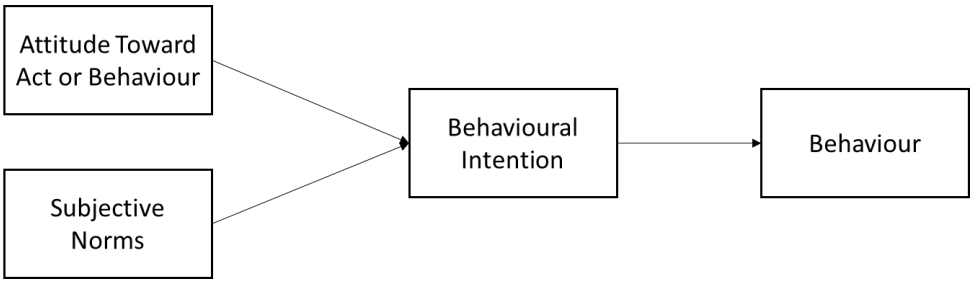
2.2.1 Theory of Reasoned Action

Proposed in 1974 by Fishbein and Ajzen, the TRA is regarded as one of the most significant theories for explaining human conduct and its underlying factors. According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1974), TRA used attitude and subjective norms to represent the effects

of cognitive components on the individual's decision-making process as represented in the following figure 1.

Figure 1

Theory of Reasoned Action



Note. Fishbein and Ajzen, 1974, p. 14

The TRA argues that people develop favourable or unfavourable attitudes towards a certain action depending on their perceptions of the consequences linked to that conduct. These attitudes have a substantial influence on the probability of developing the desire to participate in the activity. Nevertheless, the TRA underwent refinement and further development in the TPB. The underlying principle of this paradigm is that human conduct is shaped by ideas about the consequences of that action, which subsequently generate either a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards the activity. Based on previous conceptualisations of the attitude component of the model, attitudes form as a consequence of the anticipated value, whether positive or negative, that one associates with a certain activity (Ajzen, 1991). Additionally, the present research takes into account additional influential variables that align with other components of the TPB. The following section provides a detailed explanation of these aspects.

2.2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour

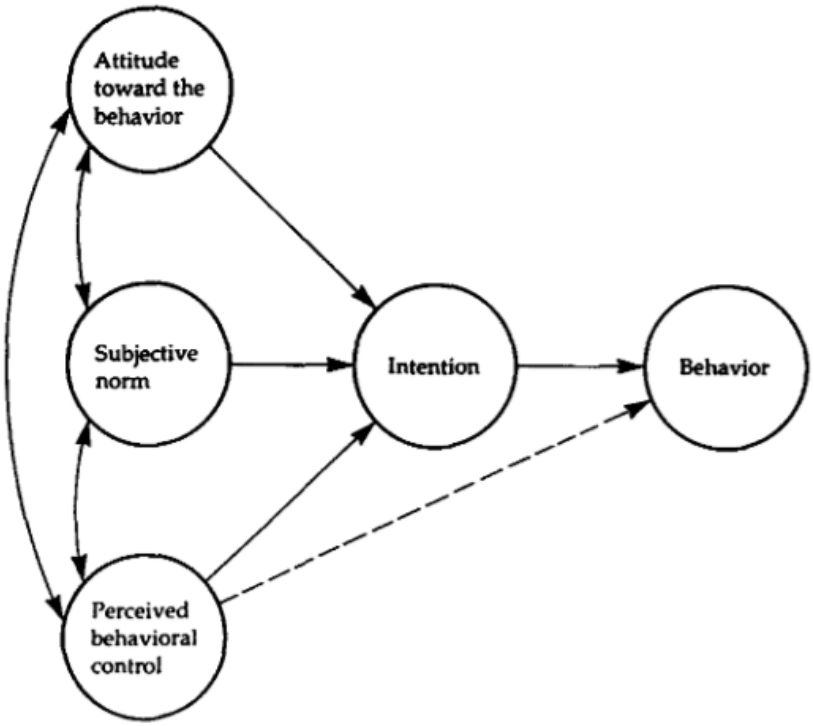
The TPB is among the most frequently used theories to describe how behavioural intentions are formed in various sectors, such as retail, banking, health, nutrition, tourism, hospitality, and various others (Rozenkowska, 2023). In addition, researchers (Hassan,

Shiu, & Parry, 2016; Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020; Rozenkowska, 2023) have outlined that the TPB is amongst the most used theory in tourism-related research contexts that also include hospitality and leisure. This underpinning theory holds significant relevance in the context of the tourism sector, because it is an expectancy-value model (Rozenkowska, 2023). Hoyer et al. (2018) outline that the expectancy-value models are analytical approaches, which explain the change in consumer behaviour based on their knowledge or beliefs about a specific aspect and their evaluation of that knowledge or belief. Similarly, in the context of the current research, the focus is on exploring tourists' beliefs about the KSA and it is important to evaluate their perceptions regarding the same.

The TPB paradigm by Ajzen (1991) suggests that the purpose or preparedness to perform represents the most cohesive aspect of an action. In the TPB, the behavioural intention is affected by behavioural beliefs, social norms, and behavioural controls (Hardeman et al., 2002). Behavioural beliefs are attitudes about an item that reflect the likelihood that a particular activity will happen (Ajzen, 1991). Social norms are the amount to which it is believed that others anticipate a particular conduct, as well as an individual's drive to adhere to that behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived behavioural control is an individual's perceived capacity to handle obstacles and complete an action (Ajzen, 1991). In his fundamental work, Ajzen (1991) examined these three ideas by examining attitudes about a certain activity and the significance of perceptual standards and behavioural control. It is essential to emphasise that the proportional impact of these aspects relies on the specific problem or case being examined (Hassan, Shiu, & Parry, 2016), and if the TPB model maintains resilience and effectiveness. The TPB model has been used effectively to identify both the overall and particular behaviours of people. A representation of TPB is done in the following figure 2.

Figure 2

Theory of Planned Behavior



Note. Ajzen, 1991, p. 182

Multiple researchers have used the theory in varying contexts. For instance, Tarigan, Putri, and Sabrina (2021) and Yadav and Pathak (2017) examined consumers' green purchase behaviour using the TPB in regard to ecological psychology research. Wang et al. (2018) combined the TPB with personal characteristics to comprehend Chinese customers' views of remanufactured items and their subsequent purchasing behaviour. Gungaphul, Seewoo, and Kasseean (2022) and Scalco et al. (2017) examined the impact of the TPB components on customers' intention to purchase and consume organic foods. In regard to the tourism industry, the TPB has been applied in a significant number of studies. For example, Patwary et al. (2022) analysed the impact of green marketing tools on their green purchasing behavioural intention to buy green products in Malaysia. Also, Nimri, Patiar, and Jin (2020) and Wang et al. (2022) utilised an adapted version of the TPB model to understand the customers' behavioural intention to visit and get accommodation in green

hotels, and in the development of consumers' decisions to pay for equivalent costs for green hotels like they pay for regular hotels. In terms of sustainability and sustainable tourism, Mohaidin, Wei, and Murshid (2017), Sardianou et al. (2016), and Zhang et al. (2020) used the TPB to understand the behavioural intention of visiting places that are being and becoming environmentally responsible. In regard to leisure tourism, Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci (2020) have conducted a systematic literature review to identify the factors that are most responsible for increasing tourists' behavioural intention.

Multiple researchers, such as Filieri et al. (2021), Mohaidin, Wei, and Murshid (2017), and Uslu (2020) have underpinned the TPB to understand the importance of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) and how it impacts tourists' behavioural intention. The TPB has also been applied in terms of medical tourism (Kreft et al., 2020), sustainable rural tourism (Joo, Seok, & Nam, 2020), volunteer tourism (Meng et al., 2020), coastal tourism and culinary tourism (Hashemi et al., 2021), food tourism (Radzi et al., 2016), and many other kinds of tourism. Also, among the other forms of tourism, the behavioural intention for religious tourism and non-religious people visiting places with religious sites is also underpinned using the TPB. For instance, Ming et al. (2020) conducted a study in the context of tourists visiting Jenn Lann Temple in Dajia, Taichung, Taiwan, that focuses on following Mazuism, and it is important to investigate the connections between destination image, service quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and the behavioural intention of tourists visiting that destination. Also, another perspective given by Adel et al. (2021) focuses on the behavioural intention of Muslims that visit non-Islamic destinations and what their experience is while visiting these places. It was observed from these papers that tourists are visiting religious places for religious purposes.

The use of the TPB in the current research will guide us to understand the factors that can impact the tourist visit intention based on their attitude and some additional factors

that have been identified based on critical literature and other theoretical underpinnings. There is a very limited focus in the literature on how people with different faiths and religions visit tourist places or have the intention to visit places that have leisure tourism along with religious tourism (Kim, Kim, & King, 2020; Reisinger & Moufakkir, 2015). Reisinger and Moufakkir (2015) have highlighted this limitation in the context of the Middle East region, which is also the focus of the current study. Even though the KSA is predominantly a region that practises Islam, and it might impact the intention of people of other faiths or religions to visit the KSA, the country is rich in cultural and historical heritage, which can also motivate visitors from various faiths that may have a keen interest in exploring the country's ancient archaeological sites, museums, and cultural landmarks. They may want to learn about the KSA's history, traditions, and way of life.

The current research does not primarily focus specifically on all the elements of the TPB, which are social norms and behavioural control, because the factors identified in the research will be attributed as a part of these factors. Also, the social norms variable is captured through e-WOM as perceptions shared using e-WOM can influence the social norms to visit the location or not. Similarly, perceived behavioural control is captured through perceived security as perceptions about safety can influence an individual's perception of their control over the ability to visit a particular destination (Hsu et al., 2009).

Moreover, multiple researchers, such as Choirisa et al. (2021), Hung and Khoa (2022), and Jalilvand, Samiei, Dini, and Manzari (2012) have also considered the TPB as their base theory and not included social norms and perceived behavioural control as variables in their study. For instance, Choirisa et al. (2021) outlined that the TPB is frequently employed as a research framework to forecast the behavioural intention of selecting a travel destination, when analysing the decision-making process that leads to travel destination preferences. Choirisa et al. (2021) and Jalilvand, Samiei, Dini, and

Manzari (2012) have considered e-WOM as a primary variable to evaluate its impact on attitude and the behavioural intention, and it is considered as the main element of the TPB model.

Also, Ajzen (2020b) outlines that new elements and determinants can be added, which determine behaviour, and the author also mentions that new additions should not be redundant with the existing predictors, which is the case in the current research. In addition, attitude refers to the cognitive assessment made by an individual regarding a specific location in the context of the current research. The objective of this study is to enhance the comprehension of tourists' cognitive processes, beliefs, and evaluations concerning the destination by analysing the factors that influence their attitude towards visiting the KSA. This particular emphasis enables a thorough examination of the cognitive components involved in tourists' decision-making processes, while minimising the impact of social norms or perceived behavioural control. The exclusion of social norms and behavioural control allows for theoretical parsimony in the research design. The TPB encompasses a multitude of factors that exert an influence on human behaviour. Consequently, conducting an examination of all these variables within the confines of a single study presents a considerable challenge. By restricting the scope to attitude, the study can offer a more detailed examination of the cognitive factors involved, without the complications arising from social norms and behavioural control. The fundamental tenet of the TPB posits that individuals are inclined to engage in specific behaviours (Ajzen, 1991). The individuals in question will exhibit a positive attitude towards the behaviour and possess the requisite resources, skills, and opportunities to effectively execute said behaviour (Choirisa et al., 2021).

The concept of the behavioural intention is widely recognised as a crucial mediator in the association between attitude and behaviour, which means that attitude has a

significant effect on the behavioural intention (Choirisa et al., 2021). The TPB also suggests that human behaviour is rational and that an individual's consciousness is in control of the habitual target. However, it acknowledges that behaviour is not solely dependent on an individual's intention, but also on external factors beyond human regulation such as the accessibility to services and opportunities to exhibit said behaviour (Ajzen, 2002). Furthermore, researchers have also indicated there is a need to evaluate *background factors* to determine the understanding of determinants that impact the behavioural intention (Ajzen, 2020a; Onjewu et al., 2022). Ajzen (2020a) outlines that background factors, such as demographic traits and personality traits, can be considered as background factors to determine the intention. The study by Jalilvand et al. (2012) incorporated the dimension of e-WOM into the TPB model. It aimed to examine the influence of e-WOM on the behavioural intention, with a particular focus on the impact of image destination and attitude on the travel intention. Similarly, another study by Hung and Khoa (2022) also outlined that the impact of external behaviours can be influenced by the underlying intention of an attitude, as suggested by Ajzen (1991) and Lee (2007). According to Ajzen (2002), an individual’s intention to perform a behaviour is positively correlated with their attitude towards that behaviour. Specifically, the more favourable the attitude, the stronger the intention to perform the behaviour.

According to Um and Crompton’s (1990) research, the attitude of an individual plays a significant role in the selection of a potential destination as part of the evoked set and in the ultimate decision of choosing a final destination. Hence, the primary focus is to explore the impact of attitude on the behavioural intention based on the TPB and by extending two other important factors to the theory, such as e-WOM and destination image. Not only this, one of the studies by Han and Stoel (2017) mentioned that the subjective norms variable seemed to be the weakest element of the TPB in previous

studies. Furthermore, a systematic review conducted by Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci (2020) on the implementation of the TPB in tourism studies outlined some very important points, such as a crucial part of the behavioural intention being determined by attitude, a lack of context-specific studies focusing primarily on the impact of attitude on intention, and insufficient support of the TPB to address context-specific research questions.

Furthermore, Ajzen (2020b) has also identified that there are some additional factors that can guide and impact intention, such as individual factors like age, gender, education, income, and others, while another set of factors are social factors like religion, race, geography, and other background factors. Among these factors, individual factors are the focus of the current research because the research primarily focuses on tourists and their intention and attitude to visit the KSA. Hence, the research primarily considers some demographic factors and some additional factors that are guided through other factors of the theory, which are subjective norms and perceived behavioural control as explained before. The TPB suggests that demographic factors have an indirect influence on intentions. However, some studies have examined how demographic variables can moderate the relationships between the TPB constructs and intentions (Bamberg et al., 2003; Han et al., 2010; Paswan et al., 2014). Within the field of tourism research, demographic factors such as age, gender, income level, and education have been discovered to influence the connections between different factors and the visit intentions (Mohsin & Vogt, 2014; Quintal et al., 2010). The demographic characteristics of individuals can have an impact on their perceptions, motivations, and decision-making processes regarding travel. Identifying these potential moderating effects can offer valuable insights for customising marketing strategies and initiatives to specific target segments (Mohsin & Vogt, 2014). The approach is consistent with the increasing amount of research that acknowledges the potential influence of demographic factors on travel behaviour and

decision-making processes, even though it deviates from the original TPB framework (Han et al., 2010; Quintal et al., 2010). This study seeks to enhance our understanding of the factors that influence intentions to visit the KSA by considering demographic variables as moderators.

Also, the TPB is a valuable framework for comprehending the tourist visit intention since it focuses on the intellectual and physiological aspects that drive decision-making. According to the TPB, a person's intent to participate in a behaviour is impacted by their attitudes about the conduct, their perceptions of societal expectations and demand, and their perceptions of the behavioural control (or ease) of carrying out the behaviour (Adel et al., 2021). The TPB may be used to comprehend the aspects that impact a person's choice to visit a specific location. Additionally, it may be employed to determine the primary determinants of intention, such as the perceived image of a location, the estimated prices and advantages of a visit, and the considered societal expectations to go (Basaran, 2016). In addition, the TPB may be used to discover the elements that impact the decision-making process for various tourist sections, such as the security of the location, what people think about the location, and other such factors. The TPB is an effective framework for comprehending and determining the tourist visit intention.

However, TPB does not allow focus upon factors that can guide travel motivation, which also can impact the tourist attitude and the visit intention. The TPB is a model that explains how an individual's intentions impact their likelihood to participate in a behaviour, which guides their decision-making process (Luqman, Masood, & Ali, 2018). Motivation may influence an individual's subjective norms and attitudes, but it is not a direct component of the TPB model (Luqman, Masood, & Ali, 2018). According to the TPB model, a person's intentions to participate in a behaviour are influenced by their beliefs about the conduct, the views of others, and their perceived abilities to do the

behaviour. Therefore, the TPB focuses on the psychological processes that lead to the creation of intentions rather than the psychological processes that motivate and maintain action throughout time. Also, Perugini and Bagozzi (2001) have noted that the TPB does not encompass certain personal decision criteria, including motivational desires and past behaviour. The framework of this theory has been widely adopted in numerous trials to forecast behaviour based on attitude factors (Ho, Tsai, & Day, 2011). The variables within the TPB appear to be inadequate in providing an explanation for research inquiries that are specific to certain contexts (Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020). Consequently, the research models were augmented and broadened through the incorporation of diverse variables.

The aforementioned propositions offer diverse perspectives to the literature in comprehending behavioural intentions. Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci (2020) proposed distinct models or integrated multiple models within their research framework. In addition, Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas, (2019) have stated something similar by focusing on the point that human actions are primarily rational, which has been subject to significant criticism, highlighting the neglect of emotions in this perspective. Furthermore, Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas, (2019) contend that the process of making decisions related to travel cannot be sufficiently elucidated by a single theory and emphasises the necessity for novel methodologies to examine the factors that influence the intention to visit. In this regard, Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci (2020) state that despite its significance, only a limited number of studies have explored the connection between motivational factors and behavioural intentions. The authors mention that there is a need to expand their models by incorporating distinct context-specific variables, or that the variables they utilise may not be relevant to the TPB. The constraint in question may not solely stem from contextual factors, but also from the utilisation of restricted psychological theories, as noted by Pearce and Packer (2013).

In addition, in regards to excluding certain key variables such as subjective norms and perceived behavioral control from the TPB was made to streamline the research focus on the most impactful factors relevant to the context of non-religious tourism in KSA. While subjective norms and perceived behavioral control are important constructs in TPB, this study prioritized the variables that were hypothesized to have the most direct and significant influence on tourists' attitudes and visit intentions, such as destination image, e-WOM, and perceived security, which are in line with these factors of TPB. By narrowing the focus, the research aimed to provide more in-depth insights into the selected factors, thereby making the analysis more manageable and ensuring that the study could offer concrete recommendations for tourism stakeholders in KSA.

Additional investigation is required to comprehend the motivational facets of tourists' conduct. This can be done by understanding SDT as it provides an additional viewpoint by examining how both internal and external incentives influence behaviour (Ng et al., 2012). By combining the SDT and TPB frameworks, researchers can acquire a more thorough comprehension of the motivational factors that impact tourist attitudes, intentions, and behaviours.

Hence, based on the above discussion, one of the other theories that underpins the current research and focuses on travel motivation and its related attributes is SDT, which is described in the following section.

2.2.3 Self-Determination Theory

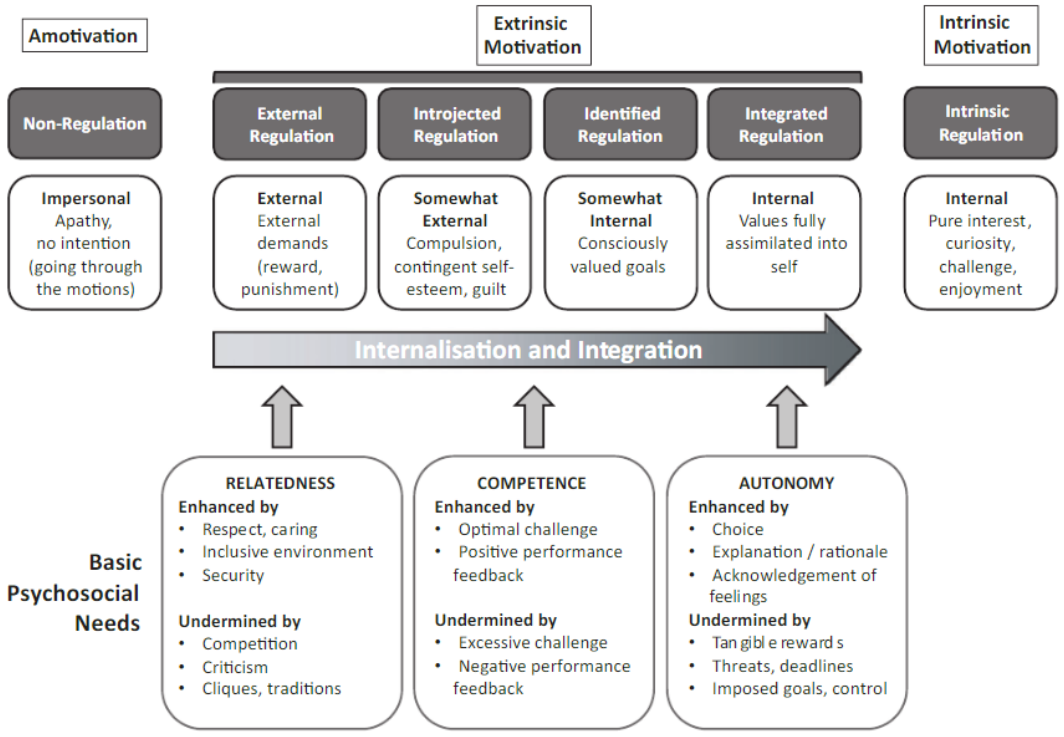
According to Deci and Ryan (2012), SDT is the theory of human motivation and personality in social circumstances that has been developed from empirical evidence. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), motivation is derived from the intrinsic enjoyment of engaging in behaviour *for its own sake*. The influence of instrumental behaviour on decision-making is evident in people, since it is driven by external results rather than the

behaviour itself (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Ryan and Deci (2017) explain that SDT illustrates how a variety of individual motivations, spanning from internal to external motivation, may lead to different methods and consequences of judgment, productivity, and emotional well-being. Individuals with intrinsic motivation act with a feeling of autonomy and make decisions based on natural preferences or desires for life goals. However, people with extrinsic motivation operate primarily in reaction to a feeling of external influence and desire for specified results, frequently within group settings (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

Furthermore, an analysis of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations can be conducted through the framework of SDT, which Deci and Ryan (1985) proposed as represented in the following figure 3.

Figure 3

Self-Determination Theory



Note. Cook & Artino Jr, 2016, p. 1010

SDT posits that motivation is a distinct and unified concept, classifying behaviours as either intrinsically motivated or extrinsically driven (Ng et al., 2012). According to Deci and Ryan (2000), the theory of self-determination suggests that the satisfaction of essential psychological requirements such as competence, autonomy, and relatedness can facilitate the formation of self-determination and result in the internalisation of intrinsic or extrinsic goals. SDT challenges the tenets of operant psychology as originally formulated by Skinner (1971) by asserting that behaviour is intrinsic in nature, as opposed to being acquired through the process of learning (Ng et al., 2012). Based on SDT, it can be deduced that an individual's behaviours are intrinsic qualities of human nature and not the result of learning processes. Deci, Olafsen, and Ryan (2017) put forth the theoretical framework of SDT, which prioritises the satisfaction of requirements over external incentives. The approach mentioned above, referred to as a needs-based theory, proposes that people are proactive beings motivated by growth and progress, with an innate tendency to incorporate their psychological elements into a unified sense of self and to assimilate into larger social structures (Deci, Olafsen, & Ryan, 2017).

In addition, the focus on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from the SDT theory was a purposeful decision to evaluate the concepts of travel motivation, such as relaxation and pleasure-seeking (related to intrinsic motivators) and culture of the location (related to extrinsic motivator). The study sought to examine the impact of intrinsic incentives on tourists' opinions and intentions towards visiting KSA. This focus is in line with the current trend in tourism research that highlights the significance of intrinsic factors in influencing long-term behavioral intentions. Also, Yousaf et al. (2021) outline that there is no one model of SDT that can be applied in the context of tourism and depends on the focus of the research. Also, SDT is primarily adopted to explain the whole concept of motivation as a whole and its interrelatedness with tourist attitude and visit intention. Furthermore, the

study's focus was on providing a specific analysis rather than a comprehensive examination of all components of SDT, such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Subsequent investigations could enhance this study by integrating these concepts to provide a more thorough comprehension of tourist motivation.

The scale of motivation can be developed through externally offered rewards that can be incorporated into the person's perception of oneself or embraced as one's personal principles and values (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Extremely ingrained motivation emerges from adopting exogenous reasons as congruent with one's beliefs and self-identity. Motivations can be self-determined and can also occur from outside pressures and constructive reasons, including physical and monetary outcomes, social standards, social pressure, or the fear of being punished rather than enjoyment of the interaction. Similarly, autonomy is a fundamental psychological idea. The model relates to an individual's judgment and lifestyle management abilities (Ryan & Deci, 2011). This ability to choose the best options for a better life is essential for preserving psychological health and happiness (Ryan & Deci, 2011). Self-determined individuals might have a feeling of ownership over their actions and lives. Moreover, self-determination increases motivation, as individuals are more likely to engage when individuals feel their activities will favourably impact the eventual outcome (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

SDT has been underpinned by many researchers in their studies that focus on travel motivation and the visit intention. For instance, Yu et al. (2019) applied SDT to identify the motivators that are intrinsic and extrinsic in the context of suicide travel, which is not a well-researched area in the context of the general public. Ng and Ho (2020) underpinned SDT to understand the travel motivational factors among senior adults as the authors found that senior individuals are reluctant to travel internationally due to their age, limited mobility, and similar other aspects. Buzinde (2020) focused on spiritual tourism through

the application of SDT and found that spiritual tourism is linked to the well-being of individuals. In a recent study by Yousaf et al. (2021), the authors stated that there are various motivations related to SDT, such as knowledge-seeking, escape, sense of accomplishment, experience stimulation, social relationships, destination rewards, and social media compulsion that can impact the tourists' travel intention. In a study by Han and Chen (2021), the authors indicated that SDT provides insight into the range of intensity levels that social media users attribute to influencers on the platform.

This research proposes SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2012) as a possible foundation for focusing on travel motivation and incorporating it into the TPB framework, which can also allow the evaluation of its impact on tourist attitude. Multiple researchers have integrated the TPB and SDT to understand the behavioural aspect showcased by individuals. For instance, Hagger and Chatzisarantis (2009) have integrated the two theories to evaluate the elements of the TPB and motivation on the behavioural intention. Similarly, Williams, Sun, and Masser (2018) also integrated two theories to determine the intention of individuals in a healthcare context. In addition, Ma et al. (2018) outline that SDT is suitable for evaluating the relationships between tourist attitude, travel motivations, and other behaviours. The choice of SDT is based on its time-tested and interdisciplinary usefulness in inspiring individuals to seek tough objectives and persevere despite obstacles or setbacks (Ryan & Deci, 2011, 2017).

Additionally, the focus of the current study is to understand the motivations driving tourists to visit KSA for non-religious purposes. The selected motivations—'relaxation,' 'culture,' and 'pleasure seeking'—are highly pertinent to non-religious tourism. To be specific, nonreligious travel provides chances for relaxation apart from daily responsibilities as it related to leisure and well-being. Travellers looking for rest and renewal will find destinations emphasising wellness, natural beauty, and peaceful settings

(Liu et al., 2021), which will motivate them to travel to that location. Similarly, tourists travelling for non-religious purposes might also be motivated to explore local legacy, arts, and history of a region. Participating in cultural events and historical sites improves the vacation experience by offering educational and enriching chances not always related to religious settings (Richards, 2009). Non-religious tourism is also driven by the search of enjoyment since many people are driven by the need to enjoy different leisure activities, entertainment, and exciting events. Engaging in activities like dining, shopping, and entertainment—all of which are fundamental to the appeal of non-religious locations—pleasure-seeking behaviours can involve those (Lengkeek, 2001).

Moreover, these motivational factors align closely with the types of attractions and experiences that KSA is promoting as part of its Vision 2030 initiative, which includes an emphasis on cultural heritage, leisure activities, and high-quality recreational experiences. Even though the sub-aspects of motivation can seem to be in line with push-pull theory of motivation, SDT allows to simplify the complex psychological processes involved in tourist decision-making. While the push-pull theory is effective for general travel motivation studies, the current research's specific focus on non-religious tourism in KSA requires a framework that can address detailed psychological and behavioral dimensions. TPB's emphasis on planned behavior and SDT's insights into motivation quality are particularly relevant for understanding how tourists perceive and decide to visit a relatively new non-religious destination like KSA.

SDT posits that when tourists engage in activities and actions that are based on their personal interests, beliefs, and values compared to external conditions, they can be highly motivated to visit a location despite the challenges that can occur (Ng & Ho, 2020). For example, people are more likely to seek or keep a travel motivation if their fundamental psychological needs can be met by following that motivation, which can further increase

their attitude to travel to that location (Aicher et al., 2015; Ng & Ho, 2020). Also, in the context of the current research, it can be deduced that the desire for connection and belonging with others, as described by Ryan and Deci (2000), may have a role in promoting the formation of attachment in people, which can motivate them to travel to the KSA. Therefore, it may be hypothesised that those who choose to follow new developments in the KSA would establish a feeling of affiliation with these new strategies that the country has adopted to market itself and cultivate a deeper attachment in comparison to those who decide not to follow them. Furthermore, it is very important to evaluate the travel motivation of visiting a location like the KSA that has recently been opened for tourists and was only open to Muslims, that too only for religious tourism. Now that it has opened for leisure tourism for Muslims and non-Muslims, it is important to evaluate if there will be travel motivation among tourists to visit the KSA, and the theory underpinning the relationships will allow understanding of its relationship with tourist attitude and the visit intention.

The TPB and SDT mutually complement each other in comprehending tourist behaviour, specifically in relation to the visit intention. These two theoretical frameworks give separate but interrelated insights that, when combined, enhance our knowledge of the elements that influence visitors' choices. The TPB, using a systematic methodology, focuses on the cognitive aspects of purpose. This framework analyses the elements of attitudes, subjective standards, and perceived behavioural control, offering a logical and methodical structure for evaluating and forecasting deliberate actions. Conversely, SDT enhances understanding by delving into the fundamental psychological demands and motives that influence people's decision-making. The concept differentiates between intrinsic motivations, which arise from internal impulses, and extrinsic drives, which are influenced by external stimuli. The combination of these theories improves the researcher's

capacity to understand and manage the complexities of tourist decision-making processes, providing significant insights for the tourism sector.

In addition, the integration of TPB and SDT within the conceptual framework of this study provides a comprehensive approach to understanding tourist attitude and visit intentions. While it may not be immediately evident how the elements of the TPB and SDT are represented in the final model, a closer examination reveals their underlying influence on the constructs and variables selected for analysis. The TPB, developed by Ajzen (1991), focuses on three core components: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These components collectively shape an individual's intention to perform a particular behavior. In the context of this study, the TPB's emphasis on attitudes is directly reflected in the investigation of tourists' attitudes towards visiting KSA. This encompasses their overall disposition, anticipations, and conduct while considering travel to KSA. Although subjective norms and perceived behavioral control are not explicitly named in the final model, their conceptual influence is present. For instance, conative destination image and e-WOM can be seen as factors related to subjective norms and perceived security as perceived behavioural control, as they shape tourists' perceptions of safety and the social influence of online reviews on their decision-making.

SDT, proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985), distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations based on the degree of internalization and autonomy. The final model incorporates elements influenced by SDT through the inclusion of travel motivation, which encompasses both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Travel motivation, as measured in the study, aligns with SDT by considering various reasons why tourists may choose to visit KSA, such as pleasure-seeking and relaxation (intrinsic motivation) and culture (extrinsic motivation). This dual consideration of motivations ensures that the study captures a holistic view of what drives tourists to consider KSA as a travel destination.

The integration of these theories into the final model can be further elucidated by examining all the variables considered in the study. By focusing on the constructs of attitudes, conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation, the final model effectively integrates key elements from both TPB and SDT. This integration allows for a nuanced understanding of how various psychological and contextual factors interact to influence tourists' visit intentions. The decision to concentrate on these specific variables ensures that the study remains focused on the most impactful factors while still being grounded in robust theoretical frameworks.

In summary, while the final model may not explicitly name each component of TPB and SDT, their influence is evident in the selection and operationalization of the key constructs. The comprehensive framework provided by these theories allows for a detailed exploration of the factors influencing tourist behavior and visit intentions, aligning with the study's objectives and contributing to the broader understanding of tourism dynamics in the context of KSA.

2.3 Conceptualisation of Tourist Visit Intention

To understand the concept of tourist, visit intention, it is first crucial to understand the concept of tourist behaviour, which is discussed in the following sections.

2.3.1 Tourist Behaviour

The significance of tourism experiences conceptualised as a behaviour produced by purpose and the desire to return has been researched extensively in a number of contexts. Researchers have used terms such as tourist behaviour and travel behaviour interchangeably, which are characterised similarly, considering that it is about how tourists perceive or behave about a certain location (Çakar & Aykol, 2022). In the current research, the terms are also used interchangeably, but the primarily terms used are tourist behaviour and the tourist visit intention. Asbollah et al. (2017) outline that tourist behaviour is

referred to as, “the representation of tourists’ needs, personality and way of life” (p. 283). The authors further emphasise that it is crucial to explore tourist behaviour as it plays a major role in developing the tourism sector worldwide. Huang, Weiler, and Assaker (2014) and Stylos et al. (2016), to name a few, have focused mostly on the behaviour of potential tourists and their past travel experiences. This behaviour is additionally influenced by the intent and objective of visitors visiting a certain place.

2.3.2 The Nature of Tourist Behaviour

Meng and Xu (2012) emphasised the importance of analysing and implementing the fundamental knowledge of different consumer behaviours (e.g., planned behaviour, impulsive purchasing, and experiential consumption) in the tourism industry to obtain a detailed understanding of tourist behaviour characteristics. Meng and Xu (2012) have elucidated these characteristics within the framework of tourist buying behaviour in the tourism sector. To be specific, impulsive behaviour mostly arises from an individual’s inherent nature, the features of the product, or specific circumstances (Meng & Xu, 2012). Hohmann and Garza (2022) also state that impulsive behaviour is defined as the display of a quick, often powerful, and long-lasting need to engage in an impulsive, unintended, and immediate purchase in response to certain triggers. Experiential consumption encompasses consumer behaviour that pertains to the multisensory, imaginative, and emotive elements of a person’s encounters with items (Wang et al., 2020). The consumer’s experience throughout the acquisition, use, or enhancement of a market product is often characterised as enjoyable and gratifying (Meng & Xu, 2012). In addition, planned behaviour refers to a buying activity that is carried out after identifying an issue in advance or forming a desire to make a purchase before visiting the store (Meng & Xu, 2012; Hsu & Huang, 2012; Yuzhanin & Fisher, 2016).

Accordingly, many researchers (Ashraf et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2020; Yuzhanin & Fisher, 2016) have outlined that tourist behaviour is a planned behaviour, which is captured and analysed based on their visit intention, and it is expressed differently in terms of what kind of behaviour tourists have towards travel destinations, food choices, adventure activities, and related choices (Carballo et al., 2021). The behaviour of tourists is a deliberate act, which is studied and evaluated by taking into consideration their intention to visit a particular place. This phenomenon has been identified and examined by Ashraf et al. (2019), who have proposed that the behaviour of tourists can be predicted and analysed by understanding their intention to visit a particular destination. Multiple researchers have confirmed the empirical evidence supporting the ability of intentions to accurately predict actual behaviour in the tourism industry (Lam & Hsu, 2006; Quintal et al., 2010). For instance, Lam and Hsu (2006) performed research on potential tourists to Hong Kong and discovered that the intention to visit was a strong indicator of whether or not people actually visited and explained a considerable amount of the variation in visiting behaviour. Quintal et al. (2010) also emphasised the significance of exploring visit intention as a method for comprehending and impacting actual tourist behaviour towards a location. The authors outlined determinants that affect the intention to travel, so those involved in the tourism industry may devise successful marketing tactics and interventions to favourably impact the decision-making processes of prospective tourists. It is important to understand the intention of tourists to further evaluate and predict their actual behaviour towards a specific location.

In the context of the current study, whereby tourist behaviour is about evaluating their intention to visit the KSA, the research considers tourist behaviour as a planned behaviour. This is because when assessing whether tourists are likely to arrive, their planned consumption behaviour becomes more significant as it emphasises the intentional

and careful process of decision-making that takes place before the actual experience happens, which corresponds to the pre-visit phase of study on tourist behaviour (Yuzhanin & Fisher, 2016). However, impulsive behaviour is not considered, because tourist behaviour is a complex phenomenon in terms of visiting a location, because it involves costs, decision-making, and other such factors (Meng & Xu, 2012). Also, impulsive behaviour adds an element of uncertainty and risk to the process of making decisions. The current study chooses to concentrate on planned behaviour to enhance the analysis and prediction of visitors' decisions, hence enabling the implementation of a more efficient strategy. Also, experiential consumption is more relevant in terms of determining the tourist revisit intention. Also, the focus of the current study on only actual tourist visit intention and not tourist behaviour is primarily related to theoretical framework and study's practical considerations. However, the current study is focused on the visit intention of visiting the KSA for the first time. Planned behaviour/Actual tourist behaviour involves a deliberate and careful decision-making process that precedes the actual experience, aligning with the pre-visit phase of tourist behavior (Yuzhanin & Fisher, 2016). In context of KSA, the tourism has recently opened in 2019, which was followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which indicates that the country has not visited many tourists to understand the tourist behaviour, so the focus is primarily on evaluating their intention to visit KSA for non-religious purposes.

2.3.3 Tourist Visit Intention

Tourists typically have no idea or information about places they have not visited, but they want to visit, which means that they have an intention to visit; this explains that tourist decision-making is based on whether they have an intention to visit or not, and if they will act on that intention to further visit that place (Carballo et al., 2021). The choices made by tourists regarding their travel destinations, food preferences, adventure activities,

and other related decisions are examples of the variety of behaviours expressed during tourism (Çiftçi & Çızel, 2024). Carballo et al. (2021) support this idea by elaborating on the different ways in which tourist behaviour manifests itself. As outlined by Kamar et al. (2024), the planned behaviour among tourists is a crucial aspect in tourism research, as it indicates the degree of dedication that tourists have towards traveling to a particular destination. The aforementioned construct serves as a more concrete measure of tourists' inclination to visit in contrast to the relatively ambiguous measures, such as interest in visiting a place (Cho, 2008; Lam & Hsu, 2006). For example, the difference in the aforementioned construct is more concrete and specific, while interest in visiting a place is more ambiguous and general (Cho, 2008). The concrete measure is likely to provide a clearer indication of whether someone is likely to visit a specific location or not, while the ambiguous measure may not provide as much clarity or precision. Tourism organisations and service providers can benefit from targeting tourists who have established definite plans to visit a destination, as they are more inclined to actualise their intention to travel. Additionally, the planned nature of visitors' visit intentions can offer valuable insights into the cognitive processes underlying their decision-making (Carballo et al., 2021). Tourists who have made definitive arrangements to visit a particular destination are more likely to have engaged in a thorough information search, evaluated alternative options, and considered various factors such as cost, time, and convenience (Liu et al., 2020).

As discussed before in the aspect of planned behaviour, it can be understood that this behaviour involves a complex decision-making process. Tourist behaviour, as a subset of consumer behaviour, is closely connected to the wider framework of decision-making (Meng & Xu, 2012). Tourists start with their journey by making choices, starting with acknowledging the want to discover new areas, to assessing various travel alternatives, and ultimately, deciding to visit a certain location, which is characterised as tourist visit

intention in the literature. In this regard, Hsu and Huang (2010) outline that the formation of tourists' behavioural intentions is influenced by a logical choice and decision-making process (Hsu & Huang, 2010). A visit intention is a desire to go to a certain location. The concept of intentions, as explained by Malhotra and McCort (2001), refers to personal desires, will, or delight, and these intentions are intimately associated with one's attitude. Wong, Lee, and Lee (2015) state that intention is crucial for creating bias, and also in making important decisions. Visit intention, or the choice to go to a certain location, is formed via a complex approach. Strategically, the major objective of destination strategists is to influence the visit intention (Chung et al., 2015) because the desire to visit a location is often described in the context of personality communication that is influenced by a variety of factors based on the person (Caldito, Dimanche, & Ilkevich, 2015). For instance, visiting a location may be seen as a self-interested activity motivated by self-involvement, such as maximising one's enjoyment when visiting a location (Caldito, Dimanche, & Ilkevich, 2015). As indicated by Prebensen (2007), a location, such as a city, that has a favourable and familiar image is more likely to be chosen by tourists. Satyarini, Rahmanita, and Setarnawat (2017) in their study indicate that the tourist visit intention can be underpinned with the concept of the behavioural intention and purchase intention. In line with the previous statement, Satyarini, Rahmanita, and Setarnawat (2017) in their study have indicated that while it is possible that a purchase intention may not be realised in the future, the assessment of this intention is often conducted to enhance the accuracy of predicting the actual purchase. Depending on the setting of the study, several researchers interpret the visit intention differently. For instance, Wong, Lee, and Lee (2015) outline the importance of narratives that must be formed about a specific location. The authors outline that tourism officials should develop proficiency in using narratives as a means of effectively communicating a destination's image to visitors. The narratives should possess

the capacity to evoke or strengthen the desired picture in the mind of the traveller, facilitate an understanding of the location, and generate a specific allure towards the destination, which can contribute to their visit intention (Wong, Lee, & Lee, 2015).

Ashraf et al. (2019) interpreted the tourist visit intention in terms of their behaviour of how they perceive the social support and environmental aspects of visiting an eco-friendly destination. However, Davari and Jang (2021) describe the factors that enable strategists to raise the intent of non-visitors. Only a few studies can be effectively related to the visit intentions of non-tourists (in comparison to tourists) and how views influence their choice to go to a location for the very first time (Davari & Jang, 2021). Hence, it can be observed that the visit intention can be conceptualised differently, sometimes depending on the context. Based on the above discussion, the current research focuses on the following definition: tourist visit intention refers to the interpretation of the purpose or motive behind a planned visit to a particular place or destination, which also involves examining various factors that drive an individual's decision to visit a specific location (Caldito, Dimanche, & Ilkevich, 2015; Davari & Jang, 2021).

2.4 Tourist Attitude

Attitude is a tendency, formed through knowledge and practice, to react consistently to an event or occurrence; this tendency could be positive or negative (Pratkanis et al., 2014). One of the most important definitions outlined by Ajzen (1991) of attitude is the extent to which an individual has a positive or negative view or assessment of the behaviour in consideration. In the tourism industry, attitude is the general tendency or thoughts that tourists forward towards a holiday location and tourism amenities and infrastructure among the characteristics of the location, which is predicated on the impression of the visitor attractions and characteristics of the location (Cheng et al., 2014; Jalilvand et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2015). Consequently, a person's attitude towards a

specific action relies on the obstacles and advantages of that conduct (Crano & Prislin, 2011). Lee (2009) also outlines that individuals' attitudes have the potential to influence their behavioural tendencies and inclinations.

Additionally, behavioural and cognitive theories acknowledge the impact of individuals' information acquisition skills from the external world and their internal cognitive capacities on their behavioural intentions and decision-making processes (Sheeran, 2002). This pedagogical technique is once again structured based on the three essential elements of attitude, namely affective, behavioural, and cognitive elements (Ostrom, 1969). Zanna and Rempel (2008) also indicate that three aspects of attitude include affective, behavioural, and cognitive elements.

Roloff (2015) mentioned that during the process of evaluation, people often depend on their collected knowledge, use critical thinking, participate in constructive analysis, and adhere to their logical intuitions. On this note, the cognitive aspect of attitude, as elucidated by Ertmer and Newby (2013), pertains to a rational evaluation that mirrors an individual's cognitive processes and understanding. In terms of tourism, the cognitive element is the assessment of the tourist location based on the available data, information, and awareness (Kwon & Vogt, 2010; Reitsamer et al., 2016).

During the process of evaluating a given issue and developing one's perspective, people may sometimes develop views that are predominantly influenced by their emotional and psychological connection to the subject matter (Pearce & Packer, 2013). Occasionally, individuals may exhibit certain behavioural responses in reaction to their context, external environment, and surrounds, without taking into account the influence of psychological emotions or logical reasoning (Shareef et al., 2015). The ultimate reaction is determined and impacted based on the behavioural element of attitude (Gagne et al., 1993). In line with tourism, Kwon and Vogt (2010) have indicated that the behavioural element is spoken or

written evidence of the tourist's trip to the location, which can be based on written reviews posted online, sharing a blog, or spreading the word through traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) practices.

Multiple researchers have explained tourist attitude, which also differs in line with the study's context. For instance, Lee (2009) states that tourist attitude is linked with the participation and satisfaction of tourists, which further determines their future behaviour. In another study by Lee et al. (2021), the authors indicated the importance of heritage and culture, and how it shapes the tourist attitude towards a specific destination. The authors also state that tourism planners should specifically focus on creating an experience for the tourists, which will shape their attitude. Najib et al. (2020) in their study have focused on the attitude of only Muslim tourists in two contexts, namely Indonesia and Malaysia, as the number of Muslim tourists to other foreign countries has reduced, which has increased the tourism in Muslim countries. Furthermore, attitude increases the susceptibility of an individual to behave or function in a specific way (Crano & Prislin, 2011). In this context, one may claim that a tourist's appraisal of one's visit to a specific location will represent one's assessment and viewpoint of the location in aspects of experiences like was it as per their expectations, whether it was fun and enjoyable, were the locals helpful, and if the overall personal experience was positive or negative (Chien et al., 2012; Lam & Hsu, 2006). The current research focuses on the following definition of tourist attitude: tourist attitude refers to the emotional inclinations indicated by visitors' favourable or negative judgments of specific activities (Cheng, Jin, & Wong, 2014; Jalilvand et al., 2012). In terms of the current research, the focus is on evaluating the tourist attitude in general rather than focusing on the individual aspects of attitude.

2.5 Factors Impacting Tourist Attitude and the Tourist Visit Intention

As discussed before, based on the theoretical underpinnings, there are various factors that impact tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention.

Table 1

Factors Identified from the Literature

Authors	Factors impacting tourist attitude and tourist intention
Liu et al. (2018)	Destination image e-WOM
Jalilvand et al. (2012)	Responder attitude Destination image Travel motivation
Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas (2019)	Travel motivation
Woosnam et al. (2015)	Perceived safety Perceived security
Ran et al. (2021)	e-WOM Perceived destination risks (security)
Hasan et al. (2019)	Destination image Tourist satisfaction
Pereira, Gupta, and Hussain (2019)	Travel motivation Travel preferences (related to attitude and behaviours) Travel anxiety (related to security)
Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas (2019)	Place attachment Ad-evoked positive effect Travel motivation
Filieri et al. (2021)	e-WOM e-WOM
Alsheikh, Aziz, and Alsheikh (2021)	Argument quality Source credibility
Al-Khaldy et al. (2022)	Social media use Social media content Trip experience sharing Tourist trust Travel constraint
Shin et al. (2022)	Perceived behavioural control Subjective norm Perceived health risk Past travel experience
Hasan et al. (2023)	Destination image Perceived value Tourist satisfaction Perceived risks
Sulivyo and Dewi (2024)	Subjective norms

Among the reviewed studies listed in the table above and the other studies reviewed by the researcher based on the underpinning theories, such as the TPB and SDT, several common factors have been commonly identified by the researchers as having a significant impact on tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. These include the travellers' view of the destination's image, the safety and security of the destination, and the travellers' motivation for visiting the destination, along with e-WOM . For instance, researchers, Liu et al. (2018), Hasan et al. (2019), and Hasan et al. (2023), focused on the effect of destination image; Reza Jalilvand et al. (2012), Ran et al. (2021), and Filieri et al. (2021), explored the impact of e-WOM; Pereira, Gupta, and Hussain (2019) and Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas (2019), explored the effect of travel motivation; and Woosnam et al. (2015), Hasan et al. (2019), and Wachyuni and Kusumaningrum (2020) explored the effect of perceived security. Moreover, the studies outlined in the table have a limited scope, but their application to the current study's objectives can be useful.

Moreover, the research conducted by Liu et al. (2018) has highlighted that one significant aspect that has a significant impact on tourist attitudes and visitor intentions is the destination image. The destination image is crucial in influencing the attitudes and behaviours of visitors. An appealing destination image has the ability to draw in tourists by cultivating impressions of security, desirability, and distinctiveness (Hasan et al., 2019). On the other hand, a poor image might discourage prospective visitors because they worry about safety, quality, or credibility. Efficient destination branding and marketing strategies are essential for effectively maintaining and improving the image of a destination (Hasan et al., 2023).

Additionally, it was claimed that it is commonly accepted in a variety of literary works that how a location is described digitally can influence how visitors act when they

arrive. Take into account that a location's advertising can influence how other people see it. Hasan et al. (2023) also stated that research in the domains of marketing and tourism has indicated that a person's preconceived beliefs of a particular place have a substantial impact on where they ultimately choose to vacation. In addition, the research by Reza Jalilvand et al. (2012) discussed e-WOM, responder attitude, destination image, and travel intention, and found that all play a role in shaping a tourist's intention to visit a given location, with age, gender, the purpose of visit, prior experience, education, and nationality all playing significant roles. According to the results of the study, the age, gender, nationality, education level, the reason for the trip, and the travel experience of the respondents all had a substantial impact on how likely they were to use e-WOM, how they felt about the destination, how likely they were to book a trip there, and how they felt about the destination as a whole. The researchers also dynamically discussed that with the use of the internet's accessibility and ease of use, potential visitors are more inclined to use e-WOM material as a supplementary resource. Given that as a part of e-WOM, comments about a destination are posted online, these can be monitored and managed with greater ease than the less structured and less accessible WOM.

In addition, Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas (2019) discussed travel motivation as an influencing factor that plays a huge role in impacting the travel visit intention and travel intention of individuals planning a trip. Furthermore, the study presented by Woosnam et al. (2015) highlighted that security and safety are a factor that contributes to the travel intention and travel visit intention of individuals. The study highlighted that tourists' safety and security are of the utmost concern. Emotional connection with the destination locals is a notion that has been largely neglected while attempting to explain why tourists feel safe at a place. The study also highlighted that tourists and the tourist industry place a premium on feeling safe and secure when travelling. Maintaining a high level of security has been a

concern over time, but it is one of the most important factors for attracting tourists and ensuring that they are positive about the location or considering a visit based on the belief that they would be safe there. Ran et al. (2021) also discussed e-WOM as an important factor that plays a major role in impacting the travel intention and travel visit intention of individuals. The study discussed that due to the global reach of the internet, people from all over the world are now able to freely exchange ideas and perspectives. Developing countries can improve their reputation as tourist destinations through e-WOM. The research further explained that more and more people all over the world now have access to the internet, and e-WOM is more powerful than ever.

Moreover, Pereira, Gupta, and Hussain (2019) also highlighted that the tourism industry and marketers benefit a lot from emphasising understanding travellers' motivations and the elements that impact their behaviour when deciding where to vacation. Individuals take vacations for a variety of reasons, including stress relief, enjoyment of nature and the outdoors, exposure to new experiences, and education. The decision of a tourist to visit a certain destination, however, is largely dependent on the travel motive, as suggested by the tourism literature and related models of travel destination choice and the decision-making process.

Moreover, theoretical underpinnings support the selection of these factors to assess visit intention. For example, SDT posits that motivation is a critical driver of behaviour and its related intention, and travel motivation is therefore a logical factor to consider in explaining tourists' visit intention. Similarly, the TPB emphasises the importance of attitude and norms in predicting behaviour, and destination image and perceived security are factors that are likely to shape tourists' attitude towards a destination. Also, based on critical literature review findings and through the analysis of the factors presented in Table 1, the selection of destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation as

the key drivers of visit intention, and the review, revealed that these four factors are the most commonly studied and empirically supported drivers of visit intention in the tourism literature. Additionally, in terms of these factors, they are highly relevant in the context of the KSA.

So, based on the represented Table 1 and the above discussion, the factors that are reported prominently in the literature and are relevant in the context of the KSA are destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation, which can have a significant impact on the tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. These factors are discussed in the following sections; however, the linkages/relationships among the variables are outlined in Chapter 3.

2.6 Conative Destination Image

Destination image is a arbitrary notion that encompasses the thoughts, ideas, experiences, and emotions of individuals regarding a nation, city, or region as a tourism destination (Eid et al., 2019; Gallarza et al., 2002). The destination image as just that is becoming the heart of destination branding, which often relates to the creation of a constant component mix that identifies and differentiates the *location* via strong graphic development (Gallarza et al., 2002). Cognitive destination image, affective destination image, and conative destination image are the three basic components of destination image (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). The cognitive image component represents an assessment of the destination's observed features, irrespective of past travel (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). This group of properties relates to a tourist destination's resources. The affective image signifies the psychological reactions and sentiments that individuals have regarding the location (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). The conative destination image is about taking action. It determines how an individual responds to information and how they perceive a destination based on their emotions and feelings (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). The

individual's actual behaviour or purpose of returning, promoting the location to others, or disseminating favourable feedback and reviews are all related to the conative destination image (Woosnam et al., 2020).

Due to a variety of factors mentioned in the following part, the present study focuses exclusively on one of the subconstructs of the destination image, namely the conative destination image. For example, the affective component of a destination's image has little practical significance (Woosnam et al., 2020). According to the findings of academics, affective assessments are relatively subjective and imprecise, making them of much less use in the development of empirical relationships and while analysing a location that has opened leisure tourism for the first time (Woosnam et al., 2020). Also, for tourists who are unable to assess the location prior to their arrival, the cognitive destination image might result in negative effects. However, the conative destination image is about taking action predicated on both aspects combined, such as how they feel about a destination, which is associated with the affective destination image element, and what they believe about a destination, which is associated with the cognitive destination image element (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). Multiple scholars, such as Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020) and Woosnam et al. (2020), have recognised the influence of the cognitive destination image and affective destination image separately; however, there is a considerable lack of empirical data about the impact of the conative destination image (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). The focus of the current research is primarily on the conative destination image, given the limited studies on the topic and the need to explore how the action of making a decision to visit a location can impact the intention to visit that specific location.

Conative destination has been covered either in detail or very briefly by various researchers, which also indicates a significant need to evaluate this construct. In addition, researchers perceive the conative destination image differently. For instance, Basaran

(2016) states that the conative destination image refers to the behavioural aspect of individuals' response to information about a destination, as well as their emotional disposition towards that place. Wang, Wang, and Ivan (2023) outlined that previously the destination image was primarily two-dimensional, namely the cognitive and affective destination image, and the concept of the conative destination image came later on. The identification of factors that influence the creation of the conative destination image associated with a location is a critical component in effectively marketing the destination and building a market position, as shown by the research conducted by Lojo, Li, and Xu (2020). Previous studies have shown that several factors, including travel experience and positive emotions, may influence individuals' inclination to suggest, engage in WOM communication, and express a desire to revisit (Hosany et al., 2016; Wang, Wang, & Ivan, 2023). The authors have noted a significant impact of user-generated tourism material on social media on the conative destination image of visitors. Nevertheless, there is a scarcity of scholarly investigations that explore the impact of the conative destination image.

2.7 Perceived Security

The relationship between tourism and security is an intrinsic element. Ensuring the security of tourism is not only a necessary condition and guarantee for the efficient functioning of tourist activities, but also a pivotal determinant for the longevity and expansion of the tourism sector (Tarlow, 2014). The significance of concerns about tourist security has increased in tandem with the expansion of the tourism sector (Tarlow, 2014). Tourism security involves a diverse array of tangible and intangible components, such as humans, economic variables, political considerations, social dynamics, cultural characteristics, legal needs, and environmental issues (Scheyvens, 2010). Scholars have observed that countries facing crises or challenges that jeopardise the well-being and security of tourists have seen a decrease in the number of visitors. For instance, Koščak

and O'Rourke (2021) have indicated that the increase in civil disputes in several countries, the widespread incidence of terrorism, the occurrence of natural disasters, the spread of illnesses, and the appearance of pandemics have all led to a heightened concern over the maintenance of safety and the security of tourists. The assessment of the security status is a crucial factor in the decision-making process pertaining to travel (Choi et al., 2019). The concept of safety and security has garnered much attention in recent decades, while it is not a novel idea. As stated by Carballo et al. (2017), the assessment of a destination's security significantly influences the decision-making of visitors over their potential visitation to that specific area.

Singh (2018) defined perceived security as the degree of confidence an individual feels when making a decision about a particular option. In regards to security, security is perceived as "the incidents of terrorist attacks, natural disasters, pandemics, wars or high levels of crime at a specific destination [that] can result in potential visitors evaluating whether or not they should reconsider their travel destination or cancel their travelling plans" (Fakir et al., 2022, p. 1898). In addition, Hartono et al. (2014) noted that perceived security congruence between the theoretical concepts of safety and actual judgments of safety in an empirical study is a multifaceted notion with numerous origins (e.g., confidentiality, integrity, availability, and non-repudiation). However, the vast majority of empirical research fails to account for the complex character of perceived security, opting instead to choose measures that capture or concentrate on only one feature.

Numerous scholars have examined the notion of tourist security via various theoretical frameworks and analytical perspectives. In their study, Walters et al. (2017) examined the impact of risk perceptions on the process of destination selection and travel decision-making. Moreover, it was said that the characteristics and importance of risk vary across various destinations. Various variables might be seen as unsafe by potential visitors,

including but not limited to terrorist attacks, natural catastrophes, sicknesses, cultural obstacles, and inadequate value for their financial investment (Walters et al., 2017). In accordance with these perspectives, Cui et al. (2016) posited that the perception of danger among tourists is a subjective phenomenon. To differentiate between the notions of risk and anxiety within the context of tourism, Cui et al. (2016) created the concept of worry. Cui et al. (2016) further indicated that risks perceived by tourists are due to the likelihood of certain unfavourable occurrences and the size of the repercussions that they have observed. Conversely, concern might be characterised as a detrimental affective reaction to situations of ambiguity (Walters et al., 2017). The existence of fear emotions among visitors was explored by Korstanje (2011) and Agarwal et al. (2021). During the process of preparing for travel, people engage in cognitive processes including the consideration of many unknown possibilities, including potential negative repercussions. They endeavour to develop strategies or identify alternatives to address these difficulties or prevent them from occurring. Agrawal et al. (2021) have indicated that perceived tourist security may be attributed to factors such as the inadequate information of terrorist dangers, weak enforcement measures, and limited integration of counter-terrorism programmes.

Additionally, the level of perceived security is one of the most important factors tourists consider when deciding whether or not to visit a particular location (Salimon et al., 2019). It has been demonstrated that visitors' perceptions of potential danger have a significant impact on their decision to visit or go to a certain region (Yang & Nair, 2014). A traveller's sense of safety may be influenced by their background and culture, personality, and travel experiences (Korstanje, 2011). On the basis of the pervasiveness of the concept of security perception in the academic literature, numerous theoretical and empirical investigations on the risk characteristics associated with travel destinations and

their influence on tourist behaviour intentions have been conducted to evaluate the effect of perceived security on the travel intention or travel visit intention of people travelling.

2.8 e-WOM

McCabe, Li, and Chen (2015) assert that persons who participate in travel often get a wide range of information via many channels during the first phases of the decision-making process for their trips. The suggestions may be obtained from several sources, including family, friends, and travel companion groups, so aiding travellers in efficiently planning their trip to the desired place (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2018). The phenomenon of WOM is well recognised as a significant and influential source of information that consumers often depend upon when making travel reservations. Furthermore, it functions as a paradigm for proposing diverse suggestions (Burgess et al., 2014). However, the traditional WOM often involves interpersonal conversations between consumers about their experiences with products and services (Blazevic et al., 2013). The use of this method of communication plays a pivotal part in the dissemination of information about diverse items and services. Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan (2018) found that consumers exhibit a stronger inclination to be affected by traditional WOM as opposed to sources that possess a more commercially oriented nature, such as hotel providers or travel agencies. The phenomenon of WOM has been recognised as a notable determinant in mitigating uncertainty in the process of consumer decision-making (Hernández-Méndez, Muñoz-Leiva, & Sánchez-Fernández, 2013). Therefore, WOM plays a key role in the consumer's decision-making process. The value of WOM is particularly relevant for hotel service providers that provide intangible services, experience interactions, or possess a positive reputation (Gremler et al., 2001). In the field of hospitality and tourism industry, consumers put considerable trust in the suggestions given by individuals who have previously used the service (Filieri et al., 2015; Purbadharmaja et al., 2021).

The proliferation of the internet has notably expedited the process of obtaining destination information via personal connections. Simultaneously, developments in electronic communication technology have facilitated the emergence of e-WOM, allowing users to employ platforms including the internet, blogs, and email. Xie et al. (2015) assert that conversation platforms function as a medium through which individuals can participate in the interchange of personal experiences and viewpoints. The utilisation of e-WOM has exhibited significant benefits across a range of offline and online environments. It is crucial to emphasise that environments exhibit a greater prevalence of e-WOM than traditional WOM (Ishida, Slevitch, & Siamionava, 2016). e-WOM comprises two discrete forms of communication: personal WOM and commercial WOM. In contrast, traditional WOM is limited to interpersonal communication in non-commercial contexts. In addition, the rationale behind focusing on e-WOM is the choice of context, the KSA. Considering that the KSA has recently started its tourism, not many people (acquaintances) of others would have visited the KSA to rely on the analysis of traditional WOM. However, Hodaed, Aziz, and Alsheikh (2021) outline that in the context of the KSA, people can rely prominently on e-WOM to gain their understanding and knowledge about the location.

There are two distinct forms of e-WOM that are linked to particular purveyors of online information platforms. These platforms can be classified as either non-commercial or commercial in character. When it comes to the former scenario, individuals utilise personal channels that are not commercial in nature to exchange information, while when it comes to the latter, individuals choose to utilise commercial media channels, such as corporate websites, to distribute information (Cox et al., 2009). A notable differentiation between traditional WOM and e-WOM, according to Jeong and Jang (2011), is the mode of communication. e-WOM occurs within the digital domain, whereas traditional WOM communication occurs through in-person interactions. Social media platforms, online

review sites, and other web-based consumer opinion platforms are extensively employed as mediums for e-WOM dissemination. These platforms afford users the ability to access and assess the experiences and perspectives of other consumers, in addition to allowing them to articulate their own viewpoints.

However, there are also many other differences between e-WOM and traditional WOM. Typically, e-WOM originates from sources that are not well known or recognisable. According to Donthu et al. (2021), e-WOM may lack the richness and liveliness associated with some languages owing to its dependence on a network connection rather than face-to-face contact. Within the confines of this particular setting, apprehensions emerge about the veracity and reliability of e-WOM (Donthu et al., 2021). Frequently, readers online are confronted with a lack of information on the reviewers' backgrounds, including their areas of expertise and underlying motivation. Hence, individuals' reactions to reviews are shaped by their holistic interpretation of the content as well as the number of reviewers involved. To a certain degree, humans assess the trustworthiness of information by taking into account the surrounding circumstances. Moreover, Agarwal and Singh (2018) outline that e-WOM has acquired significance in the academic marketing discourse. According to Choi (2021), e-WOM is envisioned based on previous techniques for the development and application of e-WOM. Several studies have used e-WOM to predict the future marketing of items and services, and these studies have conceptualised e-WOM using analogous criteria, including volume, polarity, and distribution, while adjusting it to their study environment (Al-Haddad et al., 2022).

The study conducted by Huertas (2018) provides more support for the notion that the use of live video and narrative may successfully communicate intensified emotions, authenticity, and immersive travel experiences as people may believe photos or videos more than just text . The recognition of the value of information with better credibility in

aiding well-informed decision-making is well accepted (Cheung et al., 2009). When consumers see comments as possessing characteristics such as trustworthiness, value, currency, helpfulness, and relevance to their informational requirements, they tend to put higher levels of confidence in social media material and regard it as a reliable source of information. The credibility of information is established by the use of credible sources, rather than just depending on the possibly biased viewpoint of a person or the self-promotional assertions of a merchant. Experienced individuals demonstrate the capacity to differentiate between messages that are deemed trustworthy and those that are not. Therefore, the influence of e-WOM on people is dependent on their degree of skill or expertise (Corbitt et al., 2003). Filieri et al. (2015) discovered that there is a positive association between the quality of information available on social media and the perceived trustworthiness of social media platforms. Furthermore, this association is also associated with a significant impact on people's behaviour. The anticipation of information adoption in social media may be forecasted based on trust, therefore facilitating the proliferation of e-WOM. Furthermore, the choice to focus the research on e-WOM rather than conventional WOM arises from the inherent benefits associated with the digital age. The widespread presence and easy availability of e-WOM provide an unmatched opportunity for travellers to easily access and contribute to significant online forums (Choi, 2021). The global influence of this transcends conventional WOM, since it reaches prospective visitors on a worldwide level. The instantaneous dynamics of e-WOM provide current and essential information, particularly in a tourist industry that is always evolving. e-WOM, which encompasses many platforms such as social media and review sites, gathers a wide range of perspectives. This helps to develop a detailed knowledge of tourist attitudes and their intents to come. Rich media material improves the informative value by offering a more immersive representation of experiences. e-WOM enables dynamic and engaging

exchanges that actively influence the impressions of tourists. The quantifiable indicators, such as ratings, provide a quantitative framework that enables an organised review of its effect. Ultimately, the enduring impact of e-WOM characterised by its extended duration and ease of access, guarantees a continuous effect on attitudes and intentions to travel in the always changing tourist industry.

2.9 Travel Motivation

The investigation of the underlying factors that drive tourism has been a popular area of research within the field of tourism for several decades. Understanding the underlying motivation that compels individuals to engage in tourism activities, as well as the many aspects that shape their decision-making processes when selecting a specific location, has significant academic significance. When a person makes the decision to begin to travel, it is often motivated by either internal or external causes that prompt them to go to a certain destination. The *push and pull* paradigm, first introduced by Crompton in 1979, is a commonly used typology for understanding the underlying motivation that drives individuals to engage in travel. This model takes into account two significant forces that are regarded as the fundamental variables affecting the selection of places by travellers. The *push* component pertains to intrinsic motivations, such as the urge for a change in surroundings, social engagement, or the need to break free from a repetitive setting, which serve as impetuses for individuals to transfer instead of remaining in their current place of residence (Crompton, 1979). Conversely, the *pull* element is linked to exterior allurements that draw persons to a certain area, such as distinctive natural scenery, specialised recreational activities, or athletic events hosted in that vicinity. Tourism choices may be impacted by either one or both of these variables. The influence of relaxation and the quest of a distinctive experience have been supported as significant variables in the domain of

rural tourism (Pesonen et al., 2010). The use of push factors has been widely employed in destination marketing as a means to cultivate client loyalty (Popp, 2013).

Previous research studies have been directed at comprehending the motivation of visitors via the identification of diverse typologies. One of the key approaches is analysing the needs of tourists, taking influence from SDT. Experienced travellers often place a higher emphasis on the cultural and nature-related preferences, but reasons such as couple holidays and personal growth are shown to be significant for only a restricted subset of travellers. Moreover, the research carried out by Reisinger and Turner (1997) lays considerable importance on the influence of culture. According to Pearce, Morrison, and Rutledge (1998), as well as Kozak (2002) and Ambrož and Ovsenik (2011), persons possessing varied cultural origins exhibit a strong inclination towards the motivation for international travel, as seen by the case of Australians embarking on trips to Indonesia. When doing a comparative analysis of various categories of travellers, it becomes evident that heritage travellers exhibit a discernible inclination towards actively connecting with unique cultures and selecting places that boast a significant historical legacy. The influence of religion and spirituality on travel motivations is well recognised, leading many destinations to acknowledge and improve their offers in order to successfully interact with religious persons (Ambrož & Ovsenik, 2011). Numerous scholarly investigations have been undertaken to analyse business and leisure travellers as they indicate that many people travel primarily for business purposes (Chu & Choi, 2000). The scope of this study does not include business travel as a research topic, instead placing primary emphasis on people who travel for just leisure. In addition, they have a propensity for traversing greater distances, allocating a greater amount of time for their journeys, and displaying distinct patterns of expenditure. In contemporary times, there has been an increasing academic focus on the phenomenon of adventure travellers (Michela et al., 2017). According to the

research conducted by Michela et al. (2017), individuals who participate in adventure travel are perceived to encounter a heightened level of risk in comparison to other classifications of tourists. This is attributed to their distinct internal drive for both physical and psychological stimulation, and exposure to hazardous situations and unpredictability, as well as their yearning for exploration and new experiences.

In addition, travel motivation may be defined by three key factors: pleasure-seeking, cultural exploration, and the need for relaxation (Çelik & Dedeoğlu, 2019). It is well recognised that culture is a significant factor that drives visitors to visit a certain destination. The culture component of travel motivation pertains to the inclination to discover and interact with the distinctive cultural elements of a location, including its historical background, customs, artistic expressions, culinary offerings, and local way of life (Jiang et al., 2020). Cultural travellers are driven by a desire for genuine experiences, with the goal of fully engaging in the traditions and practices of the place they visit (Jiang et al., 2020; Dedeoğlu et al., 2023). They have the option to explore museums, historical places, participate in cultural events, and engage with local communities (Douglas et al., 2023). Dedeoğlu et al. (2023) also outline that travellers are motivated to visit a location based on their food choices, primarily related to culture. Moreover, it is worth noting that the desire for pleasure and enjoyment serves as a driving force behind visitors' decision to travel (Yoo et al., 2018). Yoo et al. (2018) further delineate that pleasure-seeking travel motivation entails the quest for pleasurable and captivating encounters during the journey. This may include a wide range of diversions, such as entertainment, nightlife, shopping, and other leisure pursuits. Crompton and Petrick (2024) also specifically outlined that the selection of a pleasure vacation as the most effective means of alleviating a specific state of tension leads to a shift in focus from the impetus dimension of motivation to the directive dimension of motivation. This shift aims to guide the tourist in choosing a specific

destination over all other available alternatives. Tourists driven by the need for enjoyment are attracted to sites that provide thrill, amusement, and chances for relaxation (Yoo et al., 2018). The motivation for relaxation in travel is centred on the desire to unwind, revitalise, and retreat from the pressures of everyday life (Çelik & Dedeoğlu, 2019). This often entails searching for serene settings and participating in activities that enhance both mental and physical health. Travellers seeking relaxation may choose locales with peaceful scenery, spa amenities, seaside resorts, or wellness sanctuaries.

Additionally, according to Ma et al. (2018), travel motivation is characterised by a proactive style and a focus on one's own well-being due to reasonable safety concerns; it is inexorably tied to stimulation. Satoh and Yagi (2021) emphasised that people travel to strengthen their relationships with the people they see, which is one of the most significant psychological impacts on tourist behaviour, and which may be characterised by their internal mood or their particular demands and objectives while on vacation. Travel motivation can be perceived as similar to the concept of intention, but it significantly differs (Katsikari et al., 2020; Satoh & Yagi, 2021). The reason is that the concept of travel motivation pertains to the fundamental psychological factors that drive individuals to make the decision to visit a specific location, and that decision to travel is related to intrinsic and extrinsic factors like personal interests, cultural or educational pursuits, social connections, the desire for relaxation or escape from routine, and the pursuit of adventure or novelty (Katsikari et al., 2020). However, travel intention is related to the probability that an individual will travel to a location or not based on motivation, security, and other such factors.

2.10 Chapter Summary

The first portion of the literature review chapter provides a detailed overview of the study's outcome, which is the tourist visit intention. Following the conceptualisation of

tourist visit intention, the focus was on examining the notion of tourist attitude. This chapter delved deeper than superficial explanations and explored the processes via which visitors develop and alter their opinions, as well as the subsequent impact on their intention to visit certain places. The chapter also discussed two prominent theoretical frameworks – the TPB and SDT – and these frameworks provide significant theoretical perspectives for analysing and forecasting the intention of tourists to visit. A comprehensive grasp of these ideas was essential in formulating the conceptual framework for the subsequent chapter, whereby it was anticipated that aspects derived from these theories would be integrated into its structure.

The following chapter provides an in-depth examination of the many elements that influence the attitudes of tourists and their intentions to visit. Tourists' choices are influenced by a range of factors. These insights played a crucial role in the identification of the latent constructs, such as conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation, that are considered in the current study. The literature review part also examined these variables and offered distinct viewpoints of the decision-making process of visitors. The knowledge acquired from these segments enhances the understanding of the variables influencing the intention of tourists to visit.

The literature review chapter played a crucial role in preparing the groundwork for the subsequent chapter on the *conceptual framework and hypothesis creation* by offering a detailed understanding of the pertinent ideas, theories, and aspects. The outlined review guided the development of the subsequent chapter, in which hypotheses will be generated and the overall research structure will be established using the theoretical and empirical knowledge provided in the literature review.

Chapter 3: Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Development

3.1 Introduction

To get a deeper understanding of the complex factors influencing tourists' intentions and attitudes towards visiting a destination, the focus of this study is on developing a conceptual framework and generating hypotheses. This chapter serves as the foundational basis for the study, providing guidance for the discovery and formulation of research hypotheses and a few new linkages that have not been explored in the literature. Drawing upon the knowledge and findings presented in the prior literature review, the researcher proceeds to shift their focus from comprehension to examination and the development of hypotheses. This chapter serves as a connection between the theoretical underpinnings and the pragmatic implementation of research. The integration of several theories, models, and ideas derived from the literature review is used to provide a cohesive framework that guides the study design and facilitates the interpretation of findings. The integration and underpinning of theories such as the TPB and SDT into the study of tourist behaviour is done in order to conduct a practical examination of the key aspects and variables that have significance for visitors.

Moreover, the chapter centres its attention on the process of hypothesis development, whereby a collection of distinct hypotheses is formulated to serve as a guiding framework for the subsequent empirical inquiry. These hypotheses serve as a means to generate predictions and guide the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. They encapsulate the fundamental inquiries that are addressed in the succeeding study.

This chapter serves as a pivotal stage in the research process, facilitating the shift from conceptual comprehension to practical exploration, and establishing the groundwork for examining the factors influencing tourists' visit intention and attitude. Given the

establishment of the conceptual framework and hypotheses, this study is well positioned to elucidate the complexities of tourist decision-making within the context of the elements that impact their attitudes and intents.

3.2 Determinants of Tourist Attitude

3.2.1 Conative Destination Image and Tourist Attitude

The concept of the destination image and its relationship with tourist attitude have been researched and discussed prominently in the literature. The concept of destination image refers to an individual's perception or collective perceptions of a certain location (Phelps, 1986), and it is considered as a cognitive perception of a specific destination (Alhemoud & Armstrong, 1996). Reza Jalilvand et al. (2012) outline that the existing literature indicates that the image of a destination has a significant role in several aspects, which includes its influence on the process of selecting a destination, the subjective perception of visitors, the subsequent assessment of their trip, and their plans for future visits. Most of the researchers (Guan et al., 2023; Najar & Rather, 2023) have explored the impact of the cognitive and affective destination image. However, this is not the focus of the current study, because the conative destination image aligns with the present study's scope. Furthermore, the conative destination image is highly significant in the study's context because it will allow exploring the tourists' actions and how they contribute to their attitude towards the location (Woosnam et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2022) being discussed in the present study.

The conative element of the destination image primarily focuses on the ability of individuals to apply the knowledge and information they have (Akgün et al., 2020; Phillips & Jang, 2007). For instance, it helps in determining how the tourist will act according to one's behaviour and accordingly display the behaviour, which will further impact the attitude. In addition, Wang, Wang, and Wai Lai (2023) outlined that the conative

destination image is primarily linked to an individual's future actions, which is the main focus of the current study. Wang, Wang, and Wai Lai (2023) have also outlined that the conative destination image is more susceptible to the tourists' perceptions in regards to the time before they have visited a destination, which can further affect the attitude and intention. Also, the perceived behavioural control of the TPB explains something similar, which is how easy it will be for an individual to perform a behaviour of interest (Rhodes & Courneya, 2005). It is similar to taking action, but it depends primarily on one's mood, behaviour, and understanding. Similarly, the TPB can explain how a specific element of the destination image that is focused on understanding and beliefs, and also about taking action, can further help in determining its impact on attitude, which is a significant aspect of the TPB (Rhodes & Courneya, 2005).

Kim and Richardson (2003) argue that the perception of a destination, also referred to as destination image, has a diverse impact on the attitudes and behaviours associated with tourism. This impact may manifest in several ways, such as confirming or reinforcing current attitudes, developing new attitudes, or even modifying existing attitudes. Woomi and Soocheong (2008) showed that the perceived image of a particular destination influences the tourist attitude towards the tourist destination. Reza Jalilvand et al. (2012) also found that the destination image has a positive impact on the tourist attitude. Various researchers have also focused on the sub-constructs of destination image and their impact on tourist attitude. For instance, researchers (Agapito et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2010; Kim & Yoon, 2003) have outlined a relationship between the cognitive destination image and affective destination image and tourist attitude. Very few studies have analysed the relationship of the conative destination image and tourist attitude. Although the link between the conative destination image and visitor attitudes is crucial for understanding how perceptions and emotions translate into behaviour, there is a scarcity of research

specifically investigating this topic (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). The gap in knowledge may be due to the relatively recent introduction of the conative idea in destination image research, difficulties in measuring behavioural intents or acts, or the focus on investigating the well-established cognitive and emotional components.

Also, a few studies like Woosnam et al. (2020) and Agapito et al. (2013) have indicated that two other components of destination image, such as cognitive and affective, have an impact on the conative destination image and there is a limited focus on the conative destination image. Exploring the conative destination image of a location will allow the researcher to understand tourists' viewpoints about that place being their destination on their bucket list for a long time, its geography, culture, and positively related attributes for the location (Akgün et al., 2020; Gangadhari et al., 2023; Khaydarova, 2024). If the customers have a positive viewpoint for such characteristics of a location, then their attitude will be high. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H1: Conative destination image is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the destination.

3.2.2 Perceived Security and Tourist Attitude

The tourism industry is more susceptible to natural and man-made disasters than ever before. Such incidents have a significant impact on the length of stay and the amount of money spent by travellers (Ma et al., 2020). It is also conceivable to argue that the concept of *perceived security* is mostly concerned with the freedom of individuals to choose a location where they feel safe. This is comparable to performing something; however, the determining elements are the individual's mental state, behaviours, and comprehension.

The TPB can also shed light on how a sense of security based on knowledge and convictions, as well as the willingness to act, influences motivation (Japutra et al., 2019; Osiako & Szente, 2024). Additionally, perceived security is particularly helpful since it gives a prism through which to analyse the visitors' actions and how they relate to their attitude towards a specific location (Nogare et al., 2024; Mawby & Ozascilar, 2024). For instance, if tourists have a favourable opinion of any location as a secure destination based on a range of elements, such as its security standards, location, and perceived dangers, they are more likely to want to travel there. Ruan et al. (2017) also outlined that tourists' perceptions of security can depend on natural disasters, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, and cyclones, and also man-made disasters such as crimes, political instability, regional disputes, sexual harassment, and many other such issues.

Orindaru et al. (2021) added that travellers value safety above all other factors when picking where to vacation. While the majority of travellers avoid potentially unsafe areas, others actively seek out danger as part of their enjoyment of international travel. Khan et al. (2020) also reported that tourists have a negative view of a travel place if they feel unsafe there. In order to build a theoretical platform based on visitor security perceptions and other behavioural intention predictors, it will likely be necessary to identify the common risk aspects. Based on the security they perceive about a specific location, their attitude towards that location can differ. There is a significant lack of empirical data regarding the effect of perceived security on tourist attitude, but this does not negate the fact that numerous studies have discussed how a risk and uncertainty of location influences the tourist attitude (Mawby & Ozascilar, 2024). For instance, Quintal et al. (2010) have identified the risk of financial loss and how it can impact the tourist attitude. The authors stated that there was a correlation between the estimated likelihood of incurring financial losses and the extent of unfavourable attitude towards a purchase for visiting a specific

location. Their study (Quintal et al., 2010) was a different context, but it still indicates that any concerns regarding any risk can impact tourist attitude. Researchers Tasci and Sönmez (2019) have conducted the study in the context of lenient gun laws and how tourists perceive the security of that location, which further impacts their tourist attitude. The authors identify that a presence of permissive gun regulations in a particular location has the potential to elicit an emotional reaction and influence the attitudes and behaviours of tourists towards that state, specifically in relation to gun violence. In a recent study by Kim et al. (2020), the authors outline how an internal conflict in a country can potentially impact the tourist attitude. Kim et al. (2020) indicated that the perceived risk of protests occurring in the country can impact tourist attitude, but the authors found that there is no relationship between the two. Also, Gorji, Almeida-García, and Mercadé-Melé (2023) outline the risk that tourists perceive when visiting sanctioned locations and identified that they perceive lesser security in such locations further affecting their intention. When the pandemic occurred, tourists were concerned about their safety as there were sudden lockdowns, a threat to their health, and other such challenges (Rather, 2021). Even though the travel had begun, tourists' attitude was negatively impacted due to tourists' perceptions of risks occurring due to the pandemic (Rather, 2021; González-Reverté et al., 2022). It can be observed that there is significant research that focuses on the relationship between perceived risk and tourist attitude, and also focusing on a specific type of risk. Also, there is a discrepancy in research regarding whether perceptions related to security have an effect on the tourist attitude or not. In light of the above discussion, the following hypothesis has been formed:

H2: Perceived security is positively related to the tourist attitude towards the destination.

3.2.3 e-WOM and Tourist Attitude

Recent studies in the tourism industry have proven that e-WOM has a substantial impact on the supply and demand for tourism-related merchandise and services in a number of countries (Agag & El-Masry, 2016). Because people only share their thoughts when utilising a certain product or service, e-WOM only occurs when people are using the commodity (Strickland & Williams, 2022). The power of e-WOM can be either positive or negative. Several researchers (Şehirli, 2021; Jie-Hua et al., 2020) have claimed that e-WOM is more effective than conventional forms of advertising. Due to the importance of this information for both travellers and businesses in the tourism industry, researchers have employed cutting-edge techniques to analyse and interpret online traveller reviews (Arıca et al., 2022). The majority of the existing literature on the effectiveness of e-WOM is based on surveys in which the participants were asked to indicate how much they trusted internet reviews when making vacation plans, indicating that e-WOM has a strong positive impact on visitors' perceptions of a destination's attractiveness due to the availability of social media's interactive features (Seo et al., 2020). Despite the dearth of empirical data about the effect of e-WOM on traveller intention or travel visit intention, various studies (Agag & El-Masry, 2016; Seo et al., 2020) have examined how e-WOM influences travellers' behaviour intentions to select a particular place.

However, underpinning the TBP theory in this context, which specifies the ease with which an individual will engage in an interest-related behaviour, it can be stated that e-WOM is one of the determining factors for individuals to select their travel destination (Tornikoski & Maalaoui, 2019). It can also be argued that WOM is more effective than e-WOM; however, Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci (2020) have outlined that contemporary consumers exhibit a greater inclination to place trust in communications originating from individuals as opposed to those disseminated by marketing professionals. Nevertheless, the

authors mention that it is imperative to engage in a discussion to examine the impact of content origins, individual characteristics, and the engagement with and perspectives on social media. These factors may play a crucial role in the process of selecting a destination and determining their intention to visit. Furthermore, it is recommended that forthcoming research endeavours explore the potential benefits of user-generated content in terms of e-WOM for determining the visit intention.

In terms of the relationship between e-WOM and tourist attitude, many research studies have explored this. For instance, Choirisa et al. (2021) stated that their findings indicated that e-WOM has a positive impact on the tourist attitude, because it allows tourists to consult with other tourists for selecting the location and gathering positive or negative reviews that give them the confidence to make their travel decision. In the study by Gosal et al. (2020), the authors focused on reviews on an Instagram account and their impact on tourist attitude. The study indicated that e-WOM generated by travellers contributes positively to the perspective of other tourists who come across an Instagram review pertaining to a specific context, and that the favourable view of visitors also contributes to a favourable attitude among tourists. Albarq (2013) also found that e-WOM has a significant and positive effect on the tourist attitude, and the author outlines that tourists who effectively express e-WOM engage in sharing real-life experiences encountered during their visit to a particular place, and these individuals use online platforms to relay their experiences to others, therefore establishing a valuable resource for anyone seeking information to get a deeper knowledge of the chosen destination. Most of the studies, such as Gosal et al. (2020) and Choirisa et al. (2021), have indicated a positive impact of e-WOM on the tourist attitude, which also guides the current study to explore a similar relationship in the KSA’s context.

Nonetheless, perspectives on e-WOM in the KSA's context are particularly useful because they can provide a window through which to examine the visitors' actions and how they relate to their attitude towards the location (Salah et al., 2023). However, these authors focused on the impact of e-WOM on the intention to revisit the luxury hotels in the KSA and the data were collected from local people and not international tourists. Similarly, Beyari and Garamoun (2024) have explored the impact of e-WOM on the purchasing intention in the context of the hospitality industry, but it is more linked to the purchase of hotel rooms or property bookings based on the online reviews. In another study conducted in the context of the KSA, Hodaed, Aziz, and Alsheikh (2021) explored the effect of e-WOM on the tourist visit intention and found that e-WOM has an impact on the tourist visit intention. However, the authors Hodaed, Aziz, and Alsheikh (2021) outlined that the study was conducted from a perspective of domestic tourists and that the perspective of international tourists should be investigated to explore this relationship.

It can be explained that if individuals are planning to visit a specific location based on a variety of factors, such as hotel reviews, cities to be visited, and other landmarks, they are more likely to desire to travel there based on available good reviews. Based on this, by examining the comprehension of e-WOM for travel in the KSA, the researcher can gain insight into how travellers see the KSA as a whole. If these features appeal to tourists, the KSA will make a favourable impression. Following the above discussion, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H3: e-WOM is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.

3.2.4 Travel Motivation and Tourist Attitude

Motivation can be viewed as the driving force behind tourist behaviour (Dean & Suhartanto, 2019). Crompton (1979) devised the push–pull model of travel motivation, which explains the influences of external variables on vacationers' final hotel decisions and

total trip enjoyment (Sosa Rodriguez et al., 2022). In addition to satisfying fundamental human needs for rest, education, and amusement, tourism serves as a means of building interpersonal bonds among individuals (Sosa Rodriguez et al., 2022). Motivation is a difficult and diverse subject, particularly when attempting to comprehend what motivates tourists. According to SDT, individuals have a natural tendency to seek out experiences that align with their unique beliefs, preferences, and objectives (Aicher et al., 2015). The desire to travel is an expression of this fundamental propensity. People will be more driven to travel when they perceive that travelling enables them to show their independence, competence, and relatedness. People who feel independent and responsible in their travel choices and experiences are more likely to have favourable travel outcomes, such as greater well-being and pleasure (Aicher et al., 2015), according to research using SDT.

In terms of the relationship between travel motivation and tourist attitude, various researchers have touched upon this topic. Very few researchers (Najib et al., 2020) have explored the overall motivation of tourists and its impact on tourist attitude, while most of the other researchers have outlined the impact of a few motivational factors on tourist attitude. For instance, Katsikari et al. (2020) outline that there is a correlation between visitors' desires and their motivations for travelling to a certain location. Katsikari et al. (2020) explain further that tourists often desire a sense of self-worth, self-actualisation, and connection with people more than they desire physiological or safety needs. Pereira, Gupta, and Hussain (2019) explored motivational factors, such as escape, knowledge, religion, economic aspects, self-actualisation, safety, physical elements, and natural beauty, and their impact on tourist attitude, but the findings indicated that escape, safety, knowledge, and natural beauty have a positive and significant effect on tourist attitude. Wong (2013) also explored the impact of various motivational factors, such as knowledge, excitement, relaxation, friends and family, and shopping, on tourist attitude and found that all factors

except friends and family have a positive effect on tourist attitude. Noh, Lee, and Hwang (2017) explored some very interesting and unique motivational factors, such as information offering, expression of positive emotions, mitigation of negative emotions, record storage, self-expression, social interactivity, and group power, and found that they have a significant impact on tourist attitude. Prayag et al. (2017) explored four factors similar to the ones identified by other researchers, which were socialisation, novelty and learning, and escape and relaxation, and they found that they have a positive effect on tourist attitude. In addition, according Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019), there are three sub-dimensions of travel motivation, namely the culture, relaxation, and pleasure-seeking behaviour of the tourist while visiting a location. The current study focuses on the model of Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019), because these three factors collectively cover other factors and they include both push and pull factors. In addition, studies (Miller, 1997; Smith, 2003) have said that the rapid expansion of cultural tourism has resulted in cultural attractions being the primary factor that encourages people to visit. Tourists get pleasure from engaging in recreational activities while travelling, including visits to museums and other locations of cultural significance (Yang et al., 2022). Zimbardo and Boyd (2008) proposed that persons with a present-oriented mindset engage in leisure activities that provide pleasure and excitement, while avoiding tasks that are monotonous or demanding. The attraction of pursuing pleasure when travelling goes beyond simple enjoyment; it involves a range of good and satisfying experiences that have a big influence on travellers (Douglas et al., 2023). The pursuit of pleasure encompasses the inherent human need for bliss, contentment, and satisfaction. Tourists often go out on expeditions with the expectation of encountering moments of pleasure, thrill, and satisfaction. The potential to get inherent pleasure from a destination serves as a compelling incentive, guiding people towards locations that provide enjoyable experiences (Douglas et al., 2023). Leisure travel offers a

respite from the tedium of regular schedules and the pressures of daily existence (Reisinger & Moufakkir, 2015). Tourists are attracted to places that provide a respite from the mundane, allowing them to unwind, relax, and engage in activities that provide happiness and a feeling of revitalisation. The prospect of an enjoyable getaway serves as a driving force that influences one's intents to travel (Yoo et al., 2018). The presence of relaxation, which is a vital factor in motivating tourists, significantly impacts their desire to travel by providing a strong promise of renewal. Tourists are looking for venues that provide a way to get away from the fast and busy pace of everyday life (Yoo et al., 2018). The possibility of relaxation plays a crucial role in influencing their decision to visit (Çelik & Dedeoğlu, 2019; Lee & Kim, 2023). Destinations that prioritise relaxation contribute to the increasing demand for wellness tourism, matching with the modern requirement for well-being (Douglas et al., 2023). The desire for a stress-free and calming vacation compels people to select destinations that prioritise relaxation, creating a harmonious connection between the motivation for relaxation and the intention to have rejuvenating and satisfying travel experiences (Çelik & Dedeoğlu, 2019). Also, these three factors are most relevant in the context of the KSA, considering it is rich in heritage and culture, and also as the current research is focused on leisure tourism, motivational factors such as pleasure-seeking and relaxation are highly relevant and are explored in this study.

There is a lack of research that explains how a traveller's motivation influences their attitude towards the KSA, considering it is not a well-researched context in terms of leisure tourism as it is the recently eased policies that allow non-Muslims to also travel to the KSA. The TBP theory suggests, however, that travellers' motivation for a vacation can have a major bearing on whether or not they actually make the trip. Someone may be inspired to go to a particular country or region because it offers the kinds of things that make them feel at ease, whether it is an adventure, greenery, beaches, or city life. If

individuals are planning to visit a specific location based their motivation to explore more about a place, the culture, the people, and various landmarks, they would most likely enjoy visiting the place, which means that the researcher can learn about tourists' impressions of the country as a whole by focusing on their knowledge about the reasons for visiting the location. If these attractions are popular with visitors, that place will make a good impression. The following hypothesis and sub-hypotheses have been developed in the context of the preceding discussion:

H4: Travel motivation is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.

$H4_A$: Culture is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.

$H4_{B:}$ Pleasure seeking is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.

$H4_{C:}$ Relaxation is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.

3.3 Tourist Attitude and the Tourist Visit Intention

According to Hadinejad et al. (2019), favourable or unfavourable judgments of their own behaviour that are stated by visitors are what is meant by *tourist attitudes*. There is a close connection between the mental, emotional, and behavioural aspects that have an effect on the impressions of tourists (Hasan et al., 2023). A cognitive response is an evaluation that is made during the formation of an attitude (Çelik & Dedeoğlu, 2019). An effective response is a psychological reaction that reflects a tourist's liking for an entity. Kang and Gretzel (2012) and Hasan et al. (2023) further added that a behavioural response is a vocal indicator of the tourist's intention to visit or make use of that entity. It has been shown through a study on various topics like household recycling, pro-environmental activities, and tourist behaviour that attitudes influence behaviour and outcomes (Lee,

2009). The level of satisfaction that a traveller experiences before, during, and after their trip has a direct correlation to the amount of fun they have (Huaman-Ramirez et al., 2023). According to the TPB, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural constraints all play a part in the formation of a person's intention to engage in a certain behaviour (Japutra et al., 2019). It is possible for the reasons that lie behind a person's inner situation to be reflected in their behaviour on the outside.

The concept of planned behaviour is widely utilised in the process of analysing the feelings of tourists, understanding their attitude towards visiting a certain place, and developing an intention to do so to meet their travel intention (Japutra et al., 2019; Asbollah et al., 2017; Hasan, Ray, & Neela, 2023). The selection of recreational activities, adventure motivation, preferred holiday destinations, and different landmarks' behaviour have all been analysed using the TPB by various researchers (Ahn & Yu, 2019). This behavioural theory has been used as evidence to support the contention that the dispositions of vacationers have a significant influence on the likelihood that they would participate in a variety of activities when they are away from home (Abascal et al., 2016; Rozenkowska, 2023). However, in the current research based on the prominence of the literature both underpinning the TPB and understanding the relationship between tourist attitude and tourist travel intention under the observed tourism literature, it can be asserted that attitude does influence the behavioural intention and the travel intention of the visitor when planning to visit a certain place.

There is a lot of research in regards to establishing the linkages between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention; this study can provide a greater knowledge of this relationship, specifically because the factors affecting tourist attitudes are novel, specifically in the context of the KSA. For instance, the current study suggests that those who are interested in visiting the location may like travelling and exploring other regions

of the world, and that the location's recent technological achievements and historical investigation serve as an attractive factor. However, those with a good attitude about organising visits to such locations for new experiences may be enticed to visit the location by creating the travel intention to visit this country, which is the KSA. Based on the preceding debate addressing the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H5: Tourist attitude is positively related to the intention to visit the destination.

3.4 Mediating Role of Tourist Attitude

The TPB offers a robust framework for comprehending the influence of attitudes on determining the visitor intention and behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB posits that an individual's inclination to partake in a certain action, such as visiting a tourist site, is shaped by three primary factors: their attitudes towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Quintal et al., 2010). Attitudes are the subjective assessments people make about behaviour, indicating their general favourable or unfavourable emotions towards it. Onjewu et al. (2022) outline that attitude is developed by various background factors. Similarly, in the context of tourism research, Handayani and Arifin (2017) outline that attitude is shaped by various background factors that can include factors like e-WOM, perceived security, and travel motivation in the context of tourism-related research. Considering this, attitude has been found to be impacted by various elements, such as destination attractiveness, destination image, perceived value, and satisfaction, among other such elements (Hasan et al., 2023; Reitsamer et al., 2016). TPB has indicated that the behavioural intention is an outcome of attitude (Zheng et al., 2022), and in tourism-related research, the tourist visit intention has been explored as an outcome of attitude. Hence, it has been explored as a mediator in various studies (e.g.,

Hasan et al., 2023; Reitsamer et al., 2016) and is also being explored in the current research.

Furthermore, researchers (Agapito et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2010; Choirisa et al., 2021) have indicated that when tourists have a favourable destination image about a destination, their attitude towards that place is high. A few researchers (Choirisa et al., 2021; Lee, 2009; Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012) have also outlined that a positive destination image leads to a high visit intention. Also, the significance of the conative image as a conceptual construct with its impact on tourist attitude has been the topic of extensive discussion subjectively, but not empirically. For instance, Stylos et al. (2016) argued that the conative image translates one's cognitive and emotional observations of an area into a choice regarding whether or not that location is worth visiting. This study identifies the conative images as strong determinants of tourists' overall attitude towards a tourism site, and they impact the subsequent tendency to return to that location. Specifically, the pre-trip attention of vacationers shifts from impersonal landscapes and destination-related tourist activities to their own joys and those of their close friends (Basaran, 2016). Contrary to the suggestions of prior studies that considered the conative image as the purpose or action component of an image, and that it was associated with behaviour, the conative image is not associated with behaviour. The results and the interpretation of these various studies indicate the importance of traveller's attitudes in visiting a certain place and on a conative image in predicting their travel intention to return to a location and establish its mediating role, emphasising its explanatory power over tourists' intention to return to a previously visited destination. Also, the relationship between tourist attitude and the visit intention is well explored. However, there is limited research that evaluates the impact of tourist attitude on the relationship between the conative destination image and the visit intention. In line with the above, the following hypothesis is developed:

$H6_A$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between conative destination image and the tourist visit intention.

In addition, the sense of safety visitors can feel while visiting a destination has become an increasingly important factor in the decision-making process for holiday destinations (Salimon et al., 2019). A traveller's perception of safety is a crucial factor in deciding whether or not they will visit a particular location, according to studies. For instance, Rather (2021) and Tasci and Sönmez (2019) have indicated the relationship between perceived security and tourist attitude, and Choi et al. (2019) and Walters et al. (2017) have also outlined the linkages between security and the visit intention. Also, if it can be assumed that travellers evaluate potential destinations based on their perceived security, make decisions about whether or not to visit a particular location based on their perceived security, and are then motivated to travel, then we can say that travellers' attitudes can have an impacting result in interlinking the perceived security as a contract in influencing their visiting intention. However, there is minimal research that explores the mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between perceived security and the tourist visit intention. Also, it is important to explore how tourists perceive the safety of a location that they have not visited yet, and a location that is relatively new in terms of leisure tourism. Based on the above, the following hypothesis is developed:

$H6_B$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between perceived security and the tourist visit intention.

One of the background factors that has a relationship with tourist attitude represents that the recommendations, reviews, and ratings of a tourist location have an impact on the decisions of potential visitors to book a trip there (Hodaed, Aziz, & Alsheikh, 2021; Handayani & Arifin, 2017). Considering that everyone has followers on social media sites such as Instagram, and every post is visible to all followers, e-WOM might influence the

travel decisions of others by providing recommendations. According to studies, positive e-WOM can increase a destination's reputation, hence increasing people's propensity to travel there (Aktan et al., 2022). Multiple studies (Albarq, 2013; Choirisa et al., 2021) have explored the relationship between e-WOM and tourist attitude, and Albarq (2013), Choirisa et al. (2021), and Gosal et al. (2020) have also established a positive relationship between e-WOM and the visit intention. Researchers Choirisa et al. (2021) have also explored the mediating role of tourist attitude between e-WOM and the visit intention, which indicates that positive perceptions about a place due to positive reviews can increase their intention to travel to that specific location. Also, limited research has explored the mediating role of tourist attitude between e-WOM and the tourist visit intention in the context of the KSA. Based on the above, the following hypothesis is developed:

$H6_C$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between e-WOM and the tourist visit intention.

Koščak and O'Rourke (2021) also outline that the discipline of tourism and travel studies has consistently shown interest in the complex dimensions of traveller behaviour and the underlying determinants of their decision-making processes. At the core of this field of study is the analysis of the motivating factors that compel people to undertake trips to other locations. The concept of travel motivation encompasses a wide range of factors that drive individuals to engage in the exploration of unfamiliar destinations (Lee, 2009). In the present setting, three prominent motivational factors that have constantly also emerged in the scholarly literature are considered: cultural enrichment, seeking pleasure, and relaxing. Positive attitudes may be seen via the presence of increased anticipation, enthusiasm, and a strong inclination to actively participate with the many possibilities of a location (Najib et al., 2020). Conversely, negative attitudes may dissuade persons from considering a certain region as an appealing choice for travel. The central premise of this

discourse suggests that the attitude of tourists serves as a mediator in the relationship between travel motivation and the desire to visit tourist destinations. Essentially, this proposition posits that the impact of travel motivation on the desire to visit a certain area is not a direct relationship, but rather contingent upon the individual's attitude towards the selected site. Put simply, the level and characteristics of a tourist's mindset towards a certain location may play a crucial role in deciding whether their desire to travel really converts into a definite intention to visit. On the contrary, it posits that the impact of travel incentive is dependant to a great degree on the individual's attitude. Put simply, the degree to which an individual's motive, including cultural enrichment, pleasure seeking, or relaxation, materialises into a tangible desire to visit a certain location is contingent upon their attitude towards such a destination. Based on the above, the following hypothesis is developed:

$H6_D$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between travel motivation and the tourist visit intention.

3.5 Moderating Role of Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics do play a significant role in tourism-related studies because varying demographics can have different attitudes and intentions while visiting a destination. Various researchers, such as Doosti et al. (2016) and Huang (2018), have identified that the tourist attitude has a significant impact on the visit intention, which explains that if tourists have a positive attitude towards a specific location, then their intention to visit that location will also be high. Also, one of the studies by Dang and Weiss (2021) outlined that tourism-related studies must focus on socio-demographic characteristics and individual factors like age, gender, and education must be considered in future studies, which are among some of the moderating variables considered for the current study. Also, religion has been considered as a moderating variable in multiple

studies, such as Nugraha and Widyaningsih (2022) and Patwary et al. (2018), that primarily focused on studies that have an inclination towards religious tourism or analysing tourist behaviour with places that have a high amount of religious or heritage sites, and similar aspects.

In terms of the current research, the younger generation might be more willing to visit the KSA because they show high adventure-seeking behaviour and are more open to other cultures and religions compared to old people, which means that the relationship between two factors like conative destination image and the behavioural intention can be stronger for one age group compared to the other age group (Huang & van der Veen, 2019). Age differences are considered moderating variables in different contexts of tourism-related research. For instance, Kang, Jang, and Jeong (2018) have identified that age acts as a moderating variable in a study that focuses on analysing the satisfaction of tourists regarding a mobile guide system, and the authors found that age acts a moderator, which means that the older group considers the guide system to be very useful compared to the young group of people. Most of the researchers have used age as a moderator in studies that focus on the behavioural intention of tourists regarding using technology and not on the visit intention. However, one of the studies (Han, Hsu, & Lee, 2009) has stated that age is an important determinant that can impact the behaviour of tourists, which is affected by their intention. The authors also outline that older and younger age groups can have different perceptions about a location, which can significantly impact the behavioural intention. Hence, it is hypothesised that age can have a potential effect on enhancing or limiting the relationship between tourist attitude and the visit intention:

$H7_A$: Age moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.

Multiple studies have focused on different perceptions of travelling to different locations based on the gender of individuals. For instance, Karagöz et al. (2021) and Hamdy et al. (2023) have found that gender does impact the tourist visit intention and identify that if a location is not safe and is risky to travel to, female travellers will have a poor intention to visit the place. Khan et al. (2019) also identified that women have a higher intention to visit a location if they perceive that the location is safe to travel to and if the location is physically and financially feasible to travel to. In regards to the KSA, gender perceptions can potentially affect the tourist visit intention (Hamdy et al., 2023) and moderate the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention because women around the world have mixed perceptions about how women can visit and live in the KSA, which can weaken or strengthen their attitude that can significantly or poorly impact their visit intention. Hence, it is hypothesised that gender moderates the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention of tourists visiting the KSA:

$H7_B$: Gender moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.

Not only age and gender, but education is also among the socio-demographic characteristics that impact the tourist visit intention. For instance, Makanyeza et al. (2021) examined the moderating effect of education on the customer attitude and purchase intention in the hotel industry, and found that education does impact the behavioural intention because consumers with higher education are open-minded, have more awareness, and can be positively related to intellectual capabilities. However, there is limited research that explores the educational level as a moderating variable in regard to the tourist attitude and its relation with the tourist visit intention:

$H7_C$: Education level moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.

Another socio-demographic characteristic is income, which can impact the visit intention. In regards to its moderating role, there are no studies in the tourism context, and also, there is limited research that explains the relationship with the visit intention. One of the studies explains that income does have a controlling impact on the visit intention as tourists with high income will visit places that have high economic conditions and can afford the lifestyle there (Hassan et al., 2023), like in the KSA. Hence, it is hypothesised that income can have a moderating effect on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention:

$H7_D$: Income moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.

According to Nugraha and Widyaningsih (2022) and Patwary et al. (2018), religion is described as a powerful religious conviction that may influence human destiny. Various religious practitioners of different faiths, including Muslims, Catholics, Hindus, Buddhists, and others, have diverse views. In brief, religion affects society and connects with other aspects of social and everyday life. While religion has been identified as a potential determinant of tourist behaviour in some studies, its theoretical and empirical underpinnings are not well established (Kayal, 2019; Rehman et al., 2023), and its inclusion in the proposed research would require further consideration. Theoretically, it can be argued that religious orientation has an influence on the behaviour of tourists by affecting their personal values and attitudes. Religious beliefs and values have the potential to influence the way in which tourists perceive a destination and their underlying reasons for choosing to visit (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015). Also, Muslims are among the largest tourist markets (Eid, 2015), and it is important to explore if there are significant differences between Muslims and non-Muslims and their effect on tourist visit intention. Religion may be perceived as a cultural determinant that influences the conduct of travellers originating

from particular religious affiliations. Prior research (Wilkins et al., 2019) has described the moderating effect of religious orientation on the intention to buy Halal or other consumer-based items, but there is less evidence that religious orientation influences the visit intention. Also, in regards to visiting the KSA, the selected context of the current research, religious orientation, can moderate the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention:

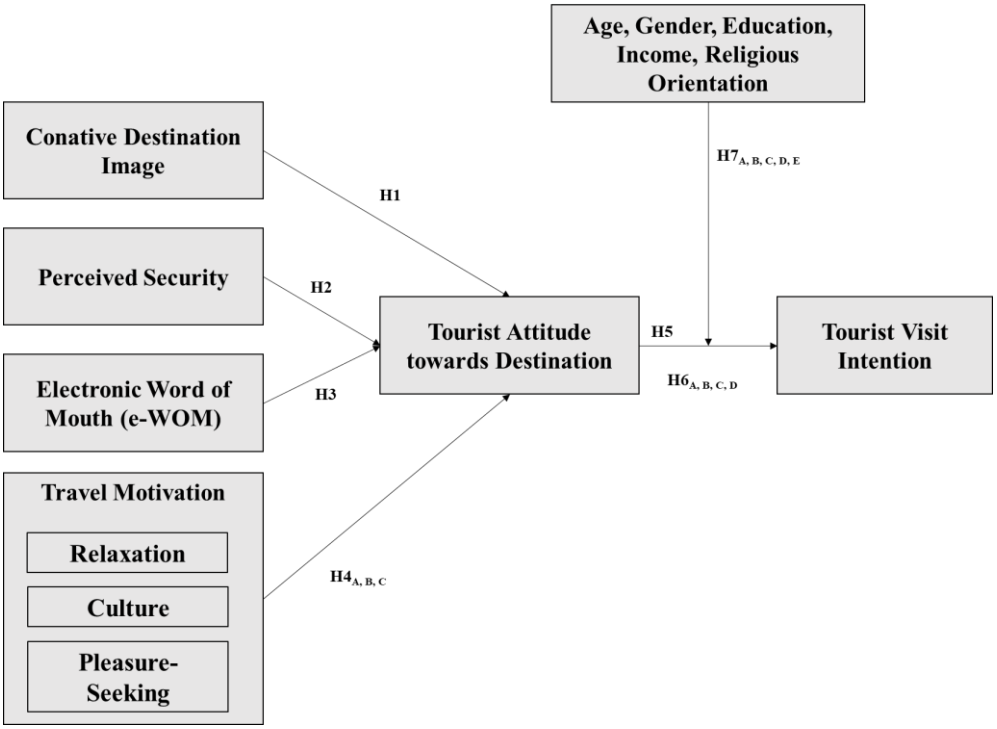
$H7_E$: Religious orientation moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.

3.6 Research Model

The conceptual framework was developed based on the seven hypotheses outlined in the above sections. It is represented in the conceptual framework that there are four independent variables, which are conative destination image, e-WOM, perceived security, and travel motivation, and one dependent variable that is the tourist visit intention. Tourist attitude as a mediating variable and demographic characteristics as a moderating variable are considered in the study, and their effects on the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable are tested in the current study. The research model based on the developed conceptual framework and above-outlined research gaps is represented in the following figure 4, which also indicates the hypotheses being tested in the study.

Figure 4

Conceptual Framework



Note. Author's own

3.7 Chapter Summary

The present chapter supported the development of hypotheses with literature and underpinning theories. Various linkages among the variables were discussed. The chapter started with the linkages between the independent variables, such as conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation, and tourist attitude, which led to the development of the H1-to-H4 hypotheses. Following this, the literature supporting the linkages between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention was outlined that led to the H5 hypothesis development. After outlining the direct effects, the indirect effects were also outlined. For instance, the mediating hypothesis H6 was outlined that was supported with the literature related to the mediating role of tourist attitude between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Then, the H7 moderating hypothesis was developed,

which outlined the literature exploring the moderating role of demographic characteristics. Lastly, the research gaps and conceptual framework were outlined.

The hypotheses and conceptual framework must be empirically tested and evaluated to either accept or reject the hypotheses. To do this, it is important to select a relevant research methodology and approach. The details regarding a suitable methodology, sampling, and data collection are outlined in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Within the confines of the current study, this chapter presents an exploration of the research method that guides the inquiry into the research topic. This chapter plays a crucial role in the research undertaking, influencing not only the methodological processes but also the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings that support the investigation. The methodological decisions used in this study have significant significance for the credibility, reliability, and validity of the research results. The chapter begins with an examination of the selected research philosophy, namely positivism. Drawing on the foundational principles of philosophy, this study employs a deductive research approach that involves using well-established ideas as a starting point and then verifying the hypotheses drawn from these theories via empirical investigation. Moreover, the research strategy used in this study is firmly rooted in the quantitative methodology, situated within the framework of the positivist philosophy. The selection of a quantitative research technique is motivated by the need to effectively gather, analyse, and interpret numerical data. Furthermore, the chosen research strategy used in this study is the survey technique. The chapter also provides an explanation of the data collecting procedure, with particular emphasis on the technical aspects of survey distribution and administration among the specific target population of interest. Purposive sampling was used to sample the population of the current research. This chapter incorporates a well-developed questionnaire as the study tool, which is first tested by conducting a pilot study. This chapter further addresses the importance of reliability and validity metrics in ensuring the credibility and consistency of the research outputs. Lastly, the chapter also outlines details regarding the data analysis and ethical considerations adopted in the current research.

4.2 Research Philosophy

The collection of ideas, views, and ideals that inform a researcher's approach to the research process is referred to as their research philosophy (Armstrong, 1999). It lays out the study's theory structure and serves as the basis for the research technique (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). The character of the research issue, the research queries, and the research goals all play a role in the selection of the research philosophy (Patten, 2017).

Positivism and interpretivism are the two major philosophies in research (Patten, 2017). Positivism places a focus on empirical study and standardised data. Positivism takes for granted that there is such a thing as an objective, external world separate from any and all subjective interpretations (Park, Konge, & Artino, 2020). On the contrary, Alharahsheh and Pius (2020) mention that the interpretivism philosophy places more focus on the individual's perception of events and the significance of situating those events within their societal context. It holds that people's perceptions are influenced by their socioeconomic and cultural surroundings, and that truth is publicly created. The selection of a research philosophy is influenced by the research questions and objectives, and every philosophy has advantages and disadvantages (Patten, 2017). Selecting suitable research methodologies, data collection approaches, and data processing methodologies requires knowledge of the research philosophy.

The positivist research philosophy is used because the current research focuses on analysing the objective viewpoints of participants that can be statistically evaluated in terms of evaluating the relationships among travel determinants and the tourist attitude and the visit intention. Additionally, interpretivism is not a good fit for the current research since the current study does not focus on exploring, learning, and analysing the specific emotional experiences of visitors (Park, Konge, & Artino, 2020). In addition, the researcher focuses on gathering quantities of observational data in a standardised and

methodical manner, which will improve the results' credibility and generalisability. This is important in light of the applicability of positivism in the context of the current study. Likewise, data analysis techniques will offer exact and unbiased assessments of the connections between factors, enabling more specific forecasts and inferences. Additionally, a positivist strategy would aid in establishing causative connections among the variables, which is crucial for comprehending how various factors affect the visitor mood and visit purpose (Caldwell, 2015). The research has found the factors that have the greatest effect on these results and provide proof to substantiate the research theories by using a statistical methodology to analyse the data. The researcher can reduce bias and make sure the results are trustworthy and accurate by following established research procedures and gathering data methodically (Patten, 2017). Hence, positivism is a suitable and appropriate research philosophy to be adopted in the current study.

Moreover, the research philosophy employed in this study is informed by two basic assumptions, namely the ontological and epistemological assumptions (Mkansi & Acheampong, 2012). The researcher's presumptions about the essence of reality and how things are in the universe are referred to as ontological assumptions (Carter & Killam, 2013). The basic essence of life and what can be regarded as true are topics covered. Epistemological hypotheses are the researcher's presumptions about information and how it can be acquired (Carter & Killam, 2013). The essence of information and how to obtain it are topics of discussion. In the present study, both hypotheses are examined to direct the choice of a suitable research philosophy. As was previously stated, ontological beliefs are connected to worldviews that define what and how we know.

In the context of the current study on the tourist visit intention, the ontological assumptions are that there is an objective truth that exists individually of human-perceived notion or explanation (Carter & Killam, 2013), and that data gathered through

questionnaires or other methodologies can precisely capture the real essence of the tourist visit intention. The visitors in this research will also play a role as social agents, shaping their impressions of the KSA and, consequently, their decision to travel there. Also, according to the TPB, an individual's behaviour is affected by their opinions, standards, and perceived behavioural control, which are in turn impacted by fundamental values and opinions, and according to SDT, the desire to travel can also decide their purpose to visit. These concepts can be evaluated using questionnaires or other research techniques because they are based on an ontological premise that they exist literally (Su et al., 2015). The researcher would probably think that the constructs led by the TPB and SDT are reliable reflections of the real character of these conceptions and their effect on tourists' intention to travel to the KSA. In addition, the researcher will evaluate the sentiments of prospective visitors towards a specific location, as well as their opinions of the KSA's conative destination image, security, e-WOM, and travel motivation. The connections between such factors and the desire to travel there could then be investigated using statistical analysis (Hathcoat et al., 2019). In the eyes of an objectivist scholar operating under an ontological presumption, this information is a true representation of the factors that are affecting the decisions that tourists make about whether or not to visit a particular location. In spite of this, it is still worth remembering that despite the existence of an objectivist theory, there may be restrictions on how precise and accurate the data gathered can be (Hathcoat et al., 2019). For instance, social desirability bias and other variables may cause respondents to give answers that are more positive than they actually are, and self-reported views and plans may not always represent actual behaviour. So, these biases should be taken into account while conducting the research.

The current study's epistemological underpinning help to explain how knowledge about a setting or an idea can be acquired (Habib et al., 2014). A subjective

epistemological premise acknowledges that information and comprehension are created through individual perception and individual opinions. In terms of tourism research, Shan et al. (2020) outline that each person's distinct set of life circumstances, perspectives, principles, and views will play a role in determining where they choose to vacation. A subjective epistemological presumption does not prevent the use of quantifiable techniques, such as questionnaires or statistical analysis (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). Instead, it emphasises the significance of reading and comprehending quantifiable data in the framework of personal knowledge and perception. Also, epistemological assumptions emphasise the primacy of empirical evidence and objective data in acquiring the knowledge related to it (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Similarly, in regards to the current research, the focus is on collecting knowledge through individual opinions of tourists regarding travel determinants, tourist attitude, and the tourist visit intention. Doing this can allow the researcher to generate generalisable and relevant results in the context of tourism-related research.

4.3 Research Approach

Reasoning and problem-solving frequently employ both inductive and deductive approaches in disciplines as diverse as scientific knowledge, philosophy, and statistics (Åsvoll, 2014). Although both approaches are used to make inferences, they do so in different ways. Drawing subjective and generalised conclusions from particular findings or evidence is an inductive approach. Beginning with particular findings, it progresses to broader inferences or theories.

In research, the inductive approach is frequently used to develop hypotheses, and the deductive approach can verify those hypotheses (Åsvoll, 2014). The deductive approach, on the contrary, begins with broad ideas or principles, and then narrows down to more particular results (Gallaire et al., 1989). It is a form of deductive thinking in which an

individual formulates a hypothesis and then uses that hypothesis to evaluate other hypotheses by making predictions (Markus, 2007).

In research, the deductive approach is frequently employed in the pursuit of logical proof or disproof. There are benefits and drawbacks to both the inductive and deductive approaches (Åsvoll, 2014). Although Hayes, Heit, and Swendsen (2010) outline that inductive thinking can produce novel concepts and theories, it can also lead to inaccurate and very broad conclusions. Deductive logic is dependable and precise, but it needs correct theories, logic, and principles (Markus, 2007). A methodical procedure of utilising theoretical constructs or basic concepts to produce specific ideas that can be experimentally evaluated is known as a deductive approach (Markus, 2007). The author also mentions that it is a top-down method that draws particular inferences from a broad idea or theory. Based on the concepts of rational thinking, the deductive approach is frequently utilised in quantitative studies (Markus, 2007). A tested theory or presumption would be developed in deductive reasoning to support or refute the forecast ideas (Blaikie, 2018). According to Gallaire et al. (1989), one of the key features of a deductive approach is that hypotheses are generated and assessed in a thoroughly organised manner, making the evaluation comparatively repeatable. This is important for proving the research's dependability. However, data analysis using a much less systematic inductive approach can occasionally produce new theory advances (Saunders et al., 2019).

A deductive approach is used in the present study process. For the current research also, the focus is on testing the established and existing theories to establish relationships among the tourist-related determinants and the tourist visit intention. The assumption is not merely a premise or basis, as inductive reasoning further demonstrates (Gallaire et al., 1989). However, the inductive approach lacks explicit guidance on a cohesive process basis, as Hayes, Heit, and Swendsen (2010) discovered. In order to build a solid or

complete paradigm, the researcher uses both logic and reasoning, and appropriate statistical assessment (Creswell, 2013). The inductive method, on the other hand, runs counter to the deductive one. Individuals who employ inductive thinking start with specific examples and build up to a more general grasp of the subject at hand (Azungah, 2018).

Testing a theory or principle that describes a specific event or behaviour, such as tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention, is the primary goal of the deductive approach. The theory is a wide declaration that clarifies the connection between various terms and ideas (Gallaire et al., 1989). SDT and TPB, for instance, are two theories that serve as the foundation for the present research. The deductive research approach helped the researcher to decide whether to embrace or deny the study's assumptions and analyse the predictions of the two theories to the assessment (Gallaire et al., 1989). The researcher can guarantee the validity and reliability of the data they gather by using a deductive approach, specifically in the case of tourism-related research as outlined by multiple studies (Sánchez, Heredero, & Montes-Botella, 2021; Shan, Yee, & Ji, 2020; Sparks & Pan, 2009). The researcher employed a deductive approach to evaluate the data and make inferences about the theory using the observational and statistical evidence gathered (Shan, Yee, & Ji, 2020). According to deductive thinking, if the hypothesis is supported, the theory is supported, and if the hypothesis is rejected, the theory might require being changed or abandoned (Åsvoll, 2014). There are a number of benefits to using a deductive approach when conducting the study. The deductive approach also guarantees that the study is founded on well-established concepts and principles, thus adding credence to the results as done in studies like Sánchez, Heredero, and Montes-Botella (2021), Shan, Yee, and Ji (2020), and Sparks and Pan (2009) that focus on tourism-related research.

The deductive approach does, however, have some drawbacks. One of the major drawbacks is that it can be challenging to implement a deductive approach to explore

complicated or multiple occurrences (Azungah, 2018). Furthermore, the deductive approach is dependent on pre-existing ideas and principles, which can sometimes not be correct or relevant (Sánchez, Heredero, & Montes-Botella, 2021). Deductive research has some drawbacks, but those drawbacks can be worked around by using quantifiable data to back up the deductive approach and to ensure the data's truth and dependability.

4.4 Research Design

The research design aids researchers in determining what needs to be done to accomplish the research goals and guarantee a legitimate and trustworthy study (Oflazoglu, 2017). Qualitative research, quantitative research, and mixed research (a combination of qualitative and quantitative) are the three primary kinds of research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Comparatively, qualitative research delves into complex and psychological occurrences via non-numerical data like language, pictures, or notes, while quantitative research employs quantifiable information and statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

4.5 Chosen Research Methodology

Understanding how various factors affect tourists' attitudes and plans for future trips is best done through quantitative research (Su et al., 2015). In order to eliminate opinion and prejudice from the results, this method makes use of statistical analysis and quantitative metrics. This is especially important in tourist research, where intangibles like participants' views, sentiments, and intentions can have a big impact on the findings. Larger sample numbers, which improve the generalisability of the results, are one of the main benefits of quantitative research. Researchers can more certainly generalise their findings by sampling a big group of the visitor community (Su et al., 2015). This is particularly relevant in the field of tourism research, as popular tourist locations are always looking to better comprehend the interests and practices of their visitors. The ability to

precisely quantify factors and their connections is another benefit of quantitative research (Oflazoglu, 2017). As it can be challenging to determine the proportional significance of each variable in affecting the result, this is especially crucial when examining the effect of numerous factors. Researchers can gain a more detailed grasp of the research issue by utilising statistical analysis to determine the intensity and orientation of the connections between factors (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Researchers can spot patterns and structures in the data using statistical analysis that might not be instantly apparent. It has the potential to shed light on phenomena that may not be readily evident from qualitative research due to the latter's reliance on a more biased reading of the data (Patten, 2017).

Additionally, the study is conducted using quantitative research method, which primarily involves surveys and structured questionnaire method. The primary data collection tool is a structured questionnaire, which was designed to capture specific variables related to tourist motivations, perceptions of security, destination image, e-WOM (electronic word of mouth), attitudes, and visit intention toward the KSA as a tourist destination. The details regarding the questions included in the questionnaire are outlined in section 4.8.3. In addition, the questionnaire was uploaded online and surveys were conducted. The purpose of a survey study is to make broad, overarching conclusions about the phenomenon under study. In this situation, a survey strategy is vital because it provides essential hints and findings for examining the connections between various factors (Gaines, Kuklinski, & Quirk, 2007). The justification of choosing survey is outlined in the following section 4.6. In addition, a detailed implementation method of data collection is outlined in section 4.8.

4.6 Research Strategy

There are numerous quantitative research strategies, including experiment, survey, case studies, ethnographies, grounded theories, and action research, that can be utilised in

conjunction with the current study's quantitative methodology (Patten, 2017). However, the survey research strategy was used because the current study seeks to assess the influence of factors on visitors' visit intention based on measurement. The survey included a questionnaire created for each variable and gathered actual data for the same in order to evaluate the correlations (Tharenou, Donohue, & Cooper, 2007).

The influence of various factors on the disposition of, and the propensity to travel by tourists is frequently investigated through the use of surveys as a research strategy. In surveys, a representative cross-section of the population is asked to fill out a survey in order to gather information (Nunkoo, Ramkissoon, & Gursoy, 2013). The capacity of surveys to quickly gather information from a big number of people is one of their main benefits. This is especially helpful when conducting research on the effects of different factors on visitors' actions, as big sample numbers are usually necessary for this kind of research. Researchers can gather information on a variety of factors, such as the conative location image, travel incentive, perceived security, and e-WOM, by conducting a survey of a group of travellers. This information can then be analysed to reveal trends and connections between different variables, shedding light on what drives tourists' opinions and plans (Nunkoo, Ramkissoon, & Gursoy, 2013). Due to their adaptability, survey methods are a great option for academics on a budget or with restricted resources. Therefore, the use of surveys in the current research enabled evaluation of the effect of factors on the visitor mood and travel plan. Surveys are employed to obtain statistical information (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). Likert scales were used in this research as a survey method. Surveys were chosen as the primary data gathering tool because they enable the assessment of theories and the generalisation of the findings (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). When compared to other research techniques, such as focus groups or in-depth conversations, surveys are also a cost-effective research instrument. Based on the interests

of the researcher and the requirements of the research, surveys can indeed be online (Punch, 2003). In order to collect data on the influencing and independent variables, a survey is conducted using a questionnaire and its development is outlined in the following section.

4.7 Time Horizon

Both longitudinal and cross-sectional time periods are available to researchers. Long-term studies entail observing the event under research over an extended length of time. Fundamental questions like “Has there been any development over time?” are frequently addressed using the longitudinal research approach (Ebert & Piehl, 1973). For instance, a study might perform a long-term organisational survey to evaluate the effects of systemic changes. Cross-sectional studies capture an occurrence in a single instant, as opposed to longitudinal statistics, which look at an occurrence over time for a longer duration (Olsen & George, 2004). Although cross-sectional studies can be performed at any period, questionnaires are the most common method of data collection (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).

Since a large number of cross-sectional surveys are completed by only one respondent only once, it is thought that this type of research is more vulnerable to the prospective prevalent variability of the strategy (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). Consequently, longitudinal studies are often suggested as a solution to the problem that time divergence makes it more difficult to reach early-collected forecast behaviours, reducing the probability that these answers will indeed change the subsequent responsiveness to subsequent variables (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). This leaning is a result of the entire planning process, from the choice of topics, to the evaluation procedures, and to the setting in which the research was done (Ostroff, Kinicki, & Clark, 2002). Lynn (2009) noted that

there are a number of survey design techniques that can be used in cross-sectional research to lessen the probability of these possible variables.

A cross-sectional time frame is also most appropriate for this research project, as it will entail gathering data at a specific moment in time from a group of individuals because many of the included variables in the tourist industry shift over time. This method is ideal for researching how factors like *conative destination image*, *travel incentive*, *perception security*, and *e-WOM* affect tourists' attitudes and intentions to visit a specific location. One of the major benefits of a cross-sectional time frame is that it can be implemented quickly and affordably. This is especially relevant in the context of tourist research, where data gathering can be difficult due to the transitory character of the community being researched (Rossi, Wright, & Anderson, 2013). Researchers can effectively collect data on many different factors and gain insights that can be used to guide tourist development and administration by gathering data at a specific moment in time. The ability to compare and contrast various participant subsets is yet another useful application of a cross-sectional time horizon. Researchers can see how factors like conative location image, travel incentive, perceived security, and e-WOM affect tourists' attitudes and intentions to visit based on demographic factors like age or country. Insights like these can be helpful for travel hotspots as they try to draw visitors from all walks of life (Chiu & Yeh, 2016). In addition, a cross-sectional time frame is ideal for analysing connections between variables because it enables the gathering of data on various parameters at a single moment in time (Rossi, Wright, & Anderson, 2013). This can help paint a fuller image of what drives visitor behaviour and can be especially helpful in determining which elements are most critical for locations to consider when developing their commercial and management plans. For producing benchmark statistics on tourist factors, a cross-sectional time span is also very helpful. Researchers can create a benchmark for factors like visitor sentiment and visit

purpose by gathering data at a specific moment in time, which can then be used to monitor changes over time (Marcussen, 2011). This can be especially helpful for monitoring the results of tourist development and administration efforts, and identifying any significant challenges in the context of the tourism industry.

4.8 Methods of Data Collection

4.8.1 Data Collection Process

The use of questionnaires enables the collection of standardised data, which is crucial for assuring the veracity and dependability of the results (Tharenou, Donohue, & Cooper, 2007). Standardised questionnaires use uniform wording and reaction choices, making it simpler to compare the answers of various respondents. Consistency like this increases confidence that the data are accurate and usable. Such questionnaires primarily include close-ended questions that require the respondents to choose from a set of predetermined response choices (Punch, 2003). This adaptability enables researchers to gather data on a variety of factors and to customise the survey to the research topic.

The term *method* is used to describe a variety of methods that place a strong focus on quantitative data analysis. Interviews, surveys, and public data are used to gather information about organisations in this instance (Markus, 2007). The questionnaires and questions used in quantitative research are simple to give to a large group of people, saving time and money (Newman, Benz, & Ridenour, 1998). This makes it especially helpful for academics who need to gather data fast or on a limited budget. The amount of information gathered, however, is directly proportional to the quality of the questionnaire design (Newman, Benz, & Ridenour, 1998). To ensure that the data gathered are accurate and dependable, careful consideration must be given to the phrasing of queries, the layout of the form, and the selection of answer choices. Surveys were developed through the use of standardised questionnaires. Zhang et al. (2017) outline that there are mainly two types of

questionnaires, online and offline. Cosma et al. (2012) also has used online questionnaires to collect information from participants in the context of the tourism sector.

The online questionnaire is uploaded online and developed into online surveys, which are administered using digital platforms, enabling a wider audience to be reached and facilitating quicker data gathering (Nayak & Narayan, 2019). They are cost-effective and provide instantaneous results. Also, online surveys have a greater response rate compared to offline surveys (Nayak & Narayan, 2019). Conversely, offline surveys include using paper or conducting in-person contacts, making them appropriate for certain groups lacking internet connectivity (Zhang et al., 2017). Offline surveys may need a longer processing time and are susceptible to data input mistakes. In the case of the current study, in which the target audience is the worldwide population, the online survey is more feasible and appropriate, considering it has wider reachability and is very cost-effective. Hence, the online survey was a more appropriate data collection method.

Questionnaires created with research tools were used to gather data for the current online survey. Potential participants were led to an online survey that is uploaded on a safe online site as part of this data gathering procedure. The survey was structured to elicit responses from the respondents regarding their demographic information, travel-related traits, and the variables that impact their intention to visit the KSA. The respondents needed to give their full permission before the survey can continue. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and Likert scale questions. The web survey was created using Google Forms, and a link to it was created and distributed to the complete population. The survey took between 10 and 15 minutes to finish. The respondents were given a rough idea of the time it would take to finish the survey in the marketing materials, in an effort to increase involvement. The survey also featured simple navigation and easy-to-understand prompts. The discipline of tourism and travel studies has consistently shown interest in the

complex dimensions of traveller behaviour and the underlying determinants of their decision-making processes (Alsheikh, Aziz, & Alsheikh, 2021).

Several methods were implemented to raise the profile of the survey and inspire involvement in order to maximise the answer rate. On online travel communities, social media sites, and other online outlets, these tactics might include sharing information about the research and a link to the survey. The survey was also sent to international tour operators for them to share the survey with the tourists that are there in the database. The uploaded material included information about the research, its goals, and the anticipated time it would take to finish the survey.

4.8.2 Sampling

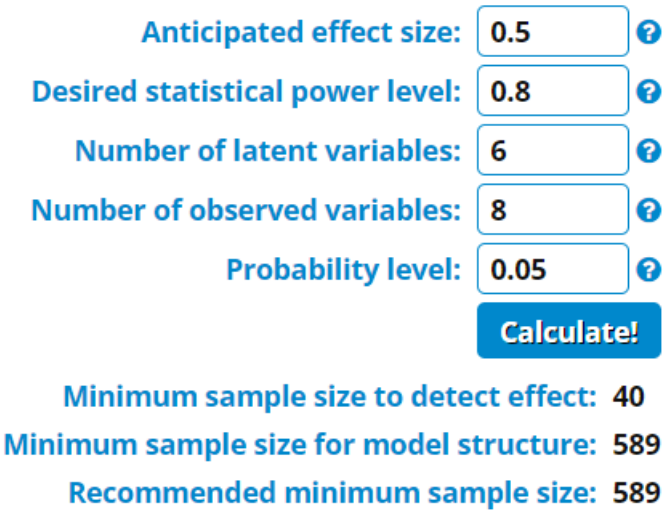
4.8.2.1 Population. The population is considered as an aggregate from which a sample is selected (Westland, 2010). For the current research, the chosen population is tourists from around the world as the current research focuses on analysing their intention to visit the KSA for leisure and holidays. Muslim tourists travelling to the KSA exclusively for religious activities like Umrah and Hajj, or any other religious activity were not included in the study's target population. The target population is primarily the tourists visiting for non-religious purposes because since 2019 the KSA has opened its holiday tourism for the first time for non-Muslims to visit the country, and is extensively working on marketing its tourism. A filtering question was asked in the beginning of the study to understand if they are travelling for religious or non-religious purposes. If they mentioned it was for religious purposes, then they were not directed to the survey. This research considered Muslims as a part of the population, but only the ones who are visiting the KSA for leisure and not for any religious activity, by asking a qualifying question in the beginning of the survey, regarding their purpose for visiting the KSA. Furthermore, as outlined by Mahate and Parahoo (2022), there is a significant focus on non-religious

tourism growth in the region, with an estimated investment of US$1.6 trillion being allocated to develop numerous mega-projects. The country has also initiated various major global entertainment and sporting events, such as the Formula 1 championship, in an effort to attract both domestic and international visitors. Similarly, Yehia et al. (2022) have noted that an increase in non-religious domestic tourism, and diversifying the economy away from a dependence on oil and natural gas exports, as envisioned in Vision 2030, may lead to a substantial increase in international non-religious tourism in the near future. Also, many researchers, such as Henderson (2011) and Wu and Mursid (2019), have already carried out research in regard to religious tourism in the KSA, and these researchers have highlighted a significant need to focus on tourists' perspectives for non-religious tourism. Hence, the population of tourists around the world that engage in non-religious tourism is most suitable for the current research.

4.8.2.2 Sample Size. Samples are considered as a subset of the population, which represents the entire population. It is important to determine a sample from the population because one cannot collect data from an entire population due to various reasons, such as limitations related to time, cost, geographical constraints, and human resources. Also, determining the sample size is important for determining the number of tourists to be reached out to for the current study. The approach utilised to establish the minimum required sample size for structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis is founded on several factors, including the number of observed variables and latent constructs in the model, the anticipated effect size, and the desired probability and statistical power levels. This approach utilises a lower bound sample size and Cumulative Distribution Function, with the values determined using Soper's (2023) calculator. Additionally, Westland (2010) outlines the formulas utilised in a-priori sample size calculation. A snapshot of the calculation done using the calculator is represented in the following figure 5.

Figure 5

Sampling Calculations



Note. Calculator by Soper, 2023

The anticipated effect size, desired statistical power level, and probability level were determined from the threshold values provided by Hair et al. (2019), which further state that the higher the sample size, the higher the power level and chances of significance. Additionally, the number of latent and observed variables (including the current study's six variables and additional observed variables) was based on the current study. It is outlined by Tabachnick and Fidell (2019) that an acceptable sample size is 300. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) highlighted that 384 is an acceptable size for a population greater than 100,000 (which is the case in the current study, as the number of tourists worldwide is greater than 100,000). In a systematic review by Nunkoo, Ramkissoon, and Gursoy (2013) that focuses on sample sizes being considered in tourism research, the authors highlight that most studies had sample sizes between 450 and 600. Based on the above discussion, the appropriate sample size being considered for the current research targeted will be around 600 tourists.

4.8.2.3 Sampling Strategy. There are two main types of sampling strategy, namely probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Cochran, 1977).

The goal of probability sampling is to ensure that each individual in a given group has an equal chance of being included in a given sample (Patten, 2017). In probability sampling, each person of the community is given a distinct number or identity, and a sample is chosen using a random number generator or random sampling technique (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013). Simple random sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, and systematic sampling are all examples of popular probability sampling methods (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013). Non-probability sampling, on the other hand, is a way of choosing a sample from a group that does not use chance selection or probability theory (Thompson, 2012). Instead, this type of sampling relies on subjective judgment or convenience. When it is unfeasible or challenging to reach the complete community, or when a random sample cannot be acquired due to practical or budgetary limitations, non-probability sampling is frequently used. Quota sampling, selective sampling, convenience sampling, and snowball sampling are all examples of non-probability sampling methods (Thompson, 2012). While non-probability sampling may be faster and less expensive than probability sampling, it may also introduce prejudice and restrict the study's findings from being applied to the entire community (Sampath, 2005). However, Patten (2017) and Nowiński et al. (2017) state that even though there are limitations linked to the non-probability sampling approach, it can lead to the collection of good quality data when the samples are representative of a high response rate and participation. Based on the convenience of the researcher, the present research used a non-probabilistic selection approach. When choosing a group of visitors to the KSA for reasons other than religious pilgrimage, non-probability sampling can be more useful because it gives scholars access to subsets of the community that might not be included in a probability sample (Sánchez, Heredero, &

Montes-Botella, 2021). Also, one more study by Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas (2019) has used purposive sampling in their empirical tourism-related research.

The present research employed purposive sampling and convenience sampling, which are types of non-probability selection techniques. Because the sample is chosen to concentrate on the very particular purpose of the study, purposive sampling was a suitable sampling technique to pick a sample from the population of the current research. Purposive sampling involves selecting participants who meet specific criteria, such as they should be traveling to the KSA for non-religious activities, and they provided the most pertinent information for a specific research question or objective. Purposive sampling can also be useful for collecting data from a specific group of tourists meeting the specific criteria, which can ensure the representativeness of the sample. The use of purposive sampling can enhance the quality of the gathered data by strategically selecting participants who are anticipated to develop pertinent information aligned with the research objectives (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013).

In addition to the purposive sampling, convenience sampling was also used, which is the method of accessing participants incorporated elements of convenience sampling that involved leveraging readily available channels. Convenience sampling is referred to as a type of non-probability sampling whereby participants are chosen depending on their simple availability and accessibility to the researcher. Convenience sampling method is preferred for its low cost, quickness, and practicality which fit for first research or when resources are constrained (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Convenience sampling's viability and efficiency make it a common choice in many research environments despite its restrictions. The research benefited from focusing on visitors in general because of the country’s growing emphasis on non-religious events such as sports events, competitions, outdoor activities, high-class recreational activities, and so on. In addition, the researcher

works at a high-level position in the KSA's tourism department and has access to multiple travel companies, which allowed the researchers to send the survey link to many such sources. For instance, online channels, such as travel groups (e.g., a Saudi travel group) and social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp) were used to disseminate information about the study, along with a link to the survey. In addition, they formed partnerships with global tour operators, using their databases to expand their reach to a broader pool of prospective participants. These strategies showcase the integration of online outreach via digital platforms and offline cooperation with industry partners to optimise the survey engagement.

The integration of purposive and convenience sampling in this strategy substantially enhanced survey engagement by combining digital outreach and collaboration with industry partners. It expanded the number of tourists visiting KSA for non-religious reasons, making the sample more representative and relevant in capturing the country's increasing focus on non-religious tourism activities, such as sports events, competitions, outdoor activities, and high-end recreational pursuits.

4.8.2.4 Representativeness. The degree to which a sample accurately reflects the community from which it was taken is referred to as its representativeness (Gobo, 2004). In other words, a representative sample faithfully reflects the traits, demographics, and qualities of the community from which it was taken. It is also important to note that convenience sampling and purposive sampling are perceived to introduce bias, such as selection bias in the research as indicated by various researchers (Coviello & Jones, 2004; Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012). To ensure the representativeness of the sample, the researcher distributed the questionnaire through various channels, such as travel forums, social media groups, tour operations. Tourists visiting the KSA for recreational purposes made up the current study's representativeness population. They could be of any

age, from any faith, from any country, gender, or marriage status, and they could be traveling alone, with a partner, or in a group (with family or friends). This was focused on by specifically collecting data from diverse internet platforms and travel communities that are regularly visited by a wide range of tourists. For example, social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp were utilized to distribute the poll, guaranteeing its wide reach. In addition, collaborations with international tour operators provided access to their datasets, so broadening the scope to include a wider range of tourist demographics.

The chosen sampling approach was guided by the practicalities of accessing international tourists and the goal of obtaining a broad and diverse sample. Given the study's exploratory nature and the context of non-religious tourism in Saudi Arabia, the combination of purposive and convenience sampling provided a feasible and effective means to reach the target population. The researcher’s high-level position in Saudi Arabia’s tourism department facilitated access to multiple travel companies and online platforms, optimizing survey engagement and participation, which also contributed to representativeness of the sample. Researcher’s access allows for targeted outreach to key tourist groups, including first-time visitors and niche groups. Researcher’s access enabled the partnerships with tour operators and hospitality businesses that facilitated recruitment of participants from both leisure and religious tourism sectors, reducing the overrepresentation of a single group. The researcher’s position also helps to reduce self-selection bias, as partnerships with airlines and tourism boards can encourage participation from tourists with a broader range of travel interests, rather than only those actively seeking to participate in tourism-related research.

4.8.3 Study Instruments

4.8.3.1 Quantitative Study Scales. The current research is quantitative research, which is being conducted through a survey research strategy. For the online survey, a questionnaire is developed based on various scales adopted from the literature. The items and sources of adopted scales for the study's variables are presented in the following table.

Table 2

Questionnaire Items

Variables	Definition	Items	Source
Conative Destination Image	Conative destination image is referred to as a destination image that is determined based on how an individual responds to information and how they perceive a destination based on their emotions and feelings (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020)	CDI1: The KSA as a tourism destination fits in with my personal needs and style CDI2: The KSA has always been a dream destination to visit sometime during my lifetime CDI3: The KSA as a dream tourist destination expresses itself as a suitable vacation choice CDI4: The KSA as a destination helps me put knowledge that I have in use (i.e., knowledge of history, geography, philosophy) CDI5: The KSA as a destination always constitutes a personal goal for vacations CDI6: The KSA as a destination choice stems from a personal need of mine that had to be fulfilled CDI7: It was more desirable for me to get to the KSA, in comparison to a potential doubt, which I had that the KSA may not prove to be a good experience CDI8: The KSA as a tourist destination is still a potential option for a visit, irrespective of the poor past travel experiences I had CDI9: The KSA as a destination choice has evoked my persistence to visit it CDI10: The KSA as a destination choice encapsulates positive attributes	(Stylos et al., 2016)

		that help in the growth of my personality CDI11: The KSA as a destination choice makes me believe that my vacation there may be the best reward/gift I can offer myself CDI12: The KSA as a tourist destination can be considered as the right place to have a high-status vacation	
Perceived Security	Perceived security is defined as the degree of confidence an individual feels when making a decision about a particular option (Singh, 2018)	PS1: I will be careful of crime in the KSA PS2: I will feel worried about my personal safety in the KSA PS3: I might fall victim to crime in the KSA PS4: People have told me that the KSA region is dangerous PS5: The KSA region is unsafe PS6: The KSA region is just as unsafe as other destinations	(Woosnam et al., 2015)
Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM)	e-WOM is defined as a method of communication in which people communicate online, like in the form of reviews, rating, and information on online forums and communities (Alsheikh, Aziz, & Alsheikh, 2021)	EWOM1: I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others EWOM2: To make sure I choose the right destination (like the KSA), I often read other tourists' online travel reviews EWOM3: I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination (like the KSA) EWOM4: I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination like the KSA EWOM5: If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination like the KSA, I worry about my decision EWOM6: When I travel to a destination (like the KSA), tourists' online travel reviews make me confident in traveling to the destination	(Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012)
Travel Motivation	Travel motivation is	TM1: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to relax	

	characterised by a proactive style and a focus on one's own well-being, which can motivate people to travel to new locations (Ma et al., 2018)	TM2: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to be emotionally and physically refreshed TM3: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to enjoy good weather TM4: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to spend time with people I care deeply about TM5: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to seek adventure TM6: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to have fun TM7: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to get away from home TM8: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to mix with fellow tourists TM9: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to increase knowledge of new places TM10: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to meet local people TM11: My motivation to travel to the KSA is to visit historical and cultural sites	(Çelik & Dedeoğlu, 2019)
Tourist Attitude Towards Destination	Tourist attitude is referred to as favourable or unfavourable judgments of their own behaviour that are stated by visitors (Hadinejad et al., 2019)	TA1: As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very good TA2: As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very valuable TA3: As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very pleasant TA4: Visiting the KSA will be meaningful TA5: Visiting the KSA will be worth it TA6: Visiting the KSA will be a wise choice	(Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012; Choirisa et al., 2021)
Tourist Visit Intention	Tourist visit intention is referred to as a desire to go to a certain location (Chung, Han, & Joun, 2015)	TVI1: I would like to visit the KSA in the future TVI2: It is likely that I will visit KSA in the future TVI3: I will intend to visit the KSA in the future TVI4: I would visit the KSA rather than any other tourism destination TVI5: If everything goes as I think, I will plan to visit the KSA in the future	(Çelik & Dedeoğlu, 2019; Hosany, Buzova, & Sanz-Blas, 2019)

All the scales used in the questionnaire were 7-point Likert scale, in which 1 – *Strongly disagree,* 2 – *Disagree,* 3 – *Somewhat disagree*, 4 – *Neither agree nor disagree*, 5 – *Somewhat agree,* 6 – *Agree,* and 7 – *Strongly agree*. It has been demonstrated that 7-point Likert items are more precise and reflective of a participant's honest assessment. Also, when contrasted with higher-order items, the 7-point Likert scale tends to be the optimal solution for surveys used in evaluation (Stylos et al., 2016; Woosnam et al., 2015).

Also, these scales were considered suitable as the reliability values reported by these authors were within the threshold values. For instance, Stylos et al. (2016) reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.92 and other researchers (Stylos et al., 2017) that have used this scale also reported acceptable values like 0.91. The original scale of Stylos et al. (2016) was of 12 items and 4 items were removed. However, the inclusion of all 12 items in the current research focused on providing a comprehensive assessment of the conative image. Each item contributes to a nuanced understanding of tourists' conative perceptions, which is crucial for capturing the full spectrum of attitudes and intentions towards visiting KSA. in the context of KSA, these items might hold greater importance due to the unique characteristics of the destination. For example, the question related to "Fits in with my personal needs and style" might be particularly relevant for tourists based on the alignment of their personal preferences with the culture and lifestyle when visiting KSA.

Another scale, perceived security, by Woosman et al. (2015) was also found to be suitable as Duan et al. (2022) when using that scale reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.925. The e-WOM scale by Reza Jalilvand et al. (2012) was also suitable as Reyes-Menendez et al. (2019) used the scale and reported 0.8 as the value of Cronbach's alpha.

The scales of travel motivation and the tourist visit intention by Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019). Although, it is important to note that the scale adopted by Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019) was based on the push and pull theory of motivation, these are also in line with the

SDT underpinning the current research. This is because the constructs it measures can be mapped onto the categories of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations defined by SDT. For instance, push factors often align with intrinsic motivations (e.g., personal fulfillment, relaxation) and pull factors can be associated with extrinsic motivations (e.g., destination attributes, external rewards, such as knowledge of places or interacting with other tourists). By categorizing travel motivations into push and pull factors, the scale provides a practical means to capture a wide range of motivational drivers, which can then be analyzed through the lens of SDT to understand the degree of internalization and autonomy associated with these motivations. In addition, the scale adopted by Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019) was originally an 11-item scale, but 2 items were removed by the authors due to low factor loadings. However, the current research considered the original 11-item scale (including TM8 and TM11) because these items were relevant in the context of KSA, considering the unique characteristics of the destination. Considering the focus is on non-religious tourism, evaluating the tourists motivation to meet fellow tourists and KSA is highly rich in heritage and culture (that can also motivate tourists), the two items were included in the current research. By including these items, the research acknowledges the possibility that these motivational aspects are pertinent to understanding tourist behavior in KSA, despite their lower factor loadings in the original study. Also, the scale used by Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019) were also found to be suitable as the authors reported Cronbach's alpha values of motivation and the tourist visit intention to be 0.85 and 0.86, respectively.

4.8.3.2 Questionnaire Design. The questionnaire has three main parts, which are as follows:

Part A: Introduction to the Survey. This part contained a description of the research, along with the details of the researcher, and some important ethical considerations that

must be known to the participants, which will allow them to provide their consent to do the survey with them.

Part B: Demographics. This part included questions related to gender, age, educational background, marital status, occupation, income, frequency of travel, and religious orientation.

Part C: Survey Questions: This part will include all questions (items) from the scale (mentioned in Table 2), along with relevant 7-point Likert scale options, for example, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. All these questions were multiple choice questions (only one option can be selected).

A complete questionnaire is presented in Appendix B.

4.9 Data Analysis Methods

In the current study, SEM will be used to analyse the complex correlations between multiple variables, such as conative destination image, travel motivation, e-WOM, perceived security, tourist attitude, and the tourist visit intention. SEM allows researchers to build a theory model that describes the connections between factors and evaluate this strategy using real-world data. The social sciences, physics, and business are just a few of the many research areas that can benefit from using SEM (Bowen & Guo, 2011). SEM research entails a number of stages. Defining the paradigm is the first stage. In order to do this, one must first determine which factors are of importance, as well as the connections between them (Mueller & Hancock, 2018). The model can be represented graphically or mathematically. Graphs are used by academics to illustrate the connections between different factors in a graphical manner. The normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity assumptions of SEM analysis should also be met by the data (Maruyama, 1997). After data collection, relevant SEM software is used to analyse them.

The many interdependent parts of the proposed model led to this conclusion. The dependability of Partial Least Squares SEM (PLS-SEM) has made it popular in studies of tourist research. When using PLS-SEM, the measurement model must be specified. One can have a trustworthy and precise depiction of a parameter when the basic structure of the variable and the components used to measure it are caught by a model (Hair et al., 2017). Before developing an assessment technique, it is crucial to ascertain whether the frames are generative or introspective. In organisational research, functional models are developed by examining the connections between hidden, or unobservable, variables and their visible, or palpable, counterparts (Sarstedt, Ringle, & Hair, 2022). This is rarely possible because hidden factors are frequently unknown through linked items. The option is to assume that all observable factors are distinct, and to build the dependent variables purely on the premise of these elements, which is conceivable but highly improbable. As a consequence, a building is constructed in accordance with a predetermined plan (Hair et al., 2017). According to studies, there is a clear line of reasoning from the sign to the fundamental variable in a formative component. Briefly stated, the components being evaluated produce or cause the hidden construct. Comparing PLS-SEM to co-variance-based SEM (CB-SEM) that is done using AMOS, PLS-SEM was used as a suitable approach for the following reasons. First, PLS-SEM is suitable when the research includes theory development (Elbaz & Haddoud, 2017). Also, PLS-SEM is well-suited for complex models with many constructs, indicators, and paths and can handle multiple dependent and independent variables more effectively than AMOS, which is CB-SEM. The current research focused on investigating the impact of the factors on tourist attitude and the visit intention with underpinning theories, such as the TPB and SDT, which allows to establish this theoretical concept and evaluate the complex model of multiple relationships among the variables. Second, PLS-SEM is suitable for both reflective and formative constructs, and it allows for

a mix of reflective and formative indicators in a model. In the current model, all variables are reflective. Third, PLS-SEM is an iterative procedure that integrates the measurement and estimate of structural models (Elbaz & Haddoud, 2017). This may be beneficial in circumstances where the creation and improvement of theories are continuous processes, enabling researchers to revise the model as they acquire new insights. Also, PLS-SEM is less sensitive to data non-normality and uses a non-parametric approach, making it more robust when the data does not meet the normality assumptions required by AMOS (Usakli & Rasoolimanesh, 2023). In the current study also, the TPB has been used in many contexts to generate new insights and has also guided the current study accordingly. The present research employed PLS-SEM using either the WarpPLS software, which allowed the researcher to evaluate model variables and make predictions using hypotheses.

Overall, SEM has the major benefit of allowing scholars to examine numerous correlations between factors at once (Hair et al., 2021). This is accomplished by making educated guesses as to the nature and magnitude of the connections between the variables, while also factoring in the influence of any other factors that may be relevant (Hair et al., 2017). Multiple theories can be tested at once using SEM, which is especially helpful for large-scale research initiatives. The fit of the model to the data is usually evaluated using SEM (Hair et al., 2021). This entails contrasting the actual relationships between variables in the data with the predicted relationships between variables. A decent match between the model and the data indicates that the model adequately explains the interrelationships between the factors.

4.10 Validity and Reliability Considerations

The consistency and stability of observations or data gathered in research are referred to as reliability (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 2013). Because it guarantees the reliability and accuracy of the data gathered, it is a crucial component of quantitative

research. The validity and reliability of the assessment tools used in the research was guaranteed. While validity refers to the measurement's precision, reliability refers to the measurement's constancy (Thanasegaran, 2009). Use tried-and-true measuring tools should be used to guarantee reliability (Litwin & Fink, 1995). To ensure that all participants follow the same methods, a standardised survey data gathering technique was used, minimising the possibility of prejudice or mistakes. The Cronbach's alpha value was used to determine whether or not the testing tools are internally consistent. This checks to see if all of the objects in the scale are quantifying the same thing. If the Cronbach's alpha for a given construct is high, it means that the things within the construct are reliable and valid measures of the construct's true characteristics (Litwin & Fink, 1995). In other words, it gives an approximation of reliability based on the inter-correlation of the recorded signs. Based on Cronbach's alpha, 0.7 is the least suggested degree of reliability (Hair et al., 2017). Cronbach's alpha should be higher than 0.7, according to Nunnally (1978), for well-known measures. However, more recent published studies by methodology scholars (Hair et al., 2019) have expressed apprehension concerning the application of Cronbach's alpha due to its assumption that all metrics have equivalent factor scores linked to the structural model and its tendency to misinterpret the internal consistency that is reliability. Due to these limitations, it has been suggested that Composite Reliability (CR) be used to assess reliability (Hair et al., 2017; Hair et al., 2019). A superior predictor of reliability is CR, which takes into consideration the loadings of the markers. CR > 0.6 (acceptable for experimental research), CR 0.7–0.9 (good), and CR > 0.9 are the recommended CR threshold statistics (Hair et al., 2021).

The validity of an experiment is determined by how accurately the selected tests reflect the variables under study (Knapp & Mueller, 2010). By ensuring that each component and trait of the target word has been properly described, the researcher strives

for content validity (Hair et al., 2021). Concept validity, on the other contrary, refers to how well the evaluated survey questions match the questionnaire's hypothesised obvious and unconscious characteristics. According to Hair et al. (2017), the questionnaire questions should help assess and explain how the measure functions, as well as how implementation could be viewed. In accordance with the standards set forth by Hair et al. (2017), the research employed a PLS-SEM model to evaluate the construct validity. Additionally, an internal performance study and a combined reliability evaluation were conducted. The average variation collected was used by the experts to prove convergent validity. The discriminant validity was also evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker and heterotrait-monotrait ratios (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2021). Convergent validity is a subgroup of construct validity that looks at how well the signs of one construct align with those of another construct. In order to verify the measurement model's validity, convergent validity is evaluated. The measure of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is used in convergent validity to determine the proportion of measurement error to which variables contribute. AVE quantifies the amount of variance that a hidden variable component got from its markers compared to the amount due to observation, can be used to evaluate the convergent validity of the variables. AVE values should be at least 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017). Also, reliability was first ensured through pilot testing and validity based on a panel of experts. The results of the same are presented in the following section.

4.11 Content Validity and Pilot Study Results

Before conducting the pilot study, the researcher ensured the validity of the questionnaire by sending the questionnaire to academic experts and also a few people in the field. Almanasreh et al. (2019) outlined that content validity is dependent on the subjective evaluations made by experts. When choosing experts to assess and analyse the content of a tool, it is important to use clearly stated criteria. The current study chose

academic experts of tourism research and industry experts of the tourism industry. Almanasreh et al. (2019) outlined that generally, a maximum of 10 experts are used, and the authors also mention that using a high number of experts can reduce the probability of chance agreement and enhance the development of the research instrument. In a similar regard, to ensure the content validity of the questionnaire developed for the current study, it was sent to 11 experts. Out of these 11 experts, 6 of them were academic experts in a field similar to the present study and 5 of them were experts in the tourism industry. Most of the participants indicated that no changes are required to the questionnaire and indicated that the researcher can go ahead with the survey. However, a few of the participants provided valuable recommendations that helped the researcher in refining the questionnaire. For instance, it allowed the researcher to identify and eliminate any irrelevant or redundant questions, ensuring that the questionnaire addressed the research's key aspects. One of the common recommendations obtained was related to the rephrasing of the items in a simpler manner. For instance, the item that previously was "The KSA as a destination always constitutes a personal goal for vacations" was worded to "As a destination, the KSA always constitutes a personal goal for vacations". Another common recommendation that was incorporated in the research was related to wording the items of perceived security, not using the word *region* in the items, and ensuring that the items represent the definition of the variable. For instance, one of the items of perceived security, which previously was "The KSA region is unsafe", was changed to "The KSA as a country is unsafe". Another recommendation was related to rewording the items of travel motivation, which allowed the researcher to make the items simpler to read and understand for the survey participants. Doing this exercise related to content validity allowed the researcher to involve academic experts, who also guided in ensuring that the questions aligned with the theoretical foundations of the study, while the input from tourism industry

experts ensured practical relevance. Expert review helped in making the questions clear and easy to understand for the target audience, which is vital for obtaining accurate responses.

After this step, a pilot study was conducted, as Teijlingen and Hundley (2002) outline that a crucial step in collecting accurate and thorough data is the experimental study. A pilot study offers the chance to put the methods created for the research to the test (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002). The surveys and methods of data gathering for this research are also tested during the experimental project. The questionnaire's ultimate evaluation, down to the smallest detail, is based on the results of the trial study (Hassan, Schattner, & Mazza, 2006). Cocks and Torgerson (2013) outline that a sample of approximately 50 participants is suitable for a pilot study and Viechtbauer et al. (2015) outline 59 participants as a suitable choice for a pilot study. Based on these studies, a sample of 60 participants was selected for the current study's pilot study.

In order to ensure the truth and dependability of the research tool created for use in data gathering, trial surveys are disseminated to prospective participants. The validity and dependability of the surveys are evaluated using the data from the experimental research (Creswell & Creswell, 2013). Systematic studies of all process-related tasks are assured while performing the experimental study. The surveys and selection strategy used to gather data are both evaluated in the preliminary study to ensure they are adequate for the research. The researcher's expertise in performing the research is also gained through the experimental study, along with a variety of facts. The results of the prototype study are incorporated into the primary study's preparation, and the questionnaire is refined as a result. Finding out if a larger study is possible and validating the survey tool at issue are the main objectives of conducting a trial study (Johanson & Brooks, 2009). The viability study will provide insight into the actual constraints of raw data collection and provide a rough

estimate of the budgetary resources that were needed (Johanson & Brooks, 2009). Pilot testing, as recommended, can assist researchers in determining the truth and dependability of their proposed research methodologies (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002). Pilot studies are essential for determining the viability of a research project and for addressing any potential challenges that may emerge during the primary study. Problems with the facial, mental, and criterion-related validity, all of which may be demonstrated in preliminary studies, may impact the credibility and dependability of research. The Cronbach's alpha scores were calculated to check the questionnaire's trustworthiness. The survey as a whole is internally consistent, and all of the questions are trustworthy if the alpha is greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019).

4.11.1 Demographic Statistics

Demographics analysis was conducted to evaluate the frequency that represents the characteristics of the pilot sample. The survey was sent to people randomly who are tourists or live outside the KSA.

In terms of their personal characteristics, it can be observed that most of the participants who participated in the pilot study were males. The age distribution among the surveyed tourists provides valuable insights into the age groups most commonly engaged in tourism. In this sample, individuals between 36 and 45 years old are the most frequent tourists, representing 43.3% of the respondents. The majority of tourists in this sample have either a bachelor's or master's degree, with each group constituting 38.3% of the respondents. The marital status breakdown provides insights into the relationship status of the tourists in the sample. The majority, at 61.7%, are married, while singles make up 30.0%. There is also a smaller proportion of divorced individuals at 8.3%. The nationality of most of the participants is British, while other participants are from a wide range of national backgrounds, including Algerian, American, Burundian, Canadian, Chinese,

Egyptian, Filipino, French, German, Greek, Indian, Indonesian, Irish, Jordanian-Canadian, Omani, Pakistani, Palestinian, Russian, South African, Spanish, Swiss, Syrian, Taiwanese, Thai, and others. In terms of religious orientation, most of the participants had Islam as their religious orientation and Christianity was the second most religious orientation.

In regards to their professional characteristics, most of the participants are employed, either by an organisation or they are freelancers. The income group with the most participants among the surveyed tourists is the "Less than 25,000 USD" category, which comprises 26.7% of the respondents. This indicates that a significant portion of the tourists in the sample falls into the income range of less than 25,000 USD annually.

In terms of their travel characteristics, the participants were asked about who they travel with and about their travel frequency. Most of the participants indicated that they travel with their families and most of them travel once a year.

Table 3

Demographic Analysis of the Pilot

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Female	26	43.3	43.3	43.3
	Male	34	56.7	56.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	
Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Less than 25 years	7	11.7	11.7	11.7
	26–35 years	10	16.7	16.7	28.4
	36–45 years	26	43.3	43.3	71.7
	46–55 years	12	20.0	20.0	91.7
	More than 55 years	5	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	
Education level					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Do not have any degree	2	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Diploma level	3	5.0	5.0	8.3
	Bachelor's level	23	38.3	38.3	46.6
	Master's level	23	38.3	38.3	85

	Doctorate level	9	15.0	15.0	100
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Marital status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Divorced	5	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Married	37	61.7	61.7	70.0
	Single	18	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Nationality

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Algerian	1	1.7	1.7	1.7
	American	1	1.7	1.7	3.3
	Arabic-Israeli	1	1.7	1.7	5.0
	Azeri	1	1.7	1.7	6.7
	British	16	26.7	26.7	33.3
	Burundian	1	1.7	1.7	35.0
	Canada	2	3.3	3.3	38.3
	Chinese	2	3.3	3.3	41.7
	Egyptian	1	1.7	1.7	43.3
	Filipino	1	1.7	1.7	45.0
	French	2	3.3	3.3	48.3
	German	1	1.7	1.7	50.0
	Greek	1	1.7	1.7	51.7
	Indian	8	13.3	13.3	65.0
	Indonesian	2	3.3	3.3	68.3
	Irish	1	1.7	1.7	70.0
	Jordanian-Canadian	1	1.7	1.7	71.7
	Omani	1	1.7	1.7	73.3
	Pakistani	5	8.3	8.3	81.7
	Palestinian	1	1.7	1.7	83.3
	Russian	2	3.3	3.3	86.7
	South African	1	1.7	1.7	88.3
	Spanish	3	5.0	5.0	93.3
	Swiss	1	1.7	1.7	95.0
	Syrian-British	1	1.7	1.7	96.7
	Taiwanese	1	1.7	1.7	98.3
	Thai	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Occupation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Employed	35	58.3	58.3	58.3
	Professional	2	3.3	3.3	61.7
	Self-employed	14	23.3	23.3	85.0
	Student	4	6.7	6.7	91.7
	Unemployed	5	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Annual income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Less than 25,000 USD	16	26.67	26.67	26.67
	25,000–49,999 USD	10	16.67	16.67	43.33
	50,000–74,999 USD	10	16.67	16.67	60.00
	75,000–99,999 USD	7	11.67	11.67	71.67
	100,000–149,999 USD	7	11.67	11.67	83.33
	Greater than 150,000 USD	10	16.67	16.67	100.00
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Religious orientation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Atheist	1	1.7	1.7	1.7
	Catholic	1	1.7	1.7	3.3
	Christianity	18	30.0	30.0	33.3
	Confucianism	1	1.7	1.7	35.0
	Hinduism	6	10.0	10.0	45.0
	Islam	30	50.0	50.0	95.0
	None	1	1.7	1.7	96.7
	Polytheism or None	1	1.7	1.7	98.3
	Respectful and Open-minded	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

How do you travel generally?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	As a couple	12	20.0	20.0	20.0
	As a solo traveller	11	18.3	18.3	38.3
	With family	25	41.7	41.7	80.0
	With friends	12	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

What is your travel frequency?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Once in a month	6	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Once in 6 months	21	35.0	35.0	45.0
	Once in a year	25	41.7	41.7	86.7
	Once in 2 years or more	8	13.3	13.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.11.2 Reliability Analysis – Pilot Study

Reliability analysis was conducted to check the reliability of the constructs by evaluating the Cronbach's alpha values. All the variables have high Cronbach's alpha values, which have a greater value than the threshold value of 0.6, indicating a high level

of internal consistency. High values of Cronbach's alpha also indicate that the scales used for the data collection were reliable.

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha Values of Scales for the Pilot

Variables	Cronbach's alpha
Conative destination image	0.951
Perceived security	0.823
e-WOM	0.923
Travel motivation	0.940
Tourist attitude	0.984
Tourist visit intention	0.970

Based on the analysis of the pilot study, a few changes were made to the survey questionnaire that was used for the main data collection process. For instance, nationality was kept an open-ended question, which led to many mixed responses, such as British, UK, United Kingdom, and similar results. Some of the common nationalities were stated and an option for others was kept, but in the updated questionnaire, a scroll-down option will be given from which they can select their nationality. In terms of religious orientation, a few common options were given along with others, which was an open-ended question. However, many of the participants mentioned that they do not follow any of the religion, which will be included as an option. The participants were also asked if they had any suggestions about the questionnaire, to which most of the participants indicated, No. Also, the scales used in the questionnaire for the pilot study were highly reliable, which did not lead to any changes in the items used in the questionnaire.

4.12 Ethical Considerations

The ethical aspects of the research must be taken into account when planning a quantitative research project.

Ethical approval from the university's ethics committee was taken before conducting the survey, as presented in Appendix A. Informed consent is a crucial ethical

issue in quantitative research. The researcher made sure that all participants were aware of the study's objectives, the information that was to be gathered, and the potential drawbacks and advantages of taking part, and their consent was taken prior to the data collection (Punch, 2013), and accordingly the researcher took consent from them to show their willingness to participate in the study. Before any data are gathered, consent forms were given and approved by the participants. The consent form was a part of the survey and the participants were informed that if they agree to the above-mentioned points then by clicking Next, they are providing consent to participate in the study (refer to Appendix B). According to the *informed consent*, researchers have an obligation to give study subjects information about the study's goals, any potential dangers or rewards, and the safety and private precautions that will be taken. When volunteers give their informed consent, they are indicating that they have read and fully comprehended the material given and are giving their permission to engage in the research despite any potential risks. The survey was administered after the respondents have given their full permission.

In addition to respecting the participants' right to willingly participate in the study, this research plan also took into account other ethical concerns (Punch, 2013), such as the confidentiality of the participants. Experts will take precautions to prevent any unauthorised use of user information. This involves making sure that data are kept safely and that they are not disclosed to unauthorised parties.

The participants' information was kept private and encrypted throughout the research. The researcher also worked to keep the data anonymous, so that the participants cannot be recognised in any manner. The study's possible drawbacks and advantages was also be taken into account in the research plan. The research used non-invasive data gathering techniques and make sure that the participants are not in any way vulnerable (Giordano et al., 2007). By adding to the body of prior knowledge in the field and possibly

benefiting the participants, the study also worked to maximise the advantages of the research (Patten, 2017).

The participants were made aware that their involvement is entirely optional and that they can stop at any moment (Giordano et al., 2007), and thus they were informed that they have a right to withdraw from the research at any given point in time. The participants in the research will not be forced to take part, and they can opt out at any moment.

4.13 Chapter Summary

The present chapter underpinned the current research substantially, providing a detailed justification of the research approach that formed the foundation of the inquiry into the current research. The present chapter has established the foundation for the whole research undertaking, using a systematic methodology led by a well-defined philosophical perspective and rigorous methodology. The adoption of positivism as a research philosophy and the deductive research approach demonstrated a focus on objectivity and empiricism, hence strengthening the endeavour to investigate observable truths in the field of inquiry. The use of a quantitative research design assured that the study was adequately prepared to collect, analyse, and interpret numerical data with accuracy and thoroughness. The use of the survey was justified, along with outlining the relevant population and sample required for the current study. The utilisation of simple random sampling was the favoured methodology in order to ascertain a representative sample of the participants, hence preserving the study's capacity for generalisability. The study instrument, a carefully constructed questionnaire, was further developed to serve as a crucial tool for properly capturing the necessary data.

This chapter established a methodological framework that provided guidance for the empirical investigation of the study subject. The data acquired were thoroughly

examined and interpreted within the established framework, resulting in the significant findings of the research, which are reported in the next chapter, *Analysis.*.

Chapter 5: Analysis

5.1 Introduction

The research aims to analyse the determinants of tourists' attitudes and the visit intention towards the KSA, along with the moderating roles of age, gender, income, and religious orientation. The analysis chapter presents an analysis of the data gathered to understand the empirical relationships among the variables, such as tourist-related factors, tourist attitude, and the tourist visit intention. The first section is about the sample characteristics, which sheds light on the demographic factors influencing the population under investigation through the results of frequency analysis. This section is followed by the measurement model section, where the reliability, validity, and collinearity are reported. Reliability is ensured using the values of Cronbach's alpha and CR, validity is ensured using AVE values and discriminant validity, and collinearity using VIF values to uncover possible multicollinearity concerns. A structural model was developed based on the conceptual framework in which the direct effects and indirect effects were tested including the moderating and mediating relationships. Lastly, hypothesis testing is done to showcase the relationships that are supported and rejected.

5.2 Descriptive Analysis

Data were collected from 536 tourists worldwide. From the total sample of 536 tourists, 52.1% were males and 47.9% were females. In terms of age, the majority of respondents fall within the age group of 36–45 years (26.5%) and 26–35 years (26.3%). A relatively smaller proportion belongs to the age groups of less than 25 years (23.1%), 46–55 years (15.9%), and more than 55 years (8.2%). This indicates that most of the respondents that responded to the survey are 25–45 years of age.

The highest number of respondents hold a Master's level education (36.0%), followed closely by the Bachelor's level (31.3%), while a significant number have a

Doctorate level (14.4%). A smaller percentage have a Diploma level education (14.2%), and a few do not possess a degree (4.1%). A significant portion of tourists holds at least a Bachelor's or Master's level education, suggesting a relatively educated tourist population.

The participants were also asked regarding their marital status to evaluate groups that have high and low frequency, as it also helps in understanding the type of activities a country wants to plan for its tourists. In the context of the current survey, the majority of respondents are married (48.7%), followed by singles (36.4%). Divorced individuals accounted for 10.8%, and widowed individuals make up 4.1% of the respondents. The majority of tourists are married or single, indicating that both married couples and individuals are actively engaging in tourism, so accordingly the KSA can consider these aspects in their tourism-related decision-making.

The distribution of respondents across regions is as follows: Europe (37.5%), Asia & Pacific (29.5%), Middle East (15.5%), North America (7.1%), South America (7.3%), and Africa (3.2%). The regional distribution provides insights into the geographic origins or preferences of tourists, with a notable presence from Europe, Asia and the Pacific, and the Middle East.

In terms of occupation, it was found that more than half of the respondents are employed (52.1%), followed by self-employed individuals (29.5%). Unemployed individuals make up 9.1%, and students account for 9.3% of the respondents. This indicates that a significant proportion of employed and self-employed individuals engage in tourism, which is quite understandable as travelling requires a certain amount of financial resources. In terms of income, the highest frequency of respondents falls within the income range of less than 25,000 USD (31.7%).

Other income brackets include 25,000–49,999 USD (19.8%), 50,000–74,999 USD (15.7%), 75,000–99,999 USD (12.3%), 100,000–149,999 USD (10.8%), and greater than

150,000 USD (9.7%). The income distribution suggests a diverse group of tourists, including those with lower incomes (less than 25,000 USD) and higher incomes (greater than 150,000 USD).

The participants were also asked about their travel type to understand if they travel in a group, solo, or as a couple. The responses indicate the majority of respondents prefer traveling with family (34.7%), followed by solo travellers (26.1%), couples (23.1%), and friends (16.0%). The preference for traveling with family is notable, indicating that family-oriented tourism is common among the respondents. A significant portion also prefers solo travel, suggesting a diverse range of travel preferences among the respondents. This can also guide in decision-making related to KSA tourism.

The highest frequency of travel is once in 6 months (37.9%), followed by once in a year (26.9%), once in a month (20.0%), and once in 2 years or more (15.3%). The data on travel frequency indicate that a substantial number of tourists prefer to travel at least once a year, with a significant portion choosing to travel once in 6 months.

In the context of the current research, the largest group of respondents have Islam as their religion (34.7%), followed by Christianity (30.6%). Other religious orientations include Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, African Traditional and Diasporic religions, Chinese traditional religion, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Non-religious, and Secular. The diverse representation of religious orientations among tourists suggests that people from various religious backgrounds engage in tourism activities. The research sample has a significant number of respondents who identify as Muslims (34.7%), and the remaining are non-Muslims. This might potentially introduce bias, especially in the context of tourism as the bias may stem from the KSA being a prominent religious pilgrimage location for Muslims, owing to its significance in Islam with sites, such as Mecca and Medina. The religious importance of these locations might have a disparate impact on the views and

visitation intentions of Muslim tourists as opposed to those from other religious backgrounds (Rahman et al., 2021). The results may be more broadly applicable and have higher external validity if the sample is representative of the population as a whole. However, the research also explores the moderating role of religious orientation, which will present its impact on the tourist visit intention.

Table 5

Demographic Statistics

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Male	279	52.1	52.1	52.1
	Female	257	47.9	47.9	100.0
	Total	536	100.0	100.0	
Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
	Less than 25 years	124	23.1	23.1	23.1
	26–35 years	141	26.3	26.3	49.4
	36–45 years	142	26.5	26.5	75.9
	46–55 years	85	15.9	15.9	91.8
	More than 55 years	44	8.2	8.2	100.0
	Total	536	100.0	100.0	
Education level					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
	Diploma level	76	14.2	14.2	14.2
	Bachelor’s level	168	31.3	31.3	45.5
	Master’s level	193	36.0	36.0	81.5
Valid	Doctorate level	77	14.4	14.4	95.9
	Do not have a degree	22	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	536	100.0	100.0	
Marital status					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
	Single	195	36.4	36.4	36.4
	Married	261	48.7	48.7	85.1
Valid	Divorced	58	10.8	10.8	95.9
	Widowed	22	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	536	100.0	100.0	
Occupation					

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Employed	279	52.1	52.1	52.1
	Self-Employed	158	29.5	29.5	81.5
	Unemployed	49	9.1	9.1	90.7
	Student	50	9.3	9.3	100.0
	Total	536	100.0	100.0	

Annual income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Less than 25,000 USD	170	31.7	31.7	31.7
	25,000–49,999 USD	106	19.8	19.8	51.5
	50,000–74,999 USD	84	15.7	15.7	67.2
	75,000–99,999 USD	66	12.3	12.3	79.5
	100,000–149,999 USD	58	10.8	10.8	90.3
	Greater than 150,000 USD	52	9.7	9.7	100.0
	Total	536	100.0	100.0	

Religious orientation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Islam	186	34.7	34.7	34.7
	Christianity	164	30.6	30.6	65.3
	Hinduism	24	4.5	4.5	69.8
	Buddhism	24	4.5	4.5	74.3
	Judaism	18	3.4	3.4	77.6
	African Traditional and Diasporic	20	3.7	3.7	81.3
	Chinese traditional religion	19	3.5	3.5	84.9
	Zoroastrianism	10	1.9	1.9	86.8
	Jainism	10	1.9	1.9	88.6
	Non-Religious	41	7.6	7.6	96.3
	Secular	20	3.7	3.7	100.0
	Total	536	100.0	100.0	

Travel type

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	As a solo traveller	140	26.1	26.1	26.1
	As a couple	124	23.1	23.1	49.3
	With family	186	34.7	34.7	84.0
	With friends	86	16.0	16.0	100.0
	Total	536	100.0	100.0	

Travel frequency

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Once in a month	107	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Once in 6 months	203	37.9	37.9	57.8
	Once in a year	144	26.9	26.9	84.7
	Once in 2 years or more	82	15.3	15.3	100.0
	Total	536	100.0	100.0	

Region they belong to

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Africa	17	3.2	3.2	3.2
	Asia & Pacific	158	29.5	29.5	32.7
	Europe	201	37.5	37.5	70.2
	Middle East	83	15.5	15.5	85.7
	North America	38	7.1	7.1	92.8
	South America	39	7.3	7.3	100.0
		536	100.0	100.0	

5.2.1 Sample Characteristics

Descriptive statistics are used to systematically summarise and comprehend data, as these statistics provide concise overviews of the sample and the metrics. When combined with basic analysis, these methods serve as the foundation for quantitative data analysis. Descriptive statistics have limitations in terms of drawing conclusions beyond the gathered data or making judgments about the broader population, as these are mostly used to portray the facts in a more comprehensible manner. Statistical inference techniques are necessary to assess the probability or likelihood of seeing the same patterns in a larger population based on the patterns found in a sample. In the current study, descriptive analysis is done, which represents the mean and standard deviation of all items of the variables. Moreover, kurtosis and skewness values are also outlined to check if the data are normally distributed. The threshold values of skewness and kurtosis range from -1 to +1 and -3 to +3, respectively. All the skewness and kurtosis values were in the threshold range, indicating that there are no issues related to the normality of data.

In regards to the descriptive statistics for conative destination image, the items highlighted that the KSA is widely regarded as a dynamic and predominantly positive tourist destination. Based on the findings, it was observed that the KSA is a highly desirable vacation destination (Mean = 4.94, SD = 1.956), with the respondents expressing a strong preference for its vacation appeal (Mean = 4.82, SD = 1.833). The respondents perceive the destination not as a passive option, but rather as a dynamic environment where they can effectively apply their knowledge, specifically in the fields of history, geography, and philosophy (Mean = 5.02, SD = 1.777). It surpasses the domain of recreation and transforms into a captivating individual objective (Mean = 4.79, SD = 1.832), motivated by personal requirements (Mean = 4.82, SD = 1.852) and a strong determination to achieve this ambition (Mean = 4.86, SD = 1.824). The KSA serves as more than a mere tourist destination; it offers an immersive experience that embodies qualities that foster personal development (Mean = 4.95, SD = 1.851). A vacation in the KSA is not merely regarded as a source of pleasure, but rather as the highest possible recompense or gift (Mean = 4.75, SD = 1.907). Fundamentally, the surge of optimism and vitality in the opinions of the respondents signifies an effective acceptance of the KSA as an exceptionally regarded and gratifying tourist location.

For perceived security, the descriptive statistics indicated mixed perceptions of the participants regarding the security in the KSA. For instance, the respondents express a heightened level of caution and mindfulness towards crime, with a mean score of 4.29 (SD = 2.261). However, there is not a considerable level of concern about personal safety (Mean = 3.31, SD = 2.199) and of becoming a victim to crime in the KSA (Mean = 3.13, SD = 2.143) as the mean values are lower than the average value of 3.5, indicating that the participants mostly disagreed with these statements, which indicated that they perceive the KSA to be a moderately safe country. The reported findings about the perceived danger in

the KSA (Mean = 3.26, SD = 2.193) contribute to an overall perception that the KSA is viewed as a moderately safe country (Mean = 3.01, SD = 2.188). The ambiguity is further emphasised by the belief that the KSA's safety level is comparable to other destinations, with a mean score of 3.36 (SD = 2.216). In conclusion, the nuanced responses on the Likert scale shed light on the complexity of security perceptions, with variations in caution and concern among the respondents regarding safety in the KSA.

An analysis of e-WOM conduct reveals a strong and ever-changing trend among the participants, demonstrating a strong dependence on online travel evaluations when choosing a destination. The participants consistently exhibit a considerable degree of involvement in and contribution to the online travel discourse, actively pursuing perspectives on destinations that elicit favourable feelings (Mean = 5.25, SD = 1.751). The respondents' strong interest in information is also reflected in the importance they place on online travel evaluations, especially when considering destinations such as the KSA, which guarantees a thorough and knowledgeable decision-making process (Mean = 5.28, SD = 1.710). The aforementioned tendency continues, emphasising the enduring propensity to conduct extensive research on online travel evaluations as a critical component in the process of choosing enticing destinations like the KSA (Mean = 5.25, SD = 1.692). This proactive approach is consistently observed in the frequency with which information is gathered from the online travel evaluations of travellers prior to visiting particular destinations, as demonstrated by the KSA (Mean = 5.31, SD = 1.614). When participants exhibit apprehension regarding the process of making decisions in the absence of online travel evaluations, especially when contemplating destinations such as the KSA (Mean = 4.46, SD = 2.028), an intriguing element emerges. When tourists actively participate in online travel evaluations, however, a different story emerges, giving them more confidence in their travel choices, particularly when visiting places like the KSA (Mean = 5.33, SD =

1.587). This in-depth study highlights not only the importance of e-WOM, but also the fluctuating and abrupt nature of the respondents' interactions with online travel reviews, which impact their selection of travel destinations and develop their levels of assurance, particularly with regard to places like the KSA.

The descriptive analysis of the travel motivations of the participants reveals a wide range of complex and varied factors that influence their decision to visit the KSA. The participants demonstrate a notable inclination to travel to the KSA with the intention of unwinding and relaxing themselves (Mean = 4.94, SD = 1.837). This inclination surpasses simple physical relaxation, encompassing a motivation to achieve emotional relaxation as well (Mean = 5.07, SD = 1.782). Another motivation for travel to the KSA is the desire to take advantage of the pleasant weather, which receives a slightly higher mean score (Mean = 4.82, SD = 1.845). Additionally, the desire to spend precious time with loved ones is a significant factor in selecting the KSA as a travel destination (Mean = 4.92, SD = 1.850). With regard to pleasure-seeking motivations, the participants demonstrate a notable inclination to visit the KSA for the sake of experiencing adventure (Mean = 5.12, SD = 1.753) and simply enjoying oneself (Mean = 4.94, SD = 1.844). With a moderate mean score (Mean = 4.38, SD = 2.053), however, the inclination to travel to the KSA as a means of seeking solace from one's domestic situation is reflected. Mixing with fellow travellers is a significant motivator within the cultural motivation category (Mean = 4.65, SD = 1.955). The pursuit of knowledge regarding unfamiliar locations serves as a strong incentive, as evidenced by the mean score of 5.56 and the standard deviation of 1.558. In addition to meeting locals (Mean = 5.31, SD = 1.707), visiting historical and cultural sites, as well as other attractions in the KSA, is a major source of motivation (Mean = 5.74, SD = 1.538). The descriptive analysis of travel motivation reveals a diverse array of factors that

influence the respondents' choices regarding travel to the KSA that range from leisure and enjoyment-seeking to a profound interest in acquiring knowledge and culture.

The perceptions of the respondents indicate that the KSA is widely regarded favourably by tourists as a travel destination. On the basis of the 7-point Likert scale mean scores ranging from 5.29 (SD = 1.654) to 5.57 (SD = 1.549), the participants consistently rate the KSA as not only excellent, but also exceedingly valuable and enjoyable. The anticipation of visiting the KSA is accompanied by a significant sense of purpose and meaning (Mean = 5.56, SD = 1.531), underscoring the perceived value and importance of the travel experience (Mean = 5.57, SD = 1.549). Additionally, the prevailing notion that it is important to visit the KSA (Mean = 5.46, SD = 1.564) supports a calculated and strategic decision to choose the KSA as a preferred tourist destination (Mean = 5.46, SD = 1.564). In conclusion, the combined perspectives of the participants depict the KSA as a remarkably esteemed, valuable, and significant location, indicating a substantial affirmation of its attractiveness and meritoriousness among prospective tourists.

In terms of the tourist visit intention, the mean scores for all the questions are between 4.52 and 5.13, which means that most of the tourists in the group are somewhat excited about their plans to visit the KSA. The participants really want to go to the KSA in the future, as shown by their good attitudes (Mean = 5.13, SD = 1.843). A mean score of 4.96 (SD = 1.932) for the statement "It is likely that I will visit the KSA in the future" shows that the possibility of a future visit is also taken into account. It is stressed that people are intentional based on the scores (Mean = 4.96, SD = 1.921) for "I intend to visit the KSA in the future" and 5.08 (SD = 1.836) for "If everything goes as I think, I will visit the KSA in the future". Even though the statement "I would visit the KSA rather than any other tourism destination" got a slightly lower mean score (4.52, SD = 1.942), the total results show that the respondents are likely to include the KSA in their future travel plans.

One thing that stands out is that tourists generally want to visit the KSA again in the future. But the question has a lower mean score when it asks exactly why people chose the KSA over other places to visit. Tourists seem to be interested in going to the KSA, but the data indicate they might choose another place to go if they had the chance. The standard deviations show that the answers to all the questions were not all the same. There was a good range of answers, with no answers that were very close to the mean value.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Items	Mean	Std. deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Conative destination image	The KSA has always been a dream destination to visit sometime during my lifetime	4.94	1.956	-.589	-.841
	The KSA as a dream tourist destination expresses itself as a suitable vacation choice	4.82	1.833	-.453	-.920
	The KSA as a destination helps me put knowledge that I have in use (i.e., knowledge of history, geography, philosophy)	5.02	1.777	-.646	-.560
	The KSA as a destination always constitutes a personal goal for vacations	4.79	1.832	-.512	-.731
	The KSA as a destination choice stems from a personal need of mine that had to be fulfilled	4.82	1.852	-.494	-.775
	The KSA as a destination choice has evoked my persistence to visit it	4.86	1.824	-.635	-.551
	The KSA as a destination choice encapsulates positive attributes that help in the growth of my personality	4.95	1.851	-.650	-.635
	The KSA as a destination choice makes me believe that my vacation there may be the best reward/gift I can offer myself	4.75	1.907	-.533	-.819
Perceived security	I will be careful and mindful of crime in the KSA	4.29	2.261	-.158	-1.456
	I will feel worried about my personal safety in the KSA	3.31	2.199	.445	-1.258
	In the KSA, I might become a victim of a crime	3.13	2.143	.638	-.997

	People have warned me that the KSA as a country is dangerous	3.26	2.193	.449	-1.275
	The KSA as a country is unsafe	3.01	2.188	.676	-1.037
	The KSA is just as unsafe as other destinations	3.36	2.216	.392	-1.327
e-WOM	I often read and review other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions and positively impact others	5.25	1.751	-.950	.064
	To make sure I choose the right destination (like the KSA), I often read other tourists' online travel reviews	5.28	1.710	-.928	-.028
	I often investigate other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination (like the KSA)	5.25	1.692	-.864	-.089
	I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination like the KSA	5.31	1.614	-.862	.038
	When travelling to a destination like the KSA, if I do not read tourists' online travel reviews, I worry about my decision	4.46	2.028	-.307	-1.172
	When travelling to a destination like the KSA, tourists' online travel reviews make me confident while traveling to the destination	5.33	1.587	-.918	.305
Travel motivation-Relaxation	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for relaxing	4.94	1.837	-.605	-.651
	My motivation to travel to the KSA is to be emotionally and physically refreshed	5.07	1.782	-.717	-.498
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for enjoying good weather	4.82	1.845	-.491	-.816
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for spending time with the people I care deeply about	4.92	1.850	-.600	-.660
Travel motivation-Pleasure-seeking	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for seeking adventure	5.12	1.753	-.871	-.091
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for having fun	4.94	1.844	-.669	-.626
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA as an escape from my home	4.38	2.053	-.304	-1.135
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA to mix with fellow tourists	4.65	1.955	-.495	-.908

	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for increasing my knowledge of new places	5.56	1.558	-1.245	1.072
Travel motivation-Culture	My motivation to travel to the KSA is to meet local people	5.31	1.707	-.963	.093
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA to visit historical and cultural sites and other attractions	5.74	1.538	-1.337	1.189
Tourist attitude	As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very good	5.37	1.635	-.822	-.160
	As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very valuable	5.42	1.599	-.956	.303
	As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very pleasant	5.29	1.654	-.865	.045
	Visiting the KSA will be meaningful	5.56	1.531	-1.065	.548
	Visiting the KSA will be worth it	5.57	1.549	-1.110	.733
	Visiting the KSA will be a wise choice	5.46	1.564	-1.008	.534
Tourist visit intention	I would like to visit the KSA in the future	5.13	1.843	-.863	-.253
	It is likely that I will visit the KSA in the future	4.96	1.932	-.736	-.586
	I intend to visit the KSA in the future	4.96	1.921	-.736	-.591
	I would visit the KSA rather than any other tourism destination	4.52	1.942	-.412	-.949
	If everything goes as I think, I will visit the KSA in the future	5.08	1.836	-.742	-.463

5.3 Common Method Bias

The use of Likert-type scales can lead to Common Method Bias (CMB). CMB is a bias that occurs when the answers follow predominantly the same direction, which can be caused by either the instructions at the top of a questionnaire or the implicit social desirability associated with the survey strategy. This causes the indicators to share a large amount of common variation (Kock, 2015), which negatively affects the findings.

To assess for the presence of common method bias, a post-hoc test was conducted using Harman's one-factor. Here, all the items were entered into principal component

factor analysis. In this test, bias would exist if the single factor emerging from the factor analysis accounts for more than 50% of the variances in the model. In this study, the single factor accounted for 44.01% of the variances in the full sample. Since this is less than the 50% threshold, it provides support for the absence of major common methods' bias issues (Lings et al., 2014).

5.4 Measurement Model

In the context of quantitative research, the mathematical model captures the relationship between the items and their respective constructs (Hair et al., 2020). A measurement model is a component of a statistical framework, such as confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) or SEM, which enables the modelling of latent variables that cannot be directly seen or measured. The number of components or latent constructs, the variables that are measured or indicators associated with each latent construct, and the loadings that relate the indicators to the latent constructs, are all defined by the measurement model (Hair et al., 2020). It makes it possible to evaluate the dependability and validity of the indicator variables in terms of measuring the desired latent components prior to testing more complicated structural theory models.

Reflective models, in which the effects flow from the construct to the indicators, and formative models, in which the effects flow from the indicators to the construct, are examples of common kinds of measurement models (Hair et al., 2021). There are a number of key assumptions that need to be satisfied, including those about independent, normally distributed measurement errors. Prior to the addition of structural models that describe the links between constructs, measurement models are put through rigorous testing and continuous refinement. The complete structural equation model takes into account both of these components.

In regard to the current study, the first step is the *Measurement model*. In this step, the type of variables in the study were determined and all the variables in the current study were reflective variables. In the current research, the variables such as e-WOM, security, and conative destination image were reflective variables, because the effect of these variables is captured by the items that represent these variables. Furthermore, the choice of reflective constructs is supported by the assumption of unidimensionality. Unidimensionality implies that the observed items or indicators are manifestations of a single underlying construct or dimension (Hair et al., 2010). In the case of security, motivation, and e-WOM, the respective items are expected to reflect a single underlying dimension or factor, rather than representing distinct or multidimensional constructs. Based on this, the next step is to determine the reliability, validity, and collinearity of constructs in the measurement model, which are outlined in the following sections.

5.4.1 Constructs' Reliability

Reliability in research pertains to the internal consistency of variables, guaranteeing that the produced findings are trustworthy and capable of being replicated (Hair et al., 2021). Cronbach's alpha and CR values are two commonly used approaches for evaluating the reliability of the constructs used. Cronbach's alpha is a statistical metric used to assess the internal consistency of a group of questions in a scale or questionnaire (Heo et al., 2015). It provides an estimate of how well these items measure the same underlying concept. A higher Cronbach's alpha signifies enhanced reliability, with values generally deemed acceptable if they exceed 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021). The Cronbach's alpha values for all variables are represented in the following table. It can be observed that the values are greater than the threshold value 0.7, which indicated that there are no concerns related to reliability.

Table 7

Cronbach's Alpha Values

Variable	Cronbach's alpha values
Conative destination image	0.947
Perceived security	0.913
e-WOM	0.891
Travel motivation (relaxation)	0.893
Travel motivation (pleasure-seeking)	0.839
Travel motivation (culture)	0.852
Tourist attitude	0.953
Tourist visit intention	0.944

CR, often used in SEM, quantifies the extent to which a group of indicators share variation, providing a more reliable and accurate assessment of dependability. CR is typically considered good when values exceed 0.70. For the current study, the CR values for all variables are greater than the threshold value, indicating good CR. Researchers use these metrics to assess the reliability of their measuring instruments, guaranteeing that the gathered data precisely represent the intended concepts and can be relied upon for further analyses and interpretations.

Table 8

Composite Reliability Values

Variable	Composite reliability coefficients
Conative destination image	0.956
Perceived security	0.934
e-WOM	0.919
Travel motivation (relaxation)	0.926
Travel motivation (pleasure-seeking)	0.904
Travel motivation (culture)	0.901
Tourist attitude	0.963
Tourist visit intention	0.957

To summarise, the strong Cronbach's alpha values and CR coefficients observed in this research study highlight the measuring constructs' satisfactory reliability and internal consistency. The conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, travel motives

(relaxation, pleasure-seeking, and culture), tourist attitude, and the tourist visit intention all exhibit high dependability, as shown by their respective reliability measures.

The next step is to determine validity of the constructs, which is done in the following section.

5.4.2 Constructs' Validity

Reliability is a characteristic of a measure that pertains to its capacity to reduce measurement mistakes and provide consistent numerical values across different assessment occasions (Bashir & Marudhar, 2018). Construct validity is a crucial but challenging measurement quality to assess, since it primarily concerns the link between the concept and the measurement (O'Leary-Kelly & Vokurka, 1998). Two strategies used to assess the validity of constructs are convergent validity and discriminant validity (O'Leary-Kelly & Vokurka, 1998). The incorrect interpretation of component analysis and failure to demonstrate discriminant validity may lead to dysfunctional measuring scales in research, potentially resulting in erroneous findings about the links between the investigated constructs (Rönkkö & Cho, 2020). Convergent validity pertains to the degree to which two measurements accurately represent a shared concept (Carlson & Herdman, 2010). Alternative measures with poor convergent validity offer uncertainties that hinder the formation of meaningful interpretations of data within and between research.

Nunnally (1967) proposes that significant convergence is indicated by measurements that are *highly correlated*, whereas measures that are *correlated near zero* indicate weak or no convergence. Nevertheless, there is no clear definition for the degree of relationship required to be considered *highly* associated. A correlation coefficient of r = .00 would unequivocally show a lack of convergence. Conversely, when the convergent validities are r = 1.0, it indicates a complete and flawless convergence. The majority of convergent validities in an actual study lie between these two extremes. In the absence of

clear instructions, researchers come to contradictory conclusions based on logical reasoning. They claim that a convergent validity as low as r = .28 (e.g., Larraza-Kintana et al., 2007) suggests that the measures are similar, while a convergent validity as high as r = .75 (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 2009) indicates that the measures are different. Weak convergent validity indicates that one or both variables inadequately represent the target notion. Therefore, the presence of insufficient convergent validity data creates uncertainty about the interpretation of the study findings. Convergent validity is assessed by examining the item loadings and AVE. AVE estimate is the mean level of variance that a hidden construct may account for in the observable variables that it is theoretically associated with. A latent construct will exhibit a correlation with observable variables, x1 and x2, which are conceptually linked to that construct. The association is often known as a factor loading. Squaring each of these correlations yields the proportion of variation in each observed variable that can be attributed to the latent construct, also known as shared variance. The AVE (Farrell, 2009) is obtained by calculating the AVE of all observable variables that are conceptually related to a latent construct. According to Henseler et al. (2015), the minimum threshold value for both AVE and path loadings should be 0.5 or higher. As seen in Table 10, the item loadings for all variables are above 0.5, and the AVE values for all variables are likewise above 0.5. This suggests a good convergent validity.

Table 9

Item Loadings and AVE Values

Variable	Item description	Items	Item loadings	Convergent validity (AVE values)
Conative destination image	The KSA has always been a dream destination to visit sometime during my lifetime	CD1	0.816	0.729

	The KSA as a dream tourist destination expresses itself as a suitable vacation choice	CD2	0.864	
	The KSA as a destination helps me put knowledge that I have in use (i.e., knowledge of history, geography, philosophy)	CD3	0.817	
	The KSA as a destination always constitutes a personal goal for vacations	CD4	0.865	
	The KSA as a destination choice stems from a personal need of mine that had to be fulfilled	CD5	0.867	
	The KSA as a destination choice has evoked my persistence to visit it	CD6	0.873	
	The KSA as a destination choice encapsulates positive attributes that help in the growth of my personality	CD7	0.860	
	The KSA as a destination choice makes me believe that my vacation there may be the best reward/gift I can offer myself	CD8	0.868	
Perceived security	I will be careful and mindful of crime in the KSA	PS1	0.592	0.706
	I will feel worried about my personal safety in the KSA	PS2	0.888	
	In the KSA, I might become a victim of a crime	PS3	0.907	
	People have warned me that the KSA as a country is dangerous	PS4	0.883	
	The KSA as a country is unsafe	PS5	0.904	
	The KSA is just as unsafe as other destinations	PS6	0.826	
e-WOM	I often read and review other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions and positively impact others	EWOM1	0.699	0.656
	To make sure I choose the right destination (like the KSA), I often read other tourists' online travel reviews	EWOM2	0.882	
	I often investigate other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination (like the KSA)	EWOM3	0.904	
	I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination like the KSA	EWOM4	0.889	
	When travelling to a destination like the KSA, if I do not read tourists'	EWOM5	0.653	

	online travel reviews, I worry about my decision			
	When travelling to a destination like the KSA, tourists' online travel reviews make me confident while traveling to the destination	EWOM6	0.799	
Travel motivation (relaxation)	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for relaxing	TMRelax1	0.902	0.758
	My motivation to travel to the KSA is to be emotionally and physically refreshed	TMRelax2	0.900	
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for enjoying good weather	TMRelax3	0.832	
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for spending time with the people I care deeply about	TMRelax4	0.845	
Travel motivation (pleasure-seeking)	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for seeking adventure	TMPleas1	0.876	0.758
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for having fun	TMPleas2	0.922	
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA as an escape from my home	TMPleas3	0.811	
Travel motivation (culture)	I am motivated to travel to the KSA to mix with fellow tourists	TMCul1	0.728	0.696
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for increasing my knowledge of new places	TMCul2	0.880	
	My motivation to travel to the KSA is to meet local people	TMCul3	0.889	
	I am motivated to travel to the KSA to visit historical and cultural sites and other attractions	TMCul4	0.831	
Tourist attitude	As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very good	TA1	0.887	0.811
	As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very valuable	TA2	0.909	
	As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very pleasant	TA3	0.922	
	Visiting the KSA will be meaningful	TA4	0.895	
	Visiting the KSA will be worth it	TA5	0.899	
	Visiting the KSA will be a wise choice	TA6	0.891	
Tourist visit intention	I would like to visit the KSA in the future	TVI1	0.879	0.818
	It is likely that I will visit the KSA in the future	TVI2	0.931	
	I intend to visit the KSA in the future	TVI3	0.948	
	I would visit the KSA rather than any other tourism destination	TVI4	0.862	
	If everything goes as I think, I will visit the KSA in the future	TVI5	0.899	

Another approach to assess validity is assessing the discriminant validity. Discriminant validity refers to the degree to which a latent variable may be distinguished from other latent variables. Discriminant validity refers to the ability of a hidden variable to explain a greater amount of variation in the observable variables linked to it compared to factors such as the measurement error or external effects that are not directly examined, as well as other constructs within the conceptual framework. According to Hamid et al. (2017), the variable shown on the diagonal should have a higher value compared to the other values in the column, which would indicate that there are no issues with discriminant validity. As seen in the table below, the greater diagonal values suggest the absence of any concerns about discriminant validity.

Table 10

Discriminant Validity Values

	Conative destination image	Perceived security	e-WOM	Relaxation	Pleasure-seeking	Culture	Tourist attitude	Tourist visit intention
Conative destination image	0.854							
Perceived security	0.099	0.841						
e-WOM	0.410	0.250	0.810					
Relaxation	0.794	0.056	0.400	0.870				
Pleasure-seeking	0.693	0.138	0.423	0.746	0.871			
Culture	0.668	0.035	0.483	0.714	0.751	0.834		
Tourist attitude	0.789	-0.043	0.382	0.803	0.682	0.752	0.901	
Tourist visit intention	0.577	0.096	0.385	0.585	0.664	0.660	0.647	0.904

Overall, there were no concerns related to the validity of data used for analysis. After determining that there are no issues linked with discriminant validity, the next step is to check the collinearity of items based on the VIF values, which are outlined and discussed in the following section.

5.4.3 Collinearity

Collinearity is among the crucial assumptions that should be met before hypothesis testing as it helps to ensure that the model being tested in the research is reliable and valid. Multicollinearity appears when two or more independent variables in the regression model are correlated. A little bit of multicollinearity sometimes will cause a big problem, but when it is moderate or high then it will be a problem to be solved. Multicollinearity, or near-linear dependence, is a statistical phenomenon in which two or more predictors' variables in a multiple regression model are highly correlated. If there is no linear relationship between the predictor variables, they are said to be orthogonal. The variance inflation factor (VIF) indicator is used to check the collinearity. When correlation exists among the predictors, the standard error of predictors coefficients will increase and consequently the variance of predictors' coefficients is inflated. The VIF is a tool to measure and quantify how much the variance is inflated. The threshold for VIF values is 5, which means that the VIF values for all the variables should be less than 5 to indicate that there is moderate correlation among the variables, because if the values are greater than 5 then that would indicate high correlation. Higher VIF values signify that it is difficult-to-impossible to accurately assess the contribution of predictors to a model. Based on the VIF values of all the variables presented in the following table, the values indicate that there are no concerns related to multicollinearity based on the collected data.

Table 11

VIF Values

Variable	VIF values
Conative destination image	3.619
Perceived security	1.238
e-WOM	1.497
Travel motivation- relaxation	4.184
Travel motivation- pleasure-seeking	3.470
Travel motivation- culture	3.532
Tourist attitude	4.601
Tourist visit intention	2.283

5.5 Structural Model

The structural model refers to a system consisting of objects or variables, and the static relationships that exist among them (Hair et al., 2010). Including the R square (R^2), R square corrected (R^2 adjusted), and Q square (Q^2) values is crucial when presenting the findings of a PLS-SEM model and its associated analysis (Hair et al., 2010). The R^2 value, sometimes referred to as the coefficient of determination, quantifies the amount of variability in the dependent latent variables that can be accounted for by the independent latent variables in the model (Hair et al., 2014). The metric quantifies the extent to which the model accurately explains the observed fluctuations in the dependent variable. The adjusted R^2 incorporates the quantity of predictors in the model and offers a more precise depiction of the model's adequacy by penalising the presence of irrelevant variables (Hair et al., 2014).

As per the findings represented in the following Table 13, the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.796 indicates that about 79.6% of the variation in tourist attitude can be accounted for by the exogenous latent variables in the model. The R^2 value is strong, showing that the model effectively captures and explains the underlying elements that influence tourist attitude. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.793 for tourist attitude as represented in the following table takes into consideration the complexity of the model by

imposing a penalty for the inclusion of extraneous variables. In other studies, such as Anuwichanont et al. (2020) and Hasan et al. (2019), the R^2 values of attitude were reported to be 0.502 and 0.56, respectively. The elevated adjusted R^2 value in the current study compared to other researchers provides strong evidence for the model's reliability, suggesting that the chosen variables make a substantial contribution to explaining tourist attitude.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.266 indicates that 26.6% of the variation in the tourist visit intention can be accounted for by the exogenous latent variables. In comparison to the studies, such as Hosany et al. (2020) and Ulfy et al. (2021), the R^2 values for tourist visit intention were found to be 0.276 and 0.252, respectively. This outlines that the R^2 values for visit intention are closely similar in the current study and other researchers. However, as the R^2 value for tourist visit intention in the current research is lower compared to the R^2 value for tourist attitude, it is crucial to take into account the intricacy and characteristics of the dependent variable, which is the visit intention. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.257 for the tourist visit intention takes into account the complexity of the model and the lower value indicates that there is potential for improvement or the inclusion of new variables to increase the model's ability to explain the tourist visit intention.

Table 12

Variance Explained

	R square	R square adjusted
Tourist attitude	0.796	0.793
Tourist visit intention	0.266	0.257

The Q^2 value quantifies the predictive significance of the model and it evaluates the model's ability to predict the internal hidden variables for fresh, unseen data using cross-validation. A higher Q^2 value suggests stronger prediction performance. In regards to the

current research, the Q^2 value of 0.760 for tourist attitude indicates a high level of predictive significance, which indicates that the model has the ability to precisely forecast the tourist attitude for unfamiliar data. The good Q^2 result confirms the model's dependability beyond the specific sample utilised for estimate. The Q^2 score of 0.432 indicates a high degree of predictive significance for the tourist visit intention. Although the R^2 value of tourist visit intention may be relatively low, the positive Q^2 value provides evidence for the model's successful prediction of the tourist visit intention, hence enhancing its practical usefulness.

Table 13

Predictive Relevance

	Q square
Tourist attitude	0.760
Tourist visit intention	0.432

The model appears to perform well in explaining the tourist attitude, as evidenced by the high R^2 and adjusted R^2 values presented in Table 14, along with a strong Q^2 for predictive relevance. For the tourist visit intention, while the R^2 values are relatively lower, the Q^2 suggests that the model has good predictive power, indicating its potential to forecast tourists' visit intentions accurately.

Furthermore, the following table outlines all the hypotheses being tested in the current study, along with their structural paths. The relationships being tested in the current study were the 5 direct relationships, 4 mediating relationships, and 5 moderating relationships represented in the following table.

Table 14

Hypotheses and Structural Paths

Hypotheses	Structural paths
H1: Conative destination image is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the destination.	Conative destination image → Tourist attitude

H2: Perceived security is positively related to the tourist attitude towards the destination.	Perceived security → Tourist attitude
H3: e-WOM is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.	e-WOM → Tourist attitude
H4: Travel motivation is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA. $H4_A$: Culture is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA. $H4_B$: Pleasure seeking is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA. $H4_C$: Relaxation is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.	Travel motivation → Tourist attitude $H4_A$: Relaxation → Tourist attitude $H4_B$: Pleasure-seeking → Tourist attitude $H4_C$: Culture → Tourist attitude
H5: Tourist attitude is positively related to the intention to visit the destination.	Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention
$H6_A$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between conative destination image and the tourist visit intention. $H6_B$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between perceived security and the tourist visit intention. $H6_C$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between e-WOM and the tourist visit intention. $H6_D$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between travel motivation and the tourist visit intention.	Conative destination image → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention Perceived security → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention e-WOM → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention Travel motivation → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention
$H7_A$: Age moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA. $H7_B$: Gender moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA. $H7_C$: Education level moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA. $H7_D$: Income moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA. $H7_E$: Religious orientation moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.	Moderating effect (Age*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention Moderating effect (Gender*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention Moderating effect (Education*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention Moderating effect (Income*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention Moderating effect (Religious orientation*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention

5.5.1 Direct Effects

It is outlined in the above table that hypotheses H1 to H4 indicate the direct relationships among the variables.

H1 suggests that there is a relationship between a tourist's conative destination image (emotional perceptions and attitudes towards a destination) and their overall attitude as a tourist. The hypothesis implies that the way individuals perceive and feel about a destination may impact their overall attitude as tourists. The following Table 16 represents the beta values and significance values (p-values) to represent the strength and significance of the relationships, respectively. The results revealed a significant relationship between conative destination image and tourist attitude ($\beta = 0.318$, $p < 0.05$). The beta value indicates the strength and direction of the relationship, and the low p-value provides evidence to accept the hypothesis, supporting the idea that conative destination image has a significant impact on tourist attitude, which suggests that the emotional perceptions and attitudes individuals hold towards a destination play a crucial role in shaping their overall attitude as tourists.

Furthermore, it was postulated that the perception of security has a detrimental influence on tourists' attitudes. The findings from the H2 analysis revealed an inverse correlation between the two variables. The beta coefficient for the linkage between perceived security and tourist attitude showed a negative correlation ($\beta = -0.099$, $p < 0.05$). These data indicate that as the level of felt danger or risk is high, the attitude of visitors tends to be low. This emphasises the important influence of perceived security in shaping tourists' overall attitudes.

The investigation could not provide statistical evidence for the anticipated association between e-WOM and tourist attitude, as suggested by H3 ($\beta = 0.036$, $p > 0.05$). The results of this research do not support the notion that e-WOM has a substantial influence on tourist attitude. Specifically, the data suggest that e-WOM (reviews) about the KSA does not affect tourist attitude.

Hypothesis H4 suggests that travel motivation has a favourable and substantial influence on tourist attitude. The assessment of tourist motivation was conducted by evaluating three sub-constructs: relaxation, pleasure-seeking, and culture. The hypothesis suggests that a travel motive centred on relaxation has a favourable and substantial influence on the attitude of tourists ($\beta = 0.329$, $p < 0.001$). The low p-value (< 0.001) confirms that this relationship is statistically significant and provides strong evidence to support the hypothesis that relaxation has a positive and significant impact on tourist attitude. This implies that when tourists are motivated to relax in the KSA, their attitude towards the KSA also increases. Additionally, it was theorised that travel motivation driven by the desire for enjoyment had a favourable and substantial influence on tourist attitude. However, it was found that the relationship between pleasure-seeking and tourist attitude was found to be insignificant ($\beta = 0.005$, $p > 0.05$). The high p-value of 0.458 ($p > 0.05$) suggests that this relationship is not statistically significant. Therefore, in the specific context of tourists visiting the KSA, pleasure-seeking may not have a significant impact on shaping overall tourist attitudes. Another aspect influencing travel motivation, culture, was also theorised to have a substantial impact on tourist attitude. It was discovered that culture had a positive and significant effect on tourist attitude ($\beta = 0.291$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that when tourists are motivated to explore the culture of the KSA, their inclination to visit the KSA increases.

The present research additionally examined and tested the hypothesised association between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. The study revealed a noteworthy positive correlation, with a coefficient of 0.654 ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that when tourist attitude rises, there is a commensurate rise in the tourist visit intention. The high level of statistical significance ($p < 0.001$) provides strong evidence that the observed link is very unlikely to be a consequence of random chance. These results indicate that comprehending

and perhaps exerting influence on tourist attitudes might have a pivotal role in predicting and encouraging tourist visit intentions.

Table 15

Direct Effects

Hypothesis	Structural paths	B-values	p-values	Result
H1	Conative destination image → Tourist attitude	0.318	$p < 0.05$	Supported
H2	Perceived security → Tourist attitude	-0.099	$p < 0.05$	Supported
H3	e-WOM → Tourist attitude	0.036	$p \geq 0.05$	Rejected
H4	Travel motivation → Tourist attitude			Partially Supported
	$H4_A$: Relaxation → Tourist attitude	0.3290.005	$p < 0.05$	Supported
	$H4_B$: Pleasure-seeking → Tourist attitude	0.291	$p \geq 0.05$	Rejected
	$H4_C$: Culture → Tourist attitude		$p < 0.05$	Supported
H5	Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention	0.654	$p < 0.05$	Supported

5.5.2 Mediating Effects

Within the conceptual framework, it was suggested that the attitude of tourists acts as a mediating element among the complex array of variables that influence their desire to visit. The independent factors that contribute to the construction of tourist attitude include conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation. The objective was to investigate how many aspects jointly influence the overall mindset and intention of tourists to visit the KSA, using the tourist attitude as a mediator. This conception corresponds to the notion that a tourist's mindset, which is affected by their impressions of the location's image, feelings of safety, internet recommendations, and inherent motives, has a crucial impact on determining whether they will choose to visit a certain place. This framework offers a complete viewpoint for comprehending the

interaction of elements that contribute to the intention of tourists to visit. Each of these linkages was postulated and shown in the following Table 17.

Initially, it was postulated that the attitude of tourists acts as a mediator in the connection between the conative image of the location and the intention of tourists to visit (H6(a)). The indirect effect of conative destination image on the tourist visit intention through tourist attitude was found to be significant ($\beta = 0.208$, $p < 0.05$). The finding emphasises the crucial influence of the perceived conative destination image on forming travellers' overall opinions. Moreover, the study emphasises that this mindset greatly impacts travellers' inclinations to visit the place. The strong statistical significance of these observed associations emphasises their dependability and importance. These findings are valuable for destination management, as they highlight the significance of deliberately developing and controlling the conative destination images in order to favourably impact visitors' attitudes and, as a result, their intent to come.

Furthermore, it was postulated that the attitude of tourists acts as a mediator in the connection between perceived security and the intention of tourists to visit (H6(b)). The results indicate that the link between perceived security and the tourist visit intention is mediated, with an indirect effect value (β) of -0.065. This relationship is statistically significant, as shown by a p-value of 0.017 ($p < 0.05$). The total impact encompasses both the direct and indirect effects of perceived security on visitors' desire to go, which are mediated by their attitude towards tourism. The negative sign of the total effect signifies a reverse relationship, suggesting that when the security risk increases, there is lower tourist visit intention. The statistically significant p-value underscores the reliability of this link, suggesting that the observed influence is unlikely to be ascribed to random chance. Furthermore, given that the relationship between perceived security and tourists' need to travel is impacted by the visitors' attitude, it implies that a part of the impact of perceived

security on the tourists' desire to travel is conveyed via its influence on shaping their attitudes. Destination managers must have a thorough understanding of the situation. This is crucial because it highlights the need for not only directly addressing the perceived security concerns, but also recognising their potential indirect impact on visitors' intents, which is influenced by their attitude. Hence, the implementation of strategic initiatives to enhance both the perceived degree of security and the fostering of positive sentiments among tourists may successfully provide a more favourable environment for attracting and retaining visitors.

Hypothesis H6(c) suggests that the link between e-WOM and the tourist visit intention is influenced by tourist attitude. The results indicate that the mediating link between e-WOM and the tourist visit intention has an indirect effect value of 0.023 (β). However, the relationship is not statistically significant, as shown by a p-value of 0.222 ($p > 0.05$), and the findings indicate that there is no statistically significant correlation between e-WOM and tourist attitude, and between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention, when it comes to forecasting the tourist visit intention. Therefore, the study suggests that there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate a significant correlation between e-WOM, tourist attitudes, and the tourist visit intentions in the particular context of the present research.

Hypothesis H6(d) suggests that the link between travel motivation and the tourist visit intention is influenced by tourist attitude. Focusing on the travel motivation factors, the findings indicated a strong and significant effect of relaxation on the tourist visit intention through tourist attitude ($\beta = 0.215$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates a significant correlation between the motivation for relaxation during travel and the intention to visit as a tourist, taking into account the mediating influence of the tourist's attitude. This implies that individuals who seek relaxation during their travels are more inclined to develop

positive attitudes, which subsequently affect their intention to visit a particular destination. In terms of other factors of travel motivation, it was found that tourist attitude did not have a significant mediating effect on the relationship between pleasure-seeking and the tourist visit intention ($\beta = 0.003$, $p < 0.001$). This lack of significance is mediated by the influence of tourist attitude. Therefore, it can be inferred that individuals seeking pleasure as a motivation for travel are not necessarily inclined to have positive attitudes or any intention to visit the KSA. Another discovery indicates a statistically significant relationship between travel motivation-culture and the tourist visit intention, mediated by tourist attitude. The analysis reveals a significant relationship between cultural motivation and the intentions to visit a destination ($\beta = 0.190$, $p < 0.001$). The total effect size is 0.190, indicating a substantial impact, and the low p-value further supports the statistical significance of this relationship, which suggests that cultural motivation directly influences stronger intentions to visit a destination, potentially mediated by tourist attitude.

Table 16

Mediating Effects

Hypothesis	Structural paths	B-values	p-values	Results
H6(a)	Conative destination image → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention			Supported
	Conative destination image → Tourist attitude	0.318	$p < 0.05$	
	Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention	0.654	$p < 0.05$	
	Conative destination image → Tourist visit intention	0.208	$p < 0.05$	
H6(b)	Perceived security → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention			Supported
	Perceived security → Tourist attitude	-0.099	$p < 0.05$	
	Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention	0.654	$p < 0.05$	
	Perceived security → Tourist visit intention	-0.065	$p < 0.05$	
H6(c)	e-WOM → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention			Rejected
	e-WOM → Tourist attitude	0.036	$p \geq 0.05$	

	Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention	0.654	$p < 0.05$	
	e-WOM → Tourist visit intention	0.023	$p \geq 0.05$	
	Travel motivation → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention			
	Travel motivation-Relaxation → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention			
	Travel motivation-Relaxation → Tourist attitude	0.329	$p < 0.05$	
	Tourist attitude → tourist visit intention	0.654	$p < 0.05$	Supported
	Travel motivation-Relaxation → Tourist visit intention	0.215	$p < 0.05$	
H6(d)	Travel motivation-Pleasure-seeking → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention			
	Travel motivation-Pleasure-seeking → Tourist attitude	0.005	$p \geq 0.05$	
	Tourist attitude → tourist visit intention	0.654	$p < 0.05$	Rejected
	Travel motivation-Pleasure-seeking → Tourist visit intention	0.003	$p \geq 0.05$	
	Travel motivation-Culture → Tourist attitude → Tourist visit intention			
	Travel motivation-Culture → Tourist attitude	0.291	$p < 0.05$	
	Tourist attitude → tourist visit intention	0.654	$p < 0.05$	Supported
	Travel motivation-Culture → Tourist visit intention	0.190	$p < 0.05$	

5.5.3 Moderation Analysis

The conceptual framework also posited that demographic characteristics, including age, gender, education, income, and religious intention, serve as moderators in the interaction between tourists and their desire to visit the KSA. Initially, it was theorised that age plays a role in influencing the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention (H7(a)). The findings represented in Table 18 showed a beta value of -0.006 and a p-value of 0.442, suggesting that the interaction impact of age as a moderator was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Consequently, using these results, it can be inferred that age does not have an impact on the connection between tourist attitude and the desire to

visit the KSA. This implies that the effect of tourist attitude on the intention to visit the KSA stays constant, independent of age.

The research expanded its inquiry to examine how gender affects the connection between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention towards the KSA, as stated in hypothesis H7(b). The findings revealed a prominent beta coefficient of 0.134, along with a highly significant p-value of less than 0.001. This statistically significant interaction effect indicates that gender plays a moderating role in influencing the relationship between tourist attitude and the intention to visit the KSA. The positive beta value indicates a reinforcing effect, suggesting that the influence of tourist attitude on the visit intention is especially noticeable for the gender groups (males and females). Hence, our results emphasise the need for taking into account gender dynamics when evaluating the elements that impact visitors' inclinations to visit the KSA. The findings also indicate that males have a higher perception of the intention to visit the KSA compared to females.

The research also analysed how education and income influence the connection between tourist sentiment and the propensity to visit the KSA. In the context of education, the results revealed a beta value of -0.003 and a corresponding p-value of 0.471. These findings indicate that the influence of education on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the level of education does not have a significant impact on the connection between tourist attitude and the intention to visit the KSA. Similarly, the analysis showed that the beta value for income was 0.05, with a p-value of 0.121. This indicates that the impact of income on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, income levels do not have a significant influence on the strength or direction of the relationship between tourist attitude and the intention to visit the KSA. Neither education nor income were shown to have a

substantial moderating effect on the analysed relationship. These findings enhance our knowledge of the many elements that influence tourists' intentions to visit the KSA. They emphasise that, in this particular setting, education and money may not have a substantial effect on the relationship between tourists' perceptions and their intentions to visit.

The research also examined how religious orientation (based on Muslims and non-Muslims) influences the link between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention towards the KSA. The findings demonstrated a significant beta coefficient of 0.200, along with a very significant p-value of less than 0.001. This suggests that religious orientation has a statistically significant moderating impact on the connection between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. The positive beta value indicates that religious orientation amplifies the influence of tourist attitude on the desire to visit the KSA. This finding emphasises the significance of taking religious factors into account when studying and predicting tourists' intentions to visit the KSA. The religious orientation has a strong moderating impact on the conceptual framework, providing useful insights into how religious beliefs and values influence the link between tourist attitudes and the visit intentions. This emphasises the need for having sophisticated knowledge of this relationship. The findings also indicate that non-Muslims have a higher perception of the intention to visit the KSA compared to Muslims for non-religious tourism purposes.

Table 17

Moderating Effects

Hypothesis	Structural paths	Path coefficients	p-values	Results
H7(a)	Moderating effect (Age*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention	-0.006	$p \geq 0.05$	Rejected
H7(b)	Moderating effect (Gender*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention	0.134	$p < 0.05$	Supported
H7(c)	Moderating effect (Education*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention	-0.003	$p \geq 0.05$	Rejected
H7(d)	Moderating effect (Income*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention	0.05	$p \geq 0.05$	Rejected

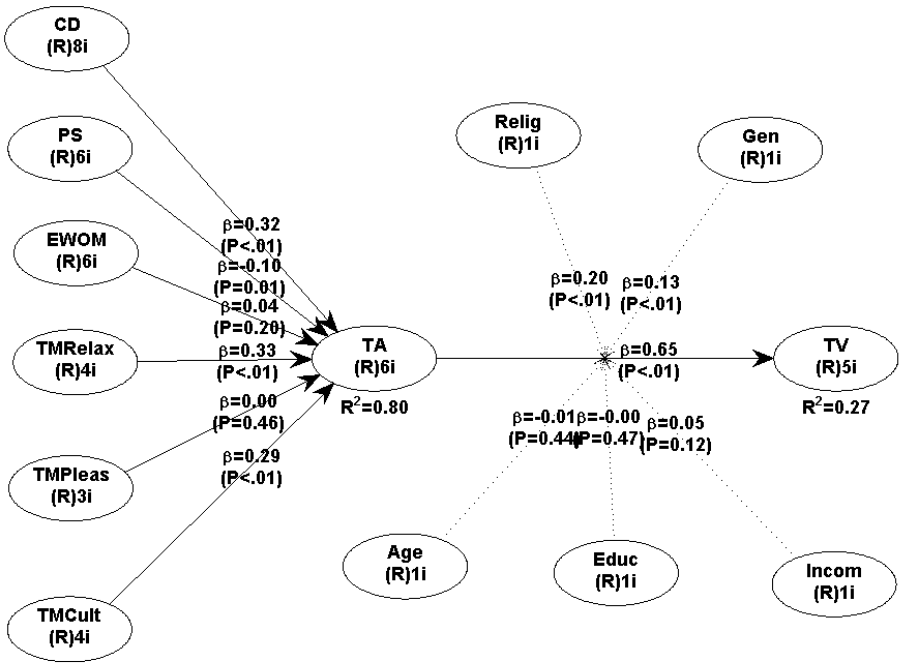
H7(e)	Moderating effect (Religious orientation*Tourist attitude) → Tourist visit intention	0.200	$p < 0.05$	Supported

Overall, the study delved into the moderating effects of demographic variables on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention towards the KSA. Age was found not to significantly moderate this relationship, suggesting a consistent impact of tourist attitude across age groups. Conversely, gender emerged as a noteworthy moderator, indicating that the influence of tourist attitude on the visit intention varies based on gender. Furthermore, while education and income were not found to be significant moderators, religious orientation exhibited a highly significant moderating effect, emphasising the pivotal role of religious beliefs in shaping the dynamics between tourist attitude and the visit intentions in the context of the KSA. These nuanced findings shed light on the diverse factors at play in tourists' decision-making processes, guiding future research and providing valuable insights for the development of targeted and effective tourism strategies in the KSA. Understanding the intricate interplay of demographic variables contributes to an understanding of the complexities surrounding tourist visit intentions, outlining that it is important to determine approaches that meet the diverse needs of potential visitors to the KSA.

The following figure 6 also represents the structural model developed through analysis using WarpPLS 8.0.

Figure 6

Output Model



5.6 Overall Summary

An overall representation of the results of all hypotheses is done in the following table.

Table 18

Hypothesis Testing Overall Results

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Conative destination image is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the destination.	Supported
H2: Perceived security is positively related to the tourist attitude towards the destination.	Supported
H3: e-WOM is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.	Rejected
H4: Travel motivation is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.	Partially Supported
$H4_A$: Culture is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.	Supported
$H4_B$: Pleasure seeking is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.	Rejected

$H4_{C:}$ Relaxation is positively related to the tourist attitude of tourists towards the KSA.	Supported
H5: Tourist attitude is positively related to the intention to visit the destination.	Supported
$H6_A$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between conative destination image and the tourist visit intention.	Supported
$H6_B$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between perceived security and the tourist visit intention.	Supported
$H6_C$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between e-WOM and the tourist visit intention.	Rejected
$H6_D$: Tourist attitude mediates the relationship between travel motivation and the tourist visit intention.	Partially Supported
$H7_A$: Age moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.	Rejected
$H7_B$: Gender moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.	Supported
$H7_C$: Education level moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.	Rejected
$H7_D$: Income moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.	Rejected
$H7_E$: Religious orientation moderates the link between tourist attitude towards the destination and the tourist visit intention of tourists to visit the KSA.	Supported

H1 posited a positive relationship between conative destination image and tourist attitude towards the KSA. The results support this hypothesis, indicating that the way tourists perceive the KSA significantly shapes their overall attitude. This finding implies that the pragmatic or goal-oriented perception of the KSA has a beneficial impact on visitors' overall perception of the nation, and it also suggests that factors such as the physical structures and functional characteristics of the location have a role in creating a positive impression among visitors and affect their attitude towards the location. H2 proposed a negative relationship between perceived security and tourist attitude, and the findings provided support for this hypothesis. It indicated that when tourists have concerns regarding security at a certain location, which in the current context is the KSA, then it can negatively affect the KSA-related perceptions of tourists. The finding emphasises the need to increase safety and security perceptions among tourists for developing a positive attitude

towards the location. In regard to analysing the impact of online reviews, that is, e-WOM, it was found that H3 was rejected because the findings were not statistically significant. This surprising result suggests that in the context of the KSA, potentially e-WOM does not play a significant role, which means that people might believe online reviews regarding the KSA, which can shape their attitude. The impact of travel motivation on tourist attitude (H4) was tested based on three factors, such as relaxation, pleasure-seeking, and culture. The results suggested that the hypothesis was partially supported, because relaxation and culture had a significant impact on tourist attitude, while pleasure-seeking did not have a significant impact on tourist attitude. The partial support indicated that tourists are motivated by factors such as relaxation and exploring culture in the context of the KSA, and not motivated by the factor related to seeking pleasure, such as doing adventures. H5 proposed a positive relationship between tourist attitude and the visit intentions, and the results supported this hypothesis. A positive attitude towards the KSA contributes to tourists' intentions to visit the destination, emphasising the central role of attitude in shaping behavioural intentions.

H6 explored the mediating role of tourist attitude between factors such as conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation. The mediating effect of tourist attitude between conative destination image and the tourist visit intention was supported, which implies that the positive impact of the destination's image on the attitude of visitors, and therefore on their desire to come, highlights the significance of the perceived practical characteristics of the destination in impacting tourists' overall visit intentions. The mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between perceived security and the tourist visit intention was also supported, which suggests that poor perceptions regarding security in the KSA affect tourists' attitude, which further affects their visit intention. The mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between e-

WOM and the tourist visit intention was rejected, which suggested that online reviews does not have an impact on tourists' attitude towards the KSA and their intention to visit the KSA. The mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between travel motivation and the tourist visit intention was partially supported, because tourist attitude mediates the relationship between relaxation, culture, and the tourist visit intention but does nor mediate the relationship between pleasure-seeking and the tourist visit intention.

Hypothesis 7 investigated the moderating effects of socio-demographic variables – age, gender, education, income, and religious orientation – on the link between tourist attitude and the visit intentions. The results exhibited mixed findings, with significant moderating effects observed for gender and religious orientation, while age, education, and income did not demonstrate significant moderation on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention.

Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The analysis chapter presents the findings, offering insights into both the supported and rejected hypotheses. The results indicate a clear support for direct relationships between various travel-related factors, such as conative destination image and perceived security, and tourist attitudes. There was partial backing for the relationship between tourist motivation and attitude towards visiting the KSA. However, the hypothesised relationship between e-WOM and tourist attitude did not find support in the data. Delving deeper into the mediating effects, it was revealed that tourist attitudes towards the destination (the KSA) play a mediating role between conative destination image and the tourist visit intention, as well as between perceived security and the visit intention. Additionally, tourist attitudes were found to mediate between certain tourist motivation factors, such as culture and relaxation, and the visit intention. However, no mediating effect was observed between the motivation factor of pleasure-seeking and the visit intention. The anticipated mediating effect of tourist attitude between e-WOM and the visit intention did not materialise. Turning to the moderating effect of demographic characteristics, it emerged that gender and religious orientation influenced the relationship between tourist attitude and the visit intention. In contrast, other demographic variables, including age, education, and income, did not exhibit a moderating effect.

The present chapter, the discussion chapter, outlines a discussion of the findings in relation to the findings of other researchers in the literature. The findings of this study are compared and contrasted with the findings of other researchers to draw conclusions and highlight the significance of the findings in the specific context and for academic research. The discussion begins with a discussion of the direct effects (H1 to H5) in the respective sections, from 6.2 to 6.6, respectively. This is followed by section 6.7, which contains a

discussion of the mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between the travel-related factors (conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and tourist motivation) and the tourist visit intention. A discussion of the moderating effects follows in section 6.8, which includes a discussion of the moderating effect of the demographic characteristics on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. Lastly, a chapter summary is outlined that integrates all the findings and provides a summarised discussion.

6.2 The Impact of Conative Destination Image on Tourist Attitude

It was hypothesised that conative destination image has a positive impact on tourist attitude towards the destination, where the tourists are planning to visit the KSA (H1). The findings indicated support for the H1 hypothesis, which indicates a favourable perception or impression of the destination that encourages tourists to consider it as a desirable travel choice. Conative destination image is about understanding the tourists' intentions and actions linked to travel to a specific destination (Akgün et al., 2020). The perceptions of tourists regarding the conative destination image of the KSA reflected the tangible and achievable outcomes of their entire perception and emotions towards the location.

The literature underscores the significance of destination image, encompassing cognitive and affective aspects, in shaping tourist attitudes and behaviours. Studies by Kim and Richardson (2003), Woomi and Soocheong (2008), and Reza Jalilvand et al. (2012) emphasise the influential role of destination image on attitude formation, trip assessment, and future travel plans. This also aligns with the literature's discussion on the relevance of exploring the conative destination image for an understanding of the tourists' viewpoints. The literature also highlights the interconnectedness of different dimensions of destination image, with studies like Agapito et al. (2013) and Woosnam et al. (2020) indicating that cognitive and affective components impact the conative destination image. This

interconnectedness echoes the complexity of tourists' perceptions and suggests that a holistic approach to the destination image is essential for a thorough understanding. However, many studies, such as Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020), Woosnam et al. (2020), and Agapito et al. (2013), have mentioned that conative destination image is weaker than the other dimensions, such as affective and cognitive, and Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020) outline that it might be because of a perception about its definition being similar to the intention to travel. Similarly, Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020) also outline that the conative destination image is generally misinterpreted with the intention, but the present study findings show that these are two different constructs. Visit intention is more about identifying the intention of visitors to visit a place; however, conative destination image is what factors of that location can contribute to tourists' action to visit a location (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020).

Furthermore, the finding of the current study that a positive conative destination image contributes to favourable attitudes among tourists intending to visit the KSA aligns with Woosnam et al. (2020) and Yang et al. (2022), whereby the authors state that the conative destination image is linked with the attitude of tourists. Also, the unique contribution of the present study lies in its focus on the conative dimension of the destination image because it allowed understanding the perceptions of tourists regarding how the KSA is linked to their lifestyle, personal vacation choice, status quo, and other such aspects. While cognitive and affective dimensions have been extensively explored, the conative destination image, associated with individuals' ability to apply knowledge and information, remains less studied (Woosnam et al., 2020), which was a novel contribution of the current study. The present study acknowledged the scarcity of research in this area and emphasises the importance of understanding tourists' actions and their contribution to attitude formation. In regards to that, the findings of the current study corroborate by

focusing on the importance of exploring the actions of tourists based on their perceptions of the KSA and their impact on their attitude towards the KSA. The findings imply that effective destination marketing strategies can play a crucial role in shaping a positive conative image of the KSA, which could involve showcasing the country's cultural richness, historical significance, natural beauty, and modern developments. Additionally, the favourable perception of the destination's appeal may be attributed to continuous endeavours in enhancing infrastructure and enhancing the overall quality of the tourist experience, while investments in lodging, transportation, and other facilities enhance the destination's reputation as a pleasant and appealing location to visit.

6.3 The Impact of Perceived Security on Tourist Attitude

It was hypothesised that perceived security issues have a negative impact on the tourist attitude of tourists who are planning to visit the KSA (H2). In the current study, the focus on security was how tourists perceive the KSA in terms of crime, personal safety, danger, and similar aspects. The findings indicated support for the H2 hypothesis, which indicates that if tourists have a poor perception related to security, then their attitude towards the destination (the KSA) will be negatively affected. It also explains that tourists are more inclined to have a positive attitude towards the KSA if they have confidence in the safety of the place and if they perceive the local people as being kind and hospitable.

The study's findings linked with poor perceptions related to the security of the location that can negatively affect the attitude of tourists, which aligns with the findings of Ma et al. (2020) and Orindaru et al. (2021), whereby the authors have explored similar relationships. Orindaru et al. (2021) also mention that when tourists have a perception of high security regarding a location, their attitude towards the location will also be positive.

Although the research and the literature agree on the significance of perceived security, there are significant variations in the contextual elements that influence security

perceptions. For example, the research explicitly targets visitors who want to visit the KSA and how they perceive crime and safety in the KSA, whereas the literature examines several aspects like financial risk (Quintal, Lee, & Soutar, 2010), lax gun regulations (Tasci & Sönmez, 2019), and internal tensions (Kim et al., 2020). Researchers also outlined the influence of global events, such as the pandemic, that linked with the security of a location. As outlined by Rather (2021) and González-Reverté, Gomis-López, and Díaz-Luque (2022), external difficulties, abrupt lockdowns, and health risks during the pandemic had an adverse impact on visitors' opinions regarding visiting a location. These differences highlight the need for using context-specific methods to comprehend and tackle security perceptions. These factors are important to consider to also understand the perceived security of any destination. Also, the interlink between global events and perceived security is an important consideration as it highlights the ever-changing nature of security perceptions, which are vulnerable to external stimuli. However, in terms of the Gulf region context, Battour et al. (2018) outline that many people have misconceptions about the security, and the findings of the current study also represented the same.

Moreover, even though the literature and the current study provide substantial evidence in favour of the concept, the researcher also admits the wider variation in studies about the extent of the connection between perceived security and tourist attitude. Kim et al. (2020) conducted research that indicates there is no notable correlation between the perception of risk and the attitude of tourists. This divergent viewpoint implies that the intensity of the correlation might be impacted by other circumstances, therefore requiring more research. The fact that location plays an important role in how tourists perceive security is an important consideration for other researchers. When a location is highly criticised in the media or through people on social media, people will think negatively about that location. Similarly, as outlined by Gorji, Almeida-García, and Mercadé-Melé

(2023) and González-Reverté, Gomis-López, and Díaz-Luque (2022), countries have to put in significant efforts to create a sense of security for residents and tourists, so that they have a positive attitude towards the location.

Similarly, the current study's findings' ramifications for the KSA's tourism are paramount, as the perceived security of a destination emerges as a pivotal factor influencing tourists' decision-making processes. An unfavourable sense of security might act as a barrier, thereby impacting the development and economic benefits of the tourist industry. Not only does this have implications for the economy, but also an exploration into the factors, such as a country's political climate, crime rates, public safety measures, and media portrayal contributing to tourists' perceptions of security, becomes imperative (Parrey, Hakim, & Rather, 2019). In addition, the reason that there are negative perceptions of security that contribute to the negative attitude of tourists is also due to the Western media's portrayal of Middle Eastern countries in general. This is also supported by Khalil (2019), whereby the author states that the Middle Eastern region has often been portrayed in a negative light by Western media and popular culture, which has contributed to misconceptions and stereotypes about countries like the KSA. Moreover, the cultural and theological disparities between Western nations and the KSA may also add to the impression of uneasiness among some travellers. Unfamiliarity with local traditions and social norms might cause fear or uncertainty, which in turn affects views towards visiting the nation (Henderson, 2008).

6.4 The Impact of e-WOM on Tourist Attitude

It was hypothesised that e-WOM has a positive impact on the attitude of tourists who are planning to visit the KSA (H3). However, the findings rejected the hypothesis, which indicates that online reviews and feedback does not impact the attitude of tourists who are planning to visit the KSA. This finding suggests that, according to the gathered

data or completed analysis, there is no substantial connection or impact identified between exposure to e-WOM and a favourable change in the opinions of prospective visitors intending to visit the KSA and implies that there may be other elements or effects that have a greater impact on forming the opinions of these visitors. Also, the KSA is a location that recently started its tourism in 2019, which means that online reviews might be fewer in number compared to other locations (Alsheikh, Aziz, & Alsheikh, 2021), which could have led to poor trust and dependability on online reviews regarding the KSA (Alwahashi & Medjedel, 2024). Also, newly opened tourist destinations may possess a scarcity of information accessible online or via conventional sources, which could affect the attitude of tourists.

The findings of the current research are different from many researchers (Agag & El-Masry, 2016; Choirisa et al., 2021; Gosal et al., 2020; Albarq, 2013), who state that e-WOM has a positive impact on the tourist attitude. Choirisa et al. (2021) outline that e-WOM is used by travellers in order to choose places, collect feedback, and develop trust in their travel selections. Conceptually, it is also relevant that when tourists read positive reviews about a location, their attitude towards the location will also be positive. However, in the context of the KSA, the findings of the current study suggest otherwise. It is important to comprehend the factors that could have led to the rejection of this relationship. For instance, Gosal et al. (2020) conducted a study on Instagram reviews and discovered that e-WOM on this platform had a beneficial impact on the perspectives of other travellers, and the current study did not consider any social media platform, whose reviews can be trusted more by tourists. Also, trust in e-WOM and traditional WOM could be a reason, as Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci's (2020) findings state that modern customers have a greater inclination to believe communication done through traditional WOM rather than those distributed by marketing experts that contribute to e-WOM. Also, many studies, such

as Choirisa et al. (2021), Gosal et al. (2020), and Albarq (2013), generally explore the positive impact of e-WOM across various contexts. However, the current study's focus specifically on the KSA suggests that specific characteristics, such as cultural, political, or societal elements unique to the KSA, may have a greater impact than internet evaluations, leading to the rejection of the hypothesis.

Moreover, the trivial role and absence of effect might be ascribed to the perceived credibility of internet evaluations. So, if prospective visitors doubt the reliability of the online reviews they come across, they may not be swayed by them, which prompts inquiries about the genuineness and dependability of internet travel information pertaining to the KSA. Also, online media often introduces stereotypes and biases about a location, which could also affect the attitude of tourists.

Moreover, the findings might also suggest that tourists planning to visit the KSA rely on alternative sources or platforms, such as traditional WOM methods, to gather information and form their attitudes, which could shape their perceptions. Also, for many years, the KSA has been a location primarily for religious tourism and tourists would have posted reviews only about that, which indicates a lack of reviews related to leisure tourism. In one of the studies conducted in a similar context to the KSA and in the tourism sector, Alwahashi and Medjedel (2024) also found that fake e-WOM does not have an effect on brand reputation and purchasing intention, and the authors indicated that this can be due to limited internet penetration or the poor marketing by tourism actors in the KSA. Considering the research being about non-religious tourism, the lack of online reviews would have contributed to no significant interlinkages between e-WOM and tourist attitude. The results might also highlight the importance of cultural sensitivity in tourism, as it is possible that tourists get affected by cultural narratives and the country's marketing strategies, and less by the opinions of other travellers shared online. Although the

hypothesis primarily examines the positive influence of e-WOM, it is important to contemplate if unfavourable evaluations or critiques have a more substantial influence on moulding attitudes. Adverse remarks may have a more profound impact on prospective visitors' impressions compared to favourable ones, dissuading them from selecting the KSA as a destination. In addition, the fact that no relationship was found between e-WOM and tourist attitude can be attributed to the fact that the KSA is an emerging tourism destination, which means that there is limited online information available regarding the destination. The impact of e-WOM on the attitudes and intents of tourists is often stronger for places that have a strong online presence and abundant user-generated information, such as reviews, blogs, and social media postings (Beyari & Garamoun, 2024). Nevertheless, in the context of Saudi Arabia, the absence of a significant online presence and the scarcity of first-hand accounts from past visitors may reduce the influence of e-WOM on the attitudes and intentions of future tourists.

6.5 The Impact of Tourist Motivation on Tourist Attitude

Tourist motivation in the current study was determined by three factors: relaxation, pleasure-seeking, and culture. It was hypothesised that travel motivation (relaxation, culture, and pleasure-seeking) has a positive impact on tourist attitude. The findings indicated that tourist motivation partially supports the tourist attitude as relaxation and culture had a positive and significant effect on tourist attitude, while pleasure-seeking did not have an effect on tourist attitude.

Regarding the findings, culture as a motivator was found to have a positive impact on tourist attitude, which indicated that the KSA is considered as a distinctive and enhancing cultural encounter, such as showcasing festivals, customs, historical sites, and other cultural assets, thus becoming more attractive to visitors. The KSA is highly rich in terms of Islamic heritage, considering that it is home to the two most holy places in Islam,

which are Mecca and Madina, and that hold high cultural and religious significance (Hodaed, Aziz, & Alsheikh, 2021). The findings also indicated that relaxation as a motivator contributes to the positive attitude of tourists towards the KSA. This is because visitors who are driven to find leisure based on relaxation during their vacation to the KSA are more likely to have a positive attitude about the place, which means that tourism planners and stakeholders might prioritise the promotion of the leisure-related elements of the KSA. Both the findings of the current study and the literature highlight the importance of cultural and relaxation aspects in influencing favourable opinions of a location. The push–pull model of travel motivation, as first proposed by Crompton (1979), is apparent in both the existing literature and the current research. Crompton's model offers a structure for comprehending the external factors that impact tourists' choices. The study specifically highlights relaxation and culture as motivating factors that have a positive impact on tourist attitudes. This finding aligns with existing research on travel motivation (Crompton, 1979; Çelik & Dedeoğlu, 2019). The findings of the current study also align with Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019), whereby the authors mention that tourists who are culturally driven by a desire for leisure and relaxation during their stay in the KSA are more inclined to have a favourable opinion of the location. Research conducted by Pereira, Gupta, and Hussain (2019) and Katsikari et al. (2020) highlights the connection between tourists' preferences and motives for visiting a certain destination, emphasising the favourable influence of cultural encounters on tourist attitudes. Moreover, SDT, as described in the literature, highlights the importance of individual autonomy, competence, and relatedness in influencing travel behaviour. The study's results are consistent with SDT, demonstrating that individuals who seek experiences that match their own views and preferences often have more positive travel outcomes (Aicher et al., 2015). This is because when tourists are motivated by their perceptions of culture and relaxation, they have a positive attitude.

However, pleasure-seeking was found to have no effect on tourist attitude, which indicated that when tourists' motivation is based on pleasure-seeking, it does not have an effect on attitude. This suggests that, at least among visitors visiting the KSA, the inclination for pleasure may not particularly influence general opinions. Although this discovery is limited to the study's particular circumstances, it is nonetheless crucial for improving tourism tactics, which suggests that emphasising pleasure-seeking events may not have a significant effect in this area. The literature extensively covers pleasure-seeking as a motivating factor (Douglas et al., 2023). However, the results of this research indicate that pleasure-seeking did not have a major influence on tourist attitudes in the unique setting of the KSA, which could be because of other factors, such as preconceptions about the KSA, restrictions, and other such factors (Al-Mohmmad & Butler, 2021). This disparity implies that, among tourists to the KSA, the desire for enjoyment may not significantly impact the overall attitudes, emphasising the significance of research tailored to particular contexts (Douglas et al., 2023). Similarly, in the present study, a noteworthy segment of the participant sample identified as Muslims, who perceive the KSA primarily as a religious destination rather than a place for fun, leisure, or adventure pursuits. Also, it is important to focus on these findings as they also imply that for tourists who have already visited the KSA for religious purposes and then if they plan to visit for non-religious purposes, they will be motivated to visit the KSA mostly by the cultural aspect, which is mainly related to Islam and by relaxation. Considering the prevailing religious viewpoint among the participants, the desire for seeking pleasure may not have had a significant role in forming their overall attitudes towards the destination. The participants' predominant correlation of the KSA with religious importance may have eclipsed the influence of incentives driven by seeking pleasure, leading to the reported lack of a significant impact on attitudes.

6.6 The Impact of Tourist Attitude on the Tourist Visit Intention

It was hypothesised that tourist attitude has a positive effect on the tourist visit intention. The findings provided support for the relationship, indicated that when tourists have high positive attitude towards the KSA, their intention to visit the KSA will be higher. According to Hadinejad et al. (2019), tourist attitudes refer to the positive or negative evaluations that tourists make about their own actions. This is consistent with the study's emphasis on how visitors' attitudes towards the KSA impact their intention to visit as the current study evaluated their perceptions regarding how valuable, pleasant, meaningful, or worthy the KSA is. The research also integrates the TPB (Japutra et al., 2019), emphasising the influences of attitudes on the visit intention. This theoretical framework is used to comprehend the emotions, opinions, and objectives of visitors about their visit to a certain location. The findings of the current study are similar to the findings of many tourism-related studies (Çelik & Dedeoğlu, 2019; Lee, 2009; Kang & Gretzel, 2012; Ahn & Yu, 2019; Abascal et al., 2016), which indicated a positive link between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. For instance, Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019) stated that cognitive reactions play a crucial role in attitude construction by including assessments, which emphasises the significance of cognitive processes in developing the attitudes of tourists. Kang and Gretzel (2012) also emphasise that behavioural reactions serve as markers of a tourist's intention to visit, hence confirming the study's focus on the correlation between attitude and the visit intention. Lee's (2009) examination and results of the attitudes that influence behaviour align with the study's emphasis on the effect of attitudes on the visitors' intention to visit. Ahn and Yu (2019) also explored the effect of attitude on travel intention by using the TPB to analyse leisure activities, adventurous motivation, desired vacation locations, and behaviour. The hypothesis is referenced as evidence that supports the claim that tourists' attitudes have a major influence on their probability of participating

in different activities while travelling (Abascal et al., 2016). As also outlined by Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci (2020), the TPB explains that attitude is directly linked with visit intention, so a poor attitude will lead to reduced visit intention.

Although the notion of planned behaviour is well supported by previous literature, the present study builds on the scarcity of research that explores the relationship between tourist attitude and the visit intention in contexts specific to locations that have recently started leisure tourism, such as the KSA. In addition, the results of this research provide useful insights by indicating that those who are interested in visiting a place are more likely to be attracted to international travel and exploration, and specifically to the KSA based on the allure of a place, as shown by its current technical advancements and historical explorations, which greatly impacts the travel inclinations.

6.7 The Mediating Effect of Tourist Attitude on the Relationship between Travel Determinants and the Tourist Visit Intention

It was hypothesised that tourist attitude mediates the relationship between conative destination image and the tourist visit intention (H6(a)). The findings indicated that conative destination image positively impacts tourist attitude, which impacts the tourist visit intention, and the indirect effect of conative destination image on the tourist visit intention was also significant. The findings highlight the significance of the perceived conative destination image in forming travellers' overall perceptions and affecting their willingness to visit a region. The present study's findings are in line with previous research findings that focused on investigating the mediating influence of tourist attitude on the connection between conative destination image and the visit intention. Prior research (Agapito et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2010; Choirisa et al., 2021) has shown that tourists tend to have a favourable attitude towards a destination when they have a positive image of it. Additionally, some studies (Choirisa et al., 2021; Lee, 2009; Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012)

have established a direct connection between a positive destination image and a strong intention to visit, which indicates that conative destination image is positively linked with tourist attitude, which is positively linked with the tourist visit intention. Also, most of the studies have focused on the mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between the overall destination image and the tourist visit intention, which means that the mediating relationship explored in the current research is novel. The limited research evaluating the impact of tourist attitude on the relationship between conative destination image and the visit intention, as highlighted in the current study, underscored a gap in the literature. Moreover, the present research corresponds with Stylos et al.'s (2016) claim that the conative image converts cognitive and emotional observations into a decision about whether a site is worth visiting. This gives deeper knowledge of the conative image as a key factor of visitors' overall mood and their subsequent likelihood to return to an area. The research contradicts the traditional concept that the conative image is connected with behaviour, stating that it is not directly linked to conduct (Wang, Wang, & Wai Lai, 2023). This deviation from prior ideas helps to promote increasing understanding of the importance of the conative image in tourist research. Moreover, tourist attitude serves as a link between the action-oriented perception related to a destination and the behavioural intention because attitudes allow individuals to interpret information and make decisions, which develops their intent to visit a location. Similarly, the findings of the current study indicate that tourists that intend to visit the KSA have a positive image about the country, which positively affects their attitude, further affecting their decision related to the visit intention.

The current study hypothesised that tourist attitude mediates the relationship between perceived security and the tourist visit intention (H6(b)). The findings indicated that perceived security negatively impacts tourist attitude, which impacts the tourist visit

intention, and the indirect effect of perceived security on the tourist visit intention was also significant. The negative sign of the indirect effect indicates an inverse correlation, meaning that a decline in perceived security is linked to a reduction in the tourist visit intention. The findings of the current study are in line with those of various researchers such as Salimon et al. (2019), Rather (2021), Tasci and Sönmez (2019), Choi et al. (2019), and Walters et al. (2017), that underscore the relationship between perceived security and tourist attitudes and the visit intentions. The direct effects of perceived security on tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention have been well explored in the literature, but developing a link between perceived security, tourist attitude, and the tourist visit intention was a novel contribution. Also, the current research not only confirms the function of tourist attitudes as a mediator, but also quantifies the overall impact, offering detailed insight of the complex dynamics at play. This study delves into the complex relationship between perceived security, tourist attitudes, and the visit intentions, going beyond mere recognition of the significance of perceived security. On the other hand, the results in the literature review give a deeper contextualisation of the relevance of perceived security in destination selections, underlining its critical role in determining tourist attitudes and the visit intentions. Additionally, the attitude of tourists is shaped based on their preconceptions of security in a country, such as the crime levels, gun violence, political instability, number of scams occurring, and other such aspects. Similarly, in the context of the KSA, if the tourists perceive that they will not feel secure and safe during their visit, their attitude will be negatively affected. Security is one of the major concerns for women, so if they perceive that the KSA is secure, then their visit intention will also be higher. In order to comprehend how tourists' general attitude towards a location is influenced by security measures, which plays a vital part in defining their intention to visit, destination managers need to have a solid understanding of this phenomenon. Both the current study's

findings and other researchers' findings highlight the need for implementing strategic activities in order to cultivate a pleasant attitude among visitors by focusing on developing a positive image of the location in terms of security.

It was hypothesised that tourist attitude mediates the relationship between e-WOM and the tourist visit intention (H6(c)). The results indicated that tourist attitude does not have a mediating effect on the relationship between e-WOM and the tourist visit intention. Also, e-WOM was found to have no effect on tourist attitude, or on the tourist visit intention, indicating that positive reviews about the KSA does not affect tourist attitude, which has no impact on the tourist visit intention. Conversely, the literature review presents several discoveries made by earlier studies, providing an alternative viewpoint on the impact of e-WOM on choices linked to travel. As stated by Ramdan, Rahardjo, and Abdillah (2017), e-WOM significantly affects travel attitudes by influencing prospective travellers' choices to make a reservation for a trip based on the suggestions, reviews, and ratings of a tourist destination. Social media sites, particularly Instagram, have a significant impact on spreading e-WOM. Positive recommendations may improve the reputation of a place, leading to an increased desire for people to vacation there (Aktan et al., 2022). Moreover, other research (Albarq, 2013; Choirisa et al., 2021; Gosal et al., 2020) has shown a direct correlation between e-WOM and the desire to visit. Choirisa et al. (2021) conduct a study that focuses on the function of tourist attitude in mediating the relationship between e-WOM and the visit intention. They highlight that positive impressions resulting from favourable evaluations have a substantial impact on increasing the desire to go to a certain destination. This is consistent with the wider body of evidence, indicating a favourable influence of e-WOM on attitudes and intentions connected to travel. Curiously, the present work challenges these conventional viewpoints by revealing a lack of statistical significance in the examined connections. Although the research highlights the beneficial

influence of e-WOM on travel choices and the intermediary function of tourist attitude, the present results indicate that, in the particular setting of the study, these connections are not apparent. The variation in results might be ascribed to the contextual variables, methodological disparities, or distinctive attributes of the research sample. This inconsistency provides opportunities for future study to further explore the contextual intricacies and uncover relevant variables that may influence the observed disparities in outcomes. A possible reason for the conflicting findings might be the distinctive contextual attributes of the research environment, namely the KSA. The unique cultural aspects, social expectations, and specific ways people in the KSA consume information may influence the dynamics of e-WOM in a different manner than what has been studied in other settings. The documented cross-cultural study extensively explores the impact of cultural elements on information processing and decision-making. It is possible to consider that the effect of e-WOM on tourist attitudes and the visit intentions may change depending on the cultural landscapes.

Tourist motivation in the current study was determined by three factors: relaxation, pleasure-seeking, and culture. It was hypothesised that travel motivation (relaxation, culture, and pleasure-seeking) has a positive impact on the tourist visit intention through the mediating effect of tourist attitude. The findings indicated that tourist motivation partially supports tourist visit intention through mediating the effect of tourist attitude as relaxation and culture had a positive and significant effect on the tourist visit intention, while pleasure-seeking did not have an effect on the tourist visit intention. Within the field of tourism and travel studies, there has been a persistent focus on examining the behaviour of travellers and the elements that impact their decision-making processes. Koščak and O'Rourke (2021) emphasise the need for comprehending the intricate factors that motivate persons to go to unexpected destinations. As focused on in the current study, travel

motivation drives the individuals to travel based on factors such as relaxation, culture, and pleasure-seeking (Lee, 2009). Positive attitudes are determined by heightened anticipation, excitement, and a proactive propensity to interact with the potential of a place (Najib et al., 2020). Similarly, in the current study, it was found that tourist attitude is developed based on travel motivation. In contrast, unfavourable sentiments might discourage persons from seeing a certain place as an attractive vacation option. The current discourse suggests that tourist attitude played a mediating role between travel motive and the desire to visit tourist places, within the complex interaction of motivations and attitudes. The study's results confirm the expected beneficial influence of travel motivation, especially in terms of relaxation and the culture of the KSA, on the intention of tourists to visit the KSA, and the influence is mediated by the attitude of tourists towards the KSA. The study indicates that the tourist visit intention is somewhat influenced by relaxation and culture, whereas pleasure-seeking strangely did not have a major impact. This comprehension corresponds with the wider body of research that highlights the complex and varied nature of travel motivation and its deep correlation with attitudes. Upon analysing these data, it becomes evident that the mediating influence of tourist attitude is important in determining the connection between travel motivation and the tourist visit intention. The correlation between relaxation, cultural experiences, and the visit intention indicates that people are motivated not just by seeking enjoyment but also by the strong need for cultural enrichment and relaxation when travelling. The lack of a substantial impact on pleasure-seeking justifies the need for more investigation and suggests the existence of a more intricate interaction of elements that influence travel choices.

Additionally, by incorporating attitude as a mediating variable, the TPB provides a framework for understanding how background factors like e-WOM, conative destination image, and perceived security indirectly influence a tourist's intention to visit a destination

through their impact on the individual's attitude. The focus on this theoretical perspective highlighted the importance of addressing and managing these background factors to shape favourable attitudes, which can ultimately lead to increased intentions and actual tourist behaviour.

6.8 The Moderating Effect of Demographic Characteristics on the Relationship between Tourist Attitude and the Tourist Visit Intention

The current section outlines a discussion regarding the moderating factors, such as age, gender, education, income, and religious orientation, and their effect on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention.

6.8.1 Age

In the context of the KSA, the hypothesis was that age moderates the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. Nevertheless, the results suggested that the interaction effect of age and the tourist visit intention was not statistically significant based on the significance values. Therefore, the study determined that age did not significantly influence the relationship between tourist attitude and the intention to visit the KSA. However, the results of the current study did not align with those of Kang, Jang, and Jeong (2018), who outlined age as a moderating factor in many studies connected to tourism. Also, Kang, Jang, and Jeong's (2018) study on tourist satisfaction with a mobile guide system revealed that age had a moderating role, as older people saw the guide system as more beneficial than younger ones. This implies a subtle perspective on the impact of age, highlighting its effect on several aspects of tourist encounters. However, the context in which Kang et al. (2018) conducted their study was about using a specific technology, which explained that older people had higher intentions compared to younger people. However, in the current research, age not being a moderator indicates that the impact of tourist attitude on the visit intention will not change based on the age of tourists. While

several studies have explored age as a moderator in the context of technology use and the behavioural intention, Han, Hsu, and Lee's (2009) study underscored the role of age as a determining factor in total tourist behaviour. Their research indicated that individuals in various age groups may have distinct views of a goal, which could have a major impact on their behavioural intentions. This viewpoint adds complexity to the discourse, suggesting that age may have a wider influence on tourist attitudes than circumstances relating to technology. The current study in the context of the KSA proposes that traits such as adventurousness and receptiveness to many cultures and faiths may incline the younger generation to visit more frequently. Irrespective of the variation in age demographics, people from both older and younger generations may have a shared purpose for travelling to the KSA. We can attribute this collective purpose to the nation's esteemed standing as a profoundly religious location, which attracts visitors from various age groups, particularly those who follow the Islamic religion. Religious significance attracts tourists from various generations, creating a diverse demography. The religious significance of the KSA makes it an attractive destination for Muslim visitors, attracting people of all ages to undertake a spiritual pilgrimage. The inherent religious importance of the area has a worldwide allure, making it a captivating destination for individuals of all age groups, including both the older and younger generations. However, the KSA draws non-Muslim visitors for leisure and other cultural, natural, and contemporary advancements, potentially appealing to those seeking a vacation that transcends religious contexts. Nevertheless, the intricate viewpoints presented in the literature, which consider the impact of age on the perception of technology and larger behavioural goals, emphasise the need to acquire a thorough comprehension of how age influences tourist attitudes. The present research suggests that the destination's distinctive cultural and contextual elements may play a role in the differing effects of age on travel aspirations across various regions and populations.

6.8.2 Gender

It was hypothesised that gender moderates the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention in the context of the KSA. The results suggested that the interaction effect of gender and the tourist visit intention was statistically significant based on the values. The results strongly support the assertion that gender indeed plays a significant moderating role in influencing the connection between tourist attitude and the intention to visit the KSA. Consequently, the gender dynamics have a substantial impact on persons' perceptions and inclinations to visit the KSA, and the results highlight the significance of taking into account gender-specific aspects when assessing the components that contribute to tourists' tendencies to visit the country. The results are in line with the researchers Karagöz et al. (2021) and Khan et al. (2019), who also presented supplementary aspects to the association between gender and tourism. Karagöz et al. (2021) argue that the perceptions of safety and risk have an impact on the intents of female tourists to visit a place. The authors propose that if a destination is viewed as hazardous, it might discourage female travellers from going there. Similarly, female participants in the current study might have had concerns regarding their safety, which could have led to differences in their visit intention compared to the visit intention of males. Meanwhile, Khan et al. (2019) also highlight the importance of safety, practicality, and cost factors in influencing women's inclinations to visit a certain area. Khan et al. (2019) have indicated that women may have varied attitudes about visiting and residing in the KSA, which means that their perceptions might enhance the influence of attitude on the visit intention towards visiting the KSA. This supports the hypothesis proposed in the present research, which suggests that gender plays a moderating role in the link between tourist attitude and the visit intention within the context of the KSA. Even though the current study indicates that there are differences in the perceptions of males and females regarding their visit intention,

there is a need to explore the wider consequences of gender views, safety concerns, and feasibility issues in influencing women's aspirations to travel to places, including the KSA. The results of group differences emphasise a significant pattern in which women have a lesser intention to visit the KSA in comparison to males, which could be due to various factors, for instance, cultural and societal norms, whereby the KSA has strongly followed conservative customs, and women may sense certain constraints or limits on their movement and experiences, which might impact their intention to visit. The presence of gender-specific restrictions in travel, such as prescribed attire, cultural norms, or restricted leisure activities for women, might potentially influence their inclination to visit the KSA (Al-Mohmmad & Butler, 2021). So, the tourism industry of the KSA could specifically focus on unique activities for female travellers to attract them and spread awareness regarding the occurring cultural shifts and opportunities. The combined observations emphasise the intricate nature of gender relations within the tourist setting, where cultural, safety, and feasibility factors interconnect with individual attitudes. Destination marketers and authorities must acknowledge these subtle impacts in order to customise strategies that address varied gender-specific issues and preferences, thereby promoting a more inclusive and attractive tourist destination.

6.8.3 Education

It was hypothesised that the education of tourists moderates the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. However, the result revealed that education does not play a statistically significant role in moderating the relationship between tourist attitude and the intention to visit in the context of the KSA. The findings of the current study are in line with Doosti et al. (2016), whereby the authors also outline that education does not have an interaction effect with the tourist visit intention. The finding of the current study diverges from the general perspective outlined in the literature, which

suggests that education is indeed a significant socio-demographic factor affecting tourist visit intention. For instance, Makanyeza et al. (2021) presented an alternate perspective, indicating that increased levels of education have a beneficial influence on behavioural intentions within the hotel business. Based on their research, those with greater education are more likely to possess open-mindedness, heightened awareness, and favourable intellectual qualities, which could have an impact on their visit intention. The divergent outcomes might be ascribed to the distinctive circumstances of the present investigation, which concentrates only on tourism in the KSA, and the effect of cultural, economic, or other contextual variables in the KSA on tourist intentions is likely to be more significant than the impact of education. The distinctive characteristics of the tourist sector in the KSA, together with the socio-cultural environment, could overwhelm the potential moderating influence of education. Tourists visiting the KSA often possess a collective comprehension and admiration for the cultural and religious importance of the location. Under such circumstances, the impact of visitors' educational background on shaping attitudes diminishes as the collective cultural backdrop may outweigh individual variations in education.

6.8.4 Income

It was hypothesised that income has a moderating effect on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. However, the findings of the current study suggest that income levels do not exert a statistically significant influence on the strength or direction of the relationship between tourist attitude and the intention to visit the KSA. The results of the current study are in line with Ran and Zhenpeng (2021), who also indicate that income does not have an interaction effect with the tourist visit intention. However, a few studies, such as Hosany, Buzova, and Sanz-Blas (2019) and Dang and Weiss (2021), have mentioned that tourists with higher income levels are more likely to

visit places with favourable economic conditions and where they can experience luxury and leisure. The differences between the findings of the current research and the literature can be attributed to other factors, such as contextual factors, socio-economic factors, and cultural factors, among others. Also, the primary motivation of Muslim tourists to visit the KSA is based on their cultural and religious beliefs, which would diminish the moderating effect of income as tourists visiting for religious purposes are motivated for the same purpose irrespective of their income levels. However, considering the current research is based on non-religious tourism, it was anticipated that the different income level of tourists can affect their tourist visit intention, as many people travel to experience luxury. Moreover, discrepancies in the research methodologies across studies might also account for divergent results between the present study's findings and other researchers' findings. Additionally, the disparity might be indicative of shifting patterns and developing consumer habits, suggesting that the comprehension of these dynamics is still evolving. The impact of income on travel choices may vary over time due to variables such as globalisation, technical progress, and changing consumer tastes. For instance, Moscardo (2017) outlines that with increasing incomes, consumers choose exotic destinations for travel and they generally want to choose sustainable and luxury accommodations, which suggests a growing preference for unique experiences over traditional luxury. With the increasing incomes, customers are more likely to pursue exclusive or specialised activities and experiences when travelling, such as engaging in adventure sports, attending wellness retreats, or immersing themselves in other cultures. Nevertheless, there is a growing inclination towards experiential travel, where individuals choose profound engagement with local communities or deep cultural encounters above material luxuries.

6.8.5 Religious Orientation

It was hypothesised that religious orientation has a moderating effect on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention in the context of the KSA. The findings highlighted a statistically significant moderating effect of religious orientation on the relationship between tourist attitude and the visit intention, suggesting that there are significant differences among perceptions between Muslims and non-Muslims while visiting the KSA. It was found that non-Muslims have a higher perception of intention to visit the KSA compared to Muslims visiting the KSA for non-religious purposes. Firstly, it is important to consider that the KSA holds a high significance in Islam, exerting a profound spiritual magnetism that transcends religious boundaries. Due to this fact, even non-Muslims would be drawn to the KSA out of curiosity or religious history veneration. The spiritual component of visit intention may considerably increase the intention of visiting the KSA (Rehman et al., 2023). It can happen because they want to gain knowledge about the cultures and historical importance that such locations hold. This finding is in line with Rahman et al. (2021), whereby the authors examine the perceptions of non-Muslims while visiting Malaysia, which is also a location for Halal tourism that accommodates Muslims and non-Muslims.

Additionally, historical and cultural factors may have a substantial impact on how non-Muslims perceive the intention to visit the KSA. This novel insight underscores the importance of considering religious factors when studying and predicting tourists' intentions. It is an interesting finding, because non-Muslims have higher intention to visit the KSA for leisure purposes compared to Muslims, as the KSA is a religious place for Muslims. Conversely, the research presented by Nugraha and Widyaningsih (2022) and Patwary et al. (2018) highlighted the extensive influence of religion on the social dynamics as the authors mentioned that religion, which includes many belief systems, was seen as a

potent influence that shapes both societal and daily existence. Nevertheless, the scholarly and practical basis for considering religious orientation as a factor influencing tourist behaviour was seen to be less firmly established. Wilkins et al. (2019) explored the moderating effect of religious orientation on the purchasing intentions related to consumer-based items like Halal products and found that it has an effect on the intention. The finding of the current study is similar to that of Wilkins et al. (2019), which also mentions that religious orientation does play a role in shaping intention, be it any context. The KSA is highly known and is considered as a very religious place among Muslims due to its religious relevance. Visitors who are not Muslims may have contrasting attitudes and perspectives in comparison to Muslim visitors while visiting a place that has a prominent religious and cultural identity. The influence of religious orientation on the link between attitude and the visit intention arises from the fact that visitors' attitudes and expectations might differ depending on their religious background. Non-Muslims may find the sights, activities, and general environment of the KSA to be new and fascinating, which might result in a more favourable disposition (Rehman et al., 2023). Conversely, Muslims may possess preconceived assumptions or expectations influenced by their religious convictions, which may therefore influence their attitude in distinct ways. Individuals who do not practise the Islamic faith may have a greater inclination towards exploring the distinctive cultural elements of the KSA, while those who adhere to Islam may prioritise visiting religious places and engaging in religious rites. This disparity in expectations may impact how their attitudes manifest as intents to visit. If there is a feeling of openness and friendliness, non-Muslims may have a greater sense of acceptance or welcome in a largely Muslim nation such as the KSA. A favourable view might strengthen the correlation between their attitude and intention to visit. The debate still emphasises the need for careful deliberation prior to integrating religious aspects into research, recognising its

capacity to shape individual values and attitudes, thereby affecting visitors' impressions of locations and motivations for selecting them.

In addition, for non-Muslims, having higher perceptions to visit the KSA for non-religious purposes indicates that they are affected by positive destination image, culture, and relaxation, along with limited perceptions about security. In addition to its religious importance, the KSA possesses a diverse array of historical landmarks, primordial customs, and cultural heritage that are immensely alluring to tourists in search of immersive cultural encounters. Non-Muslims might be inclined to investigate the varied cultural aspects of the KSA, such as its archaeological sites, museums, and traditional markets, which could develop a more positive perception of the purpose of their visit in comparison to visits for non-religious reasons.

6.9 Chapter Summary

The discussion chapter delves into various factors impacting tourists' attitudes and intentions regarding visits to the KSA. It presents evidence supporting the favourable influence of conative destination image on tourist attitudes, emphasising its substantial role in promoting positive perceptions. The importance of effective destination marketing techniques to highlight the KSA's cultural diversity, historical relevance, and advancements is underscored. Additionally, the detrimental effect of security perceptions on tourist attitudes, considering contextual components like crime rates and global events, is highlighted, emphasising the need for tailored communication strategies to address security concerns. Contrary to expectations, the research refutes the hypothesis regarding the favourable influence of e-WOM, prompting a discussion on cultural and socioeconomic factors unique to the KSA and the reliability of online evaluations. The study also reveals that while relaxation and culture positively influence attitudes, pleasure-seeking has no

effect, suggesting the need for a deeper understanding of tourists' motives in different settings.

Furthermore, the chapter examines the correlation between tourist attitudes and the visit intentions towards the KSA, affirming the significant impact of favourable attitudes on the visit intentions, emphasising the importance of attitude influences in decision-making processes. The discussion extends to factors mediating and moderating the connection between tourist attitudes and the visit intentions, demonstrating the substantial influence of conative destination image and the tourist visit intention. Perceived security is found to negatively impact tourist attitudes and the visit intentions, particularly affecting female tourists, necessitating initiatives to enhance safety perceptions. The study challenges traditional perspectives on e-WOM and the visit intention, indicating complex contextual factors at play, particularly in the unique environment of the KSA.

Regarding demographic parameters, the chapter discusses the moderating effects of age and gender, with gender showing significant disparities in influencing visit intentions, underscoring the importance of addressing gender-specific issues. Education, income, and religious orientation are also examined, with the study finding no statistically significant influence of education or income on the link between tourist attitudes and the visit intentions but highlighting the crucial role of religious orientation in shaping disparities in aspirations between Muslims and non-Muslims regarding visits to the KSA.

Overall, the discussion provides an understanding of the intricate dynamics influencing tourists' attitudes and intentions regarding visits to the KSA. It emphasises the need for the continuous monitoring and management of global perceptions and effective collaboration among stakeholders in the tourism industry to address concerns and enhance the attractiveness of the KSA as a tourist destination, ultimately benefiting the tourism industry and the economy of the KSA.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

Following an investigation, analysis, and examination of the influence of travel determinants on tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention among those intending to visit the KSA for non-religious reasons, a number of significant findings are derived. This chapter provides a synthesis of the key results presented in the preceding chapters and examines their relevance to the primary research questions formulated at the beginning of this study. The present study further investigates the theoretical and practical implications of the findings, emphasising the significant contributions that this thesis offers to the current body of research on the visit intention within the tourist industry. The first part provides a concise overview of the rationale for doing this study, including a brief overview of the background and fundamental concerns it aimed to explore. Subsequently, it restates the study objectives supported with the hypotheses that guided the analysis. Subsequently, the key findings and implications are expounded upon, integrating the pivotal outcomes into a framework of understandings. The following sections provide a contextual framework for these findings within the broader academic domain. The present chapter also highlights the potential limitations, provides recommendations for future research to fill in gaps and unsolved concerns, and provides recommendations for policymakers.

7.2 Summary of the Findings

The current research focused on evaluating the impact of travel determinants (conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation) on the tourist attitude of tourists to visit the KSA and their intention to visit the KSA. The mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between travel determinants and the tourist visit intention was also explored and evaluated. Also, the moderating effect of

demographics (age, gender, income, education, and religious orientation) on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention was also measured and evaluated.

In regard to the study's research objectives, the first research objective was to examine the impact of travel determinants (conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation) on the tourist attitude of tourists to visit the KSA. The research objective was achieved as the impact of travel determinants on the tourist attitude of tourists to visit the KSA was examined and found to be significant, except for the impact of e-WOM. The results indicated that conative destination image had a positive and significant effect on the tourist attitude of tourists to visit the KSA. The finding suggested that the KSA's conative destination image, which represents the perceptions and associations that prospective tourists have about the country that could have developed due to positive or unfavourable preconceptions that had a significant beneficial impact on visitor attitudes and plans to visit. The results also indicated that perceived security is related to the tourist attitude of tourists to visit the KSA. Higher perceived security meant that the tourists think that the KSA as a destination is safe and secure to travel. The findings of the current study indicated when tourists have negative perceptions regarding their security in the KSA, they will have a negative attitude towards visiting the KSA. In regard to the hypothesised relationship between e-WOM and tourist attitude, the findings did not provide support for it. The results were not in line with the existing research, as most of the researchers have supported the relationship between e-WOM and tourist attitude. However, the results of the current study do provide some interesting findings in terms of the context. For instance, tourists could see online information about the KSA as biased or government-controlled, diminishing its impact on their opinions and attitude towards visiting the KSA. Also, the KSA may have a less significant internet presence in

terms of travel reviews, social media debates, and influencer material compared to other tourist destinations because the KSA recently started its tourism activities for non-religious purposes. This restricted exposure may lead to a decrease in possibilities for e-WOM to influence prospective visitors' opinions of the destination. In terms of the relationship between travel motivation (based on relaxation, culture, and pleasure-seeking) and tourist attitude, the results indicated that when tourists are motivated by relaxation and culture, they have a positive and significant effect on the attitude of tourists towards visiting the KSA. The results also indicated that motivation through pleasure-seeking did not have a significant effect on tourist attitude. Many travellers go to areas that provide chances for relaxation, such as tranquil natural settings, luxurious accommodation, or recreational and leisure activities. The KSA has been expanding its tourist infrastructure by developing resorts along the coastline, health retreats, and entertainment complexes, which could have contributed to the positive attitude of tourists towards visiting the KSA. Similarly, in terms of culture, the KSA has a rich historical heritage, from ancient archaeological sites to vibrant contemporary arts scenes, which do motivate tourists that want to explore the KSA's rich history, explore its diverse traditions, and engage with its warm and hospitable people. Although the KSA presents distinctive and developing tourism prospects, pleasure-seeking travellers might not choose to visit the Kingdom because of perceived constraints, restricted activity options, cultural considerations, competition from other destinations, and safety and security worries.

The second research objective was to assess the influence of tourist attitude on the tourist visit intention towards the KSA. The second research objective was achieved as the empirical findings provided the support for the related hypothesis. The establishment of the TPB furnished a strong structure that directed the empirical relationship between the two variables. As evidenced by this study's findings, tourist attitudes are confirmed to be a

significant factor in tourism policy and planning pertaining to the expansion of tourism visits.

The third research objective was to evaluate the mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between travel determinants (conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation) and the visit intention towards the KSA. The research objective was achieved as the results supported or rejected the hypotheses linked to this research objective. The results emphasise the role of tourist attitude as a lens through which visit intention is influenced by other antecedent factors. In particular, it is believed that favourable perceptions of the KSA as a travel destination strengthen positive attitudes, which subsequently foster travel intentions to visit the country. These highlight the manner in which conative destination image can develop tourist attitude, which can further impact their visit intention. Likewise, concerns regarding security undermine both individual sentiments and intentions to visit. Tourists weigh the perceived benefits of engaging in tourism against an innate risk assessment of potential risks; diminished threat perceptions enable more favourable evaluations. Similarly, motivation based on culture and relaxation had a positive impact on attitude, which further had a positive impact on the tourist visit intention. Surprisingly, e-WOM did not demonstrate a substantial impact on individual attitudes or the likelihood of subsequent visits, which affected the tourist visit intention.

The fourth objective was achieved as the research investigated whether the relationship between tourist attitudes and intentions to visit the KSA is moderated by key demographic factors including age, gender, education, income, and religious orientation. Notably, age did not emerge as a substantial moderator, indicating that visit intentions are consistently translated into visitor attitudes across all age groups, which contradicts results in the literature suggesting that younger individuals are more adventurous and prudent than

senior individuals when visiting a location. The presence of conservative regulations, restrictions on attire, and cultural milieu may potentially deter female travellers, notwithstanding the generally positive attitudes of tourists. Similar to age, income and education had no moderating effect, indicating that visit intention rates were uniformly high across all levels of education. The KSA's allure as a hub for the Islamic faith transcends nuanced attitudinal differences arising from educational level, which also indicates that there is no need for marketers to reallocate resources towards the targeted segment of the educated affluent. Religious orientation, nevertheless, indicated significant differences among the two groups, Muslims and non-Muslims. The higher visit intention of non-Muslims may be attributed to the allure of discovering the culture and heritage of the KSA. Since Muslims already have an inherent familiarity with the country, favourable attitudes may not generate the same level of interest in visiting the KSA for non-religious purposes as they might possibly link their visit with their faith. By emphasising unique Islamic customs, targeting non-Muslim communities can generate greater returns in terms of stimulating tourism expansion as specific cultural aspects ought to be prominently displayed for non-Muslim tourists. Also, it was interesting to find that even Muslims who would intend to visit the KSA for non-religious purposes would be motivated by culture and relaxation rather than pleasure-seeking. In brief, the results of this study indicate that the influence of attitude on intention is stronger for women and non-Muslims, considering the moderating role of demographics.

The fifth research objective was to propose and test a model that integrates conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, travel motivation, tourist attitude, and demographic characteristics to predict the tourist visit intention towards the KSA. Evaluating the combined explanatory power of a multifaceted conceptual framework enabled the identification of efficacious policy components that can enhance forthcoming

tourism demand. The entire conceptual model was evaluated using WarpPLS to evaluate the effect of the relationships, which indicated that the mentioned travel determinants, except e-WOM, had a significant effect on the tourist attitude, which further affected the tourist visit intention towards the KSA. The integrated model highlighted the importance of adopting a holistic systems approach in analysing travel choices, as opposed to solely focusing on linear relationships, which indicated the need to incorporate holistic designs into tourism promotion campaigns.

7.3 Research Implications

The research aimed to investigate the link between conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, motivation, attitude, and the visit intentions of visitors. The results have implications for the literature, tourism industry, and regional authorities. The research was done in the region of the KSA, known for its religious significance. However, it focused on how non-religious tourism and the visit intentions are seen in this region. Evaluating the results of the current investigation from this viewpoint might lead to more productive outcomes for the KSA's tourism sector. The implications were outlined in this framework in the form of theoretical and practical consequences, as detailed in the following sections.

7.3.1 Theoretical Implications

The current study is grounded in TPB and SDT offers various theoretical implications for the research, which allows for a detailed understanding of the factors influencing tourist attitudes and the visit intentions of tourists visiting KSA. In addition to offering empirical support for a number of hypotheses, the study contributes to the refinement and validation of the theoretical constructs comprising the SDT and TPB frameworks as they pertain to tourism. The integration of SDT and the TPB in this study provides a theoretical framework to capture the effect of intrinsic factors' impact on tourist

behaviour, which cannot be captured primarily through the TPB or SDT alone as the TPB primarily focuses on the cognitive and external factors influencing behaviour, while it may not adequately address the intrinsic motivational factors that drive human behaviour (Hosany, Buzova, & Sanz-Blas, 2019; Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020). Furthermore, the incorporation of these theories signifies that they are valid and applicable in numerous cultural contexts, such as the KSA. Integrated theoretical models, such as the one utilised in the present investigation (TPB + SDT), exhibit potential for explanatory value by enhancing both the theoretical validity and predictive capability, which suggests that additional endeavours to incorporate theories that centre on intention, motivation, and attitudes could fortify the theoretical underpinnings of the study of tourism behaviour. The findings of this study provide support for hypotheses concerning conative destination image, perceived security, travel motivation (including sub-dimensions like culture and relaxation), and tourist attitude. These results highlight the constructs' practicality and significance in forecasting tourist behaviour in the KSA's context.

Additionally, the research contributes to the core principles of the TPB by including attitude as a mediator between background factors and the behavioural intention. In addition, the research showcases the impact of conative destination image and perceived security on tourists' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control by incorporating them into the TPB framework. This integration emphasizes the significance of contextual variables in influencing behavioural intentions, indicating that the TPB may be customized to incorporate specific characteristics that are pertinent to various tourism settings. It also emphasises the indirect impact of these underlying causes on intentions, which occurs through the development of attitudes. The findings also emphasise the significance of dealing with and controlling elements such as e-WOM and perceptions of security in order to influence positive attitudes, which ultimately influence the visit

intention. Furthermore, the study's results provide insight into the relative significance and influence of various background factors, leading to a more detailed comprehension of the factors that lead to the development of attitudes in the tourism industry.

A third theoretical implication of this study is the measurement and examination of the mediating effects. Tourists visit intention was found to be mediated by tourist attitude in relation to the travel determinants (conative destination image, perceived security, and tourist motivation (culture and relaxation)). Also, the study makes a novel contribution by exploring the mediating effect of attitude on the relationship between various motivation-related factors and the visit intention with the underpinning SDT. Also, by examining travel motivation within the context of KSA's evolving tourism sector, the study provides insights into the complex motivational dynamics at play. It shows that tourists' intrinsic motivations are crucial for forming positive attitudes, which in turn influence their intentions to visit, which also reinforces SDT's assertion that fulfilling intrinsic psychological needs is essential for fostering motivated behavior. Put simply, the attitude of tourists serves as a mediator between the aforementioned travel determinants and their intention to visit the KSA. It is more evident that individuals hold favourable perceptions of destinations when they associate them with favourable connotations of security, relaxation, culture, and conative destination image. This will positively influence travellers' perceptions of the KSA, as they will be more inclined towards relaxation and cultural immersion rather than adventure pursuits and pleasure-seeking. Also, the mediating effect of tourist attitude provides an understanding that the travel determinants may not directly influence the visit intention, but rather indirectly through their impact on attitude. Capturing this indirect effect can provide an understanding about the complex relationships among variables and the underlying psychological processes that drive tourist behaviour.

The unique theoretical implications of this study also include that a tourist's religious orientation (being Muslim or non-Muslim) can influence their intention to visit the KSA, especially for non-religious purposes, and that this effect moderates the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention. Prior research has examined many factors influencing tourist behaviour, but there has been little investigation into the influence of religious orientation, particularly in the context of visiting a place with a significant religious identity such as the KSA. The current research fills a gap in the current literature by directly examining the impact of religious orientation on the visit intention, which adds to a more thorough knowledge of how tourists make decisions. Also, the moderating role of religious orientation extends the understanding of theoretical concepts within the field of religious tourism and destination marketing. This statement underscores the need for taking into account the dynamic relationship between religious and non-religious impulses, as well as the possible conflicts or enablers that emerge from religious orientation. The importance of understanding which demographics might influence tourists' propensity to visit a given destination is underscored by this finding, which adds subtlety to previous theoretical models by showing the unequal effect of demographic variables on tourist behaviour. Context allows researchers to zero in on pertinent demographics, which may modify the association between attitude and intention and other factors. For example, gender was discovered to moderate the association between attitude and the intention of visitors to visit the KSA. This is because the KSA has stringent laws for women. In line with the significant moderating effects of gender and religious orientation, it can be highlighted that future researchers can create theoretical frameworks that effectively include these heterogeneities. Rather than making the assumption of a homogenous population, it is advisable for researchers to contemplate the development of distinct or more intricate models that include the variations in the link between attitude and

intention across distinct segments, taking into account factors such as gender, religious orientation, or other relevant moderators. Also, this study primarily investigated the individual moderating effects of gender and religious orientation. However, it is suggested that future research should delve into the possible intersectionality of these variables. The interaction between gender and religious orientation may uncover additional subtle variations in the link between attitudes and intentions, which might enhance the accuracy of theoretical models and have practical ramifications.

One other thing this research does is it finds correlations in the KSA's context that are not statistically significant. For example, it was found that the link between pleasure-seeking and tourist attitude, as well as e-WOM and tourist attitude, is not significant. To evaluate the impact of these interactions, it is helpful to discuss and comprehend them in various contexts. This also means that theoretical models need to take into consideration the contextual constraints in places like the KSA, where the use and effect of e-WOM and social media can be different. Based on the findings, theoretical considerations of visitor behaviour theories in the Middle Eastern environment should embrace and emphasise the motivating variables that influence the attitudes and intentions of tourists towards the KSA as a destination.

7.3.2 Practical Implications

The current study has some crucial practical implications for various stakeholders in the tourism sector, including destination management organisations, tour operators, hospitality businesses, and policymakers.

The KSA has implemented Saudi Vision 2030 for increasing its tourism, increasing diversification, and boosting its economy. In line with this vision, the current research focused on examining how people perceive and what motivates them, and their attitudes towards visiting the KSA as a tourist destination are crucial for informing tourism policies

and industry strategies to achieve the objectives outlined in Saudi Vision 2030. To develop a strong leisure tourism business, it was essential to prioritise travel and tourism as a sector for economic diversification, which involved strategic planning based on knowing the preferences and opinions of the target tourists. Conducting quantitative research in the context of the KSA could help identify opportunities for product development and effective marketing strategies. These studies indicate areas of tourist interest and development potential, as well as identifying the current obstacles. Amid evolving social dynamics and changing global perspectives, conducting empirical research to consistently measure progress on important indicators allows policies and investments to adapt to a dynamic external environment. Also, tourists have various misconceptions of the KSA in terms of its destination image, security, and other such aspects. For instance, the KSA has been associated with conservatism, restrictions, and a lack of tourism infrastructure, leading to the idea that it is a closed country without interesting places, attractions, or entertainment for foreign tourists, which has led to limited leisure-related tourism. The KSA opened its tourism in 2019 for non-religious purposes, which is fairly very recent. Accordingly, these perceptions might have discouraged interest in leisure travel and visiting. Moreover, researchers have identified that people have negative perceptions about the KSA's security due to regional geopolitical tensions and its regulations over the history. There have been concerns regarding the security of female tourists also, which could have contributed to negative stereotypes about the country, and perpetuated unfavourable perceptions of rigidity. The lack of marketing of cultural tourism contributed to the belief that immersive experiences were not easily available to outsiders. The KSA's absence of a tourist visa programme for an extended period and stringent entrance regulations for unmarried couples and women indicated a narrow-minded attitude towards casual tourists, which greatly reduced demand. However, with changing regulations, the KSA has seen a high

boost in tourism for non-religious purposes and the increasing attitude and intention of tourists to visit the KSA. The current research provided empirical support to evaluate the impact of various factors, such as conative destination image, security, e-WOM, and travel motivation, on the tourist attitude and the visit intention.

Destination marketing strategies can be guided by the recognition that influential factors in shaping visitor attitudes and the visit intentions include conative destination image, perceived security, and cultural experiences. Utilising these insights, destination management organisations can create focused marketing campaigns that emphasise the positive attributes, distinctive cultural heritage, and safety protocols of the KSA in order to entice prospective tourists. For instance, the KSA's tourism industry can develop marketing campaigns for Muslim tourists, which could emphasise the religious and spiritual aspects of visiting holy sites, as well as the accommodation and facilities available for practising their faith. For non-Muslim tourists, the KSA's tourism industry can focus on showcasing the rich historical and cultural attractions, while also addressing any potential concerns or misconceptions about safety and inclusivity by making promotional videos that can be shared online or can be shown on the KSA's airlines as advertisements, or banners can be placed at airports.

Similarly, the study substantiates travel intention theories within the KSA, suggesting that the KSA's tourism industry should implement digital marketing strategies, including collaboration with famous celebrities to create advertisements that can be displayed at tourist places that highlight genuine local culture, natural resources, and hospitality in order to humanise the perceptions of Saudi citizens and experiences. Furthermore, the research results indicated that travellers hold a negative perception regarding security in the KSA, a factor that significantly influences their attitudes. Considering the significant impact that perceived security has on tourist attitudes, it is

prudent for tourism authorities, such as the Saudi Tourism Authority, Saudi Commission for National Heritage, Ministry of Tourism, and key tourism stakeholders such as government authorities, public airlines, private tourism companies, and the hospitality sector to prioritise the improvement of safety protocols and the proficient dissemination of this information to prospective visitors, which may entail allocating resources towards infrastructure development, public safety endeavours, and crisis communication tactics that aim to allay apprehensions and foster confidence among tourists.

The current study has a significant practical implication in that it contributes to a better understanding of the perceptions, motivations, and attitudes that influence the intentions of prospective visitors to visit the KSA. Considering that Saudi Vision 2030 designates tourism as a key pillar of economic expansion, the policy and economic implications of knowledge regarding how to cultivate a positive destination image of the KSA and attract international visitors are significant. In the first instance, the results indicate that product development and marketing efforts might benefit from a focus on establishing the KSA as a cultural heritage destination. Positive tourist attitudes and intentions to visit the KSA are shaped by culture-focused travel motivations, according to the research. In practice, this means that the promotion of leisure tourism should emphasise distinctive cultural landmarks, such as the Janadriyah Festival and the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Madain Saleh and Al-Hijr, in addition to events that showcase heritage. This can be done by collaborating with local communities, cultural experts, and religious authorities that can help ensure that the events and promotional materials accurately depict the traditions, customs, and values of the Saudi people, avoiding misrepresentation or cultural appropriation. By strategically positioning cultural tourism via investment and policy initiatives, it is probable that greater interest will be generated. In a similar vein, the recognition that relaxation-seeking motivations also increase the likelihood of a visitor

intending to stay suggests that prioritising the development of resorts, retreat spaces, and natural destinations would be advantageous, as advertising the extensive offerings of these locations that cater to rest and relaxation would attract visitors to the KSA who are not there for religious reasons. This can be done by providing informative materials, guided tours, and interactive exhibits that can help visitors understand the historical and cultural significance of the landmarks and events, fostering appreciation and respect for the KSA's heritage. Additionally, the expansion of entertainment options and accessibility for international travellers could potentially be facilitated by regulatory changes implemented in the KSA, which could complement product development. Organisations in the hospitality industry, tour operators, and tourist attractions have the ability to customise their offerings in order to cater to distinct tourist segments, thus increasing visitor loyalty and satisfaction.

Furthermore, the relationship between destination image, perceived security, and visit intentions suggests that improving the reputation of the KSA via strategic communication and public diplomacy initiatives could potentially increase demand in a practical sense. This can be done by organising international events, which currently the KSA is doing like hosting international sports events and cultural festivals with other countries, increasing its tourism and international relations. It is important for the KSA to sustain recent advancements in publicly acknowledged reforms and social openings that aim to improve the Kingdom's historically conservative image. Such efforts may eventually yield positive results by gradually altering deeply ingrained perceptions. By acknowledging the influence of demographic variables, including religious affiliation and gender, on tourist attitudes and intentions to visit, stakeholders in the tourism industry can enhance the skills and knowledge of tourism professionals through the implementation of skill-building programmes, which will enable them to effectively and sensitively address

the varying requirements of distinct tourist segments. Such programmes can equip stakeholders with the necessary skills to understand the market dynamics. For instance, providing such programmes to tourist operators can equip them with knowledge of which tourist segments they should target during a specific time period. For instance, they can contribute to develop the image of the country as a hot region for people who live in very cold regions and motivate them to travel to the KSA for leisure and relaxation. The KSA tourism sector can utilise the results of the present study to inform resource allocation decisions concerning the enhancement of public transportation networks, accommodation options, and tourist amenities, thereby facilitating greater connectivity between cities. In general, enhancing positive attitudes plays a crucial role in capitalising on a range of demand determinants associated with the attractiveness of a destination, perceptions of risk, and motivations for travel. Equal emphasis should be placed on cultivating attitudes and product enhancements; behavioural manifestations and affective affinity mutually reinforce one another in a cyclical fashion. Branding, service quality, and atmosphere strategies should synchronise in an effort to alter perceptions in order to facilitate the growth of the tourism industry. Efforts to eliminate access barriers or negative advisories are futile in the absence of efforts to address attitude deficits that impede the realisation of travel aspirations concerning the KSA. Given the shifting global sentiment surrounding the country, it is critical to adopt a multifaceted, customer-focused, and targeted strategy that is cognisant of indigenous subtleties. Strategic exploitation of catalysts such as Vision 2030 necessitates a nuanced comprehension of tourism psychology through the use of frameworks such as the one presented here, which tracks changes in attitudes over time. Analysing whether comparable mechanisms are present in Middle Eastern destinations that experience simultaneous image reconfigurations could shed light on opportunities, obstacles, and optimal approaches that are specific to the region.

In addition, the study's findings reveal the significant role of gender and religious orientation in shaping tourists' attitudes and visit intentions. Based on these findings, the KSA's tourism authorities can develop targeted marketing campaigns that address gender-specific interests and concerns. For example, promotional materials and travel packages could be customized to appeal to different gender preferences, ensuring that both male and female tourists find offerings that align with their interests. KSA can also create segmented tourism products and services that cater to different religious and cultural backgrounds, which can help address specific needs and preferences, making Saudi Arabia a more inclusive destination for a diverse range of tourists.

KSA should continue investing in destination marketing and promotion efforts to raise awareness of its tourism offerings and attract a diverse range of visitors, which includes leveraging digital marketing channels, participating in international travel trade events, and collaborating with influential travel bloggers and media outlets to showcase the country's cultural heritage, natural beauty, and modern attractions. The KSA should also improve its infrastructure and tourism services for increasing the number of inbound tourists. This involves upgrading the transportation networks, expanding accommodation options, and developing tourist facilities such as visitor centres, interpretation sites, and recreational areas. Investments in technology and innovation can also enhance the efficiency and convenience for tourists. The findings revealed that culture-oriented travel motivations help cultivate tourist interest in visiting the KSA.

While the KSA is known for its religious tourism, there is potential to diversify tourism offerings, such as developing adventure tourism activities such as desert safaris, eco-tourism initiatives in protected areas, and luxury travel experiences in upscale resorts to appeal to a broader range of travellers. Creating niche tourism products, such as sports events like the Formula 1 championship, football events, EXPO, and other such events

tailored to different market segments can help attract new visitors and extend their length of stay. The KSA tourism sector should platform cultural events, which highlight national heritage and can entice international visitors seeking genuine experiences of Saudi traditions on a global stage, as enhancing the scale and marketing for these events would support growth. Moreover, eco-adventurers represent an untapped market, but the KSA's diverse landscape ranging from the Asir Mountains to the Red Sea offers attractions for this segment. For instance, the KSA can focus on motivating eco-adventurers through tailored promotion and infrastructure facilitating outdoor recreation such as hiking, diving, and camping to also increase the pleasure-seeking aspect of motivation among tourists. The KSA should also focus on adopting sustainable tourism practices for persevering the environment and cultural heritage, which could also attract more tourists. In addition,

The KSA's tourism sector should also focus on building a skilled Saudi hospitality workforce through vocational programmes, which can contribute to a positive attitude and intention among tourists towards visiting the KSA by setting up learning institutes or including courses related to this in tourism and hospitality management-related studies. The KSA should also implement strategies to accelerate the process of e-visas or visas on arrival for attracting more leisure travellers. The KSA's tourism sector should also collaborate with other public and private sectors for developing an enhanced tourism infrastructure, finance tourism projects, and provide quality services to visitors by offering incentives for private sector involvement, streamlining regulatory processes, and facilitating dialogue between stakeholders.

As perceptions gradually shift, bespoke marketing showcasing the KSA's offerings tailored by source market interests and insights would strategically influence visitor demand and preferences over time as reforms progress. In line with this, the KSA should invest in tourism research initiatives, including market studies, visitor surveys, and impact

assessments, to better understand the tourist preferences, behaviour, and market trends. The data-driven approach can help identify growth opportunities, target marketing efforts, and measure the effectiveness of tourism policies and initiatives. The KSA government should also install interactive wayfinding kiosks, audio guides, maps and translational signage at airports, attractions, and hotels that will smoothly facilitate international guests unfamiliar with navigating the KSA. The KSA should implement marketing campaigns that focus on the security of the KSA, and it should also ask hotels and restaurants to motivate tourists for adding reviews, which would lead to better e-WOM.

In regards to the findings of the current study, certain recommendations for policymakers, such as the Saudi Ministry of Tourism, Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage, Ministry of Culture, and local municipalities, have been provided. For instance, policymakers should instigate cultural exchange initiatives that are designed to cultivate enhanced comprehension and admiration for the culture and heritage of the KSA. They can also facilitate cultural exchanges, language immersion programmes, and volunteer prospects for promoting cross-cultural dialogue and mutual respect by collaborating with foreign governments, educational establishments, and cultural organisations. The KSA's tourism industry policymakers should focus on providing training on inclusive customer service practices and investing in infrastructure enhancements for increasing tourist satisfaction. The KSA's policymakers should also invest in increasing social media penetration by adopting digital marketing strategies so that tourists can rely on e-WOM for making travel decisions. Policymakers ought to proactively involve local communities in the processes of tourism planning and decision-making in order to guarantee that initiatives aimed at developing tourism positively impact local inhabitants and foster sustainable socio-economic progress. Potential strategies for promotion encompass the establishment of community-based tourism initiatives, assistance

to locally owned and operated small-scale enterprises, and the facilitation of cultural heritage preservation endeavours spearheaded by community organisations.

In order to increase the KSA's international standing and influence, policymakers can use tourism as an instrument for cultural diplomacy and soft power projection. Potential strategies to enhance diplomatic relations and cultivate favourable international perceptions of the KSA include endorsing international cultural exchange initiatives (by organising cultural festivals), organising prominent cultural events and exhibitions, and elevating the country's cultural heritage via diplomatic channels and international partnerships (by organising international sports events), or by sponsoring in international events for increased advertising. To preserve the natural landscapes and biodiversity of the KSA, policymakers should prioritise environmental conservation efforts and the creation of ecotourism initiatives, in addition to promoting sustainable tourism practices. It is imperative that policymakers adopt digital transformation and innovation in the tourism industry in order to bolster visitor experiences and competitiveness. To encourage innovation and creativity, this may entail investing in digital infrastructure, promoting the incorporation of cutting-edge technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality, and providing assistance to firms and entrepreneurs in the tourism technology sector.

Existing tourism governance structures and regulations ought to be reviewed and revised by policymakers to ensure that they promote inclusive and sustainable tourism development. Potential initiatives to promote responsible tourism practices, streamline administrative processes, and encourage investment in the tourism industry encompass the establishment of transparent guidelines for licencing requirements, streamlining administrative procedures, and revising licencing requirements for tourism businesses. In light of the vastness of the region's geography, policymakers must engage in negotiations for bilateral aviation agreements that would increase airline routes and accessibility to

Saudi airports in exchange for lenient airport fees and taxes, thereby facilitating transit for international passengers. Policymakers should also involve and engage with business councils, trade agencies, and companies in critical target nations in forums for the exchange of insights that enable tourism policy to adapt to the specific obstacles, expectations, and trends that influence demand in international launch markets. Policymakers should also utilise prominent platforms such as the World Economic Forum, EXPO events, and state visits to influence the discourse on the dynamic tourism landscape through the use of high-visibility announcements and testimonials from influential business and celebrity figures, which can effectively dispel antiquated misconceptions about the KSA. Policymakers can also offer specialised lending rates, training subsidies, and tax deductions to domestic operators who facilitate the consolidation of curated cultural excursions, hotels, and flights into Saudi through travel packages for international visitors, which would enable the optimisation of booking procedures via integrated platforms and distribution channels located overseas.

7.4 Research Limitations

The current study has some significant implications, but it is still prone to certain limitations, which are outlined in this section.

1. One primary limitation of the research is its restricted applicability to different contexts; thus, the results obtained from the present study may lack generalisability. As a result, the current study's findings may not be generalisable to other cultural contexts or tourist populations because it only looked at travellers' perspectives on visiting the KSA. Notwithstanding the relatively sizable sample size (N=536), the representational challenges that impede generalisation are attributable to the sampling methods employed for survey recruitment, which were nonprobability purposive sampling techniques in the present study.

2. Key tourist demographics might be underrepresented or overrepresented. Although demographic variables such as religious orientation and gender were identified as moderators in the study that examined the relationship between visitor attitude and the intention to visit, it is possible that the analysis failed to consider other potential moderating factors.
3. In light of the insignificance of the impact of e-WOM, it was critical to account for the possibility that technological usage may vary across nations, with some individuals possibly not utilising social media to make travel arrangements. Additionally, it is worth noting that the current study's population comprised international travellers. Consequently, the levels of social media and internet usage among this group may have been considerably distinct, potentially resulting in statistically insignificant findings.
4. The utilisation of cross-sectional data as opposed to longitudinal data complicates the process of deducing causal tourist behaviour over an extended period. The retrospective nature of the data collection process restricts the examination of how research factors might develop in the face of the KSA's ongoing reforms, as current sentiments may not reflect the intentions of travellers when they make travel decisions in the future.
5. The research study employed a quantitative methodology, potentially introducing limitations in its ability to capture the intricate and subjective facets of visitor motivations and attitudes. While the research model does include the behavioural intentions, there is ongoing debate regarding its capacity to accurately predict future behaviours based solely on the intentions expressed in visitor surveys. Although an integrated theoretical framework was examined, it is impossible for a single study to capture the myriad of complex psychological and social processes that influence

tourist decisions. For instance, prior experiences, brand associations, norms, limitations, and a number of other factors may plausibly influence tourist behaviour intentions towards the KSA.

6. Self-reported data obtained via surveys may be susceptible to bias and social desirability, as respondents who are travellers themselves may offer responses that are socially desirable or fail to precisely recall their experiences and perceptions. In order to utilise a self-reported measure, the study requested that the participants provide their perceptions, attitudes, and intentions regarding the factors that influence travel. An important limitation associated with the utilisation of self-reported assessments in research is that the participants may provide responses predicated on their perception of what is accurate, rather than the truth. Due to time and resource limitations, the researcher was compelled to rely on self-report techniques, which are commonly utilised to amass vast quantities of data.

7.5 Recommendations

7.5.1 Recommendations for Future Researchers

In line with the conducted study and after acknowledging the limitations of the current research, certain recommendations for future researchers are provided below.

1. To overcome the limitation of generalisability, researchers should replicate this study amongst different contexts and traveller segments. Also, researchers should employ random sampling, which would enhance the representativeness of the sample and increase the generalisability. Future researchers should also test the research framework amongst samples from other source markets to determine the generalisability across regions. Future research could address this limitation by including a more diverse and representative sample, encompassing both international and domestic tourists, as well as different demographic groups and

travel motivations. For instance, they can replicate the study amongst North American, South Asian, or Latin American travellers, which could strengthen the external validity.

2. To overcome the limitation of limited factors or demographics, future researchers can also model the effects of situational variables and constraints such as the effect of crisis (e.g., pandemic), alongside psychological factors shaping travel intentions. Future researchers can also identify more factors, such as trust, confidence in destination, travel constraints, cultural distance, and other such factors to understand how these factors affect tourist attitudes and behaviours regarding the KSA. They can incorporate supplementary theoretical constructs like perceived value, novelty-seeking tendencies, and past experiences into an expanded conceptual model to account for additional drivers that motivate contemporary tourist behaviour. The researchers can also compare cross-national sentiment between potential tourists from Muslim majority nations and non-Muslim majority nations to determine how religious orientation shapes the KSA's perceptions and intentions to visit.
3. To overcome the limitation of the insignificant effect of e-WOM and pleasure-seeking on tourist attitude, future researchers need to conduct a similar study in different contexts in the Middle East region like the United Arab Emirates and Qatar to see if these factors have an effect on the attitude and intention or not, considering that they are as developed as the KSA and hold strong religious beliefs. Future researchers can also partner with tourism companies to track actual visit conversions, not just behavioural intentions, to assess predictive effectiveness in this context over time as greater numbers visit the KSA.

4. To overcome the limitation of the study being cross-sectional in nature, future researchers can conduct longitudinal studies that track tourists' perceptions, motivations, attitudes, and intentions towards the KSA over an extended period of time to assess the impacts of the Kingdom's ongoing reforms, as this would provide richer insights into dynamism and causality absent in cross-sectional designs. Also, considering the fact that the KSA has recently started tourism in the country, conducting a longitudinal study would provide more insights on whether the tourist visit intention changes over a specific period of time or not.
5. To overcome the limitation of the research primarily being quantitative in nature, future researchers can integrate qualitative components like interviews or focus groups to complement survey methods for a mixed-methods approach. By adding open-ended responses capturing travellers' sentiments in their own words, researchers could overcome self-report biases and achieve greater depth in understanding the determinants of the KSA visit intentions, and they can also collect their understanding about why they perceive the KSA in the certain way that they do.
6. To overcome the limitation of self-reported data, future researchers could do follow-up surveys to assess if tourists' fulfilled their anticipated behaviours, which would be beneficial for confirming the predictive validity in this context. Future research could employ alternative data collection methods, such as observational studies or behavioural experiments, to mitigate bias and enhance the validity of the findings.

7.5.2 Recommendations for Destination Management Organizations and Government Tourism Agencies

- Create and execute marketing strategies that highlight the wide range of attractions in KSA, going beyond just religious sites and also emphasize distinctive cultural, historical, and natural characteristics to create a holistic and attractive perception of the destination.
- Bolster security protocols and effectively convey them to prospective tourists and enforce stringent safety rules and ensure that these measures are prominently displayed and easily available in advertising materials and on official tourism websites.
- Utilize travel motivation insights to customize tourism products and services based on factors such as cultural experiences, adventure, and relaxation and develop precise marketing techniques that align with these incentives to appeal to a wider audience.
- Increase funding and advertising efforts for cultural and recreational pursuits that cater to secular visitors, including festivals, sporting events, and entertainment choices.
- Streamline the visa application process to enhance accessibility for travelers wishing to visit KSA and implement more adaptable visa alternatives and enhancing the efficacy of the visa application procedure.

7.5.3 Recommendations for Tour Operators and Hospitality Businesses

- Develop and market travel packages specifically designed to meet the preferences and motives of secular tourists and incorporate a blend of cultural encounters, thrilling pursuits, and opportunities for unwinding to cater to a wide range of preferences.

- Allocate resources towards educating employees to deliver exceptional service and generate lasting impressions for visitors and ensure that the standards of hospitality are in line with or above international expectations.
- Employ digital platforms and social media to actively interact with prospective tourists and maximize the use of these online platforms by actively motivating contented customers to openly communicate their experiences on the internet.
- Form partnerships with local communities to provide genuine cultural experiences and contribute to community-led tourist initiatives, which can improve the overall tourist experience and promote better connections with local residents.

7.5.4 Recommendations for Private Sector Investors

- Allocate financial resources towards the enhancement of tourism infrastructure, encompassing the construction and improvement of lodging, transportation, and recreational amenities and focus on developing top-notch, enduring facilities that improve the entire visitor experience.
- Allocate funds towards technical advancements that enhance the effectiveness and attractiveness of tourism services, such as state-of-the-art reservation systems, immersive virtual reality encounters, and interactive mobile applications for travel.
- Recognize and allocate resources to specialized tourism markets that are in line with KSA's developing tourism strategy, such as eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and cultural tourism and customize investments to align with the specific requirements of these markets.
- Form alliances with global travel agencies, tourism authorities, and indigenous enterprises to expand market penetration and allure a wide spectrum of visitors.

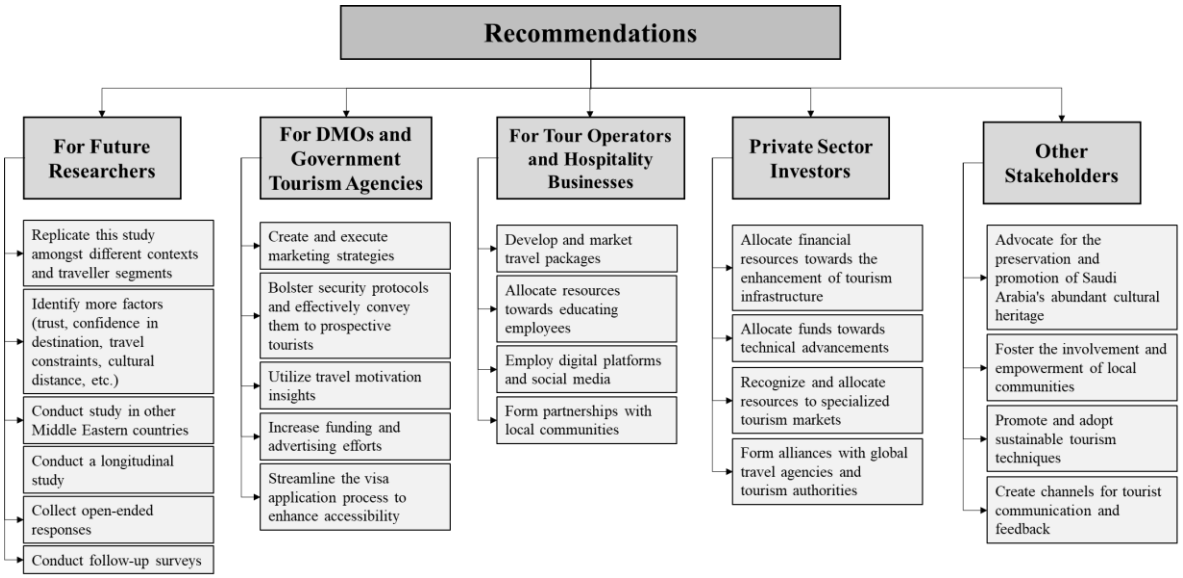
7.5.5 Recommendations for Other Stakeholders (Cultural Instituitions and Local Communities)

- Cultural institutions should aggressively advocate for the preservation and promotion of Saudi Arabia's abundant cultural heritage and historical landmarks and engage in cooperation with destination marketing organizations to guarantee that cultural attractions are prominently showcased in tourism marketing.
- Foster the involvement and empowerment of local communities in tourist endeavours to ensure their active participation and equitable benefits and endorse endeavours that engage community residents in delivering services and facilitating experiences for tourists.
- Promote and adopt sustainable tourism techniques that reduce environmental harm and encourage responsible travel behaviour and increase awareness and understanding of sustainability among both tourists and local populations.
- Create channels via which travellers can submit comments regarding their experiences and utilize this input to consistently enhance tourism services and effectively handle any arising difficulties or complaints.

A pictorial representation of all the recommendations is done in the following figure 7.

Figure 7

Research Recommendations



With the implementation of the above recommendations, KSA can improve the efficiency of the tourism industry, appeal to a wider variety of non-religious visitors, and help achieve the goals set out in Vision 2030.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Approval

Research ethics form self-assessment

Application for approval of research activity involving human subjects, personal data, or confidential material

This application form is to be used by researchers seeking approval from the Research Ethics Committee.

Research that involves human subjects, personal data, or confidential material, and is associated with The British University in Dubai, cannot begin until ethical approval has been obtained.

Section I is a general research identification table.

Section II is for the details of the ethical matters your research might involve and the necessary steps you are planning to take to address them.

Section III is an ethics checklist that will help you identify your research risk level. If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the high risk statements, then your research is High Risk. If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the medium risk statements, and 'No' to all high risk statements, then your research is Medium Risk. If you answer 'No' to all high risk and medium risk statements, then your research is Low Risk.

If you have documents related to the ethical considerations of the research such as, for example, a consent letter, evidence of external approval, questionnaire samples or interview questions, you can enclose them with this form before submission.

I. Research identification

Name	Salem Naif Alenizi
Faculty/Programme	Professional Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA)
Contact number	+966555485111
Email	21000008@student.buid.ac.ae
Research type	□ Research project □ Doctoral/Masters research □ Module assignment
Research title	Factors Affecting Tourists' Attitude and the Visit Intention Towards the KSA for Non-Religious Tourism
Date	07/07/2023

Submitted to (name)	□ Faculty nominated member (research projects): □ Director of Studies (doctoral research): Dr Mohamed Yacine Haddoud □ Dissertation supervisor (Masters research): □ Module coordinator (module assignment):

II. Research ethics details

Background and rationale for study (this should be sufficient to justify the proposed research). Aims and objectives of the research (or the research question/s) and potential benefits of proposed research: 500 words max)

Tourism is a vital industry for economic growth, and the Middle East, particularly the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), is actively striving to develop its tourism sector. With the passage of the New Tourist Law, the Saudi Arabian tourism industry is enduring a significant transformation that will stimulate economic development, technological progress, and investment. The Ministry of Tourism, the Saudi Tourism Authority, and the Tourism Development Fund are driving the country's dramatic transformation, with the goals of attracting 100 million additional tourists, increasing tourism's contribution to GDP to 10 percent, and creating one million additional jobs in the sector. The primary objective of this study is to identify the factors that can increase travellers' intention to visit Saudi Arabia and investment in the country's tourism industry. Concerns have been expressed regarding the safety and security of the country, and the current research seeks to resolve these concerns by focusing on travellers who intend to visit the KSA for non-religious purposes. The KSA has only recently begun to welcome non-Muslim travellers interested in its rich history, stunning landscapes, and vibrant culture. The current study is governed by two theories – the theory of planned behaviour and self-determination theory – in order to comprehend the factors that influence travellers' behavioural intentions and attitudes toward visiting the KSA. The study highlights the significance of understanding motivating aspects of tourism behaviour, such as travel motivation and e-WOM, as they influence tourists' attitude towards a destination and their intention to visit. The research also investigates the conative destination image of the KSA, which refers to travellers' propensity to actively contemplate a destination for travel, and the role of demographic profiles as moderators in the tourism industry of the KSA. The study emphasises the need for additional research on the impact of material sources, individual characteristics, and social media participation, as well as the underlying motivations and attitudes that influence visitors' decisions. This study's findings could assist Saudi Arabian tourism industry stakeholders in developing strategies to attract more visitors and enhance the country's reputation.

Based on the above, the following aim and objectives are outlined:

Aim: To analyse the determinants of tourists' attitudes and the visit intention towards the KSA.

Objectives:

1. To examine the impact of conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation on the tourist attitude of tourists to visit the KSA.
2. To assess the influence of tourist attitude on the tourist intention to visit the KSA.
3. To evaluate the mediating effect of tourist attitude on the relationship between tourism-related factors (conative destination image, perceived security, e-WOM, and travel motivation) and the visit intention towards the KSA.
4. To investigate the moderating role of demographic characteristics on the relationship between tourist attitude and the tourist visit intention towards the KSA.

Main ethical consideration(s) of the research
(the ethical matters your research may involve)

- The participants will be informed about the study's objectives, potential drawbacks, and the advantages of taking part in the study, and other relevant information.
- Consent will be taken from the participants before starting the data collection process.
- No personal information will be collected throughout the research.
- In case of any circumstances, the participants provide their names, in that case pseudonyms will be assigned to the participants to safeguard their names.

- All their data and information will be kept securely and only authorised people will have access to the data.
- The participants will not be harmed in any way if they agree or do not agree to participate in the study.
- The participants will be allowed to withdraw their participation at any point in time.

Methods of data collection

(outline in detail how data will be collected and attach a copy of any questionnaires, interview schedules or observation guidelines to be used: 400 words max)

The quantitative research method underpinned by the positivist research philosophy and deductive research approach is proposed for the current study. The survey research strategy will be adopted to collect data from the participants. An online survey will be created and a link will be shared with the participants, and they will need to give their full permission before the survey can continue. An online survey tool like SurveyMonkey or Qualtrics will be used to create and distribute the sample. The survey will take between 10 and 15 minutes to finish. The respondents will be given a rough idea of the time it will take to finish the survey in the marketing materials, in an effort to increase involvement. The survey will also feature simple navigation and easy-to-understand prompts. Also, pre-established scales in the literature will be used to develop the survey. For instance, a 12-point scale of conative destination image is adopted from Stylos et al. (2016), a 6-point scale of perceived security is adopted from Woosnam et al. (2015), a 6-point scale of e-WOM is adopted from Reza Jalilvand et al. (2012), an 11-point scale of travel motivation is adopted from Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019), a 3-point scale of tourist attitude is adopted from Reza Jalilvand et al. (2012), and a 6-point scale of tourist visit intention is adopted from Çelik and Dedeoğlu (2019). A 7-point Likert scale will be used in the study, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*.

Recruitment of participants

(outline the number and type of participants involved; give details of how potential participants will be identified and invited to take part in the study; and how informed consent will be obtained: 300 words max)

The population of the current study consists of tourists from around the world, as the study concentrates on tourists from around the world and their intention to travel to the KSA for non-religious reasons. This study will not concentrate on tourists visiting the KSA for Umrah, Hajj, or any other religious activities. As the current study is concentrated on specific criteria that are pertinent to the study, purposive sampling is appropriate and applicable. Purposeful sampling is utilised to select a population sample based on a predetermined criterion that fulfills the research objectives. Due to the magnitude of the population, the minimum target sample size for visitors is between 500 and 1,000. The development of a cross-sectional questionnaire is used to collect data via online surveys.

Please attach a copy of your information sheet(s), draft materials such as interview questions etc., & consent form, as well as an indication of planned time of issue/use. If you are not using a consent form, please explain why.

□ Attached

Potential adverse effects on participants and steps to deal with them
(outline if you anticipate any potential harm or negative consequences including psychological stress, anxiety or upset which may be induced by the study, and the steps to be taken to address them)

No harm will be done to the participants.

Steps to be taken to ensure confidentiality of data
(outline steps to ensure confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of data during collection, storage and publication. Specifically identify any confidential or personal information, and/or any other party's protected intellectual property which you need to use and safeguard)

- No personal information that can identify an individual will be collected.
- Password-protected folders and other technical measures will be used to ensure the data are secure.
- All the data will be kept confidential.

Steps to be taken to ensure financial and commercial propriety
(specifically identify any external funding or significant third-party financial involvement with the research)

Not applicable

Other plans to address a particular ethical matter not mentioned above

None

III. Research ethics checklist

If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the high risk statements, then your research is High Risk. If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the medium risk statements, and 'No' to all high risk statements, then your research is Medium Risk. If you answer 'No' to all high risk and medium risk statements, then your research is Low Risk.

High Risk		
Will consent be coerced out of the participants by those who would likely benefit from the research?	□Yes	□No
Will it be necessary for the participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time?	□Yes	□No
Will the study involve some form of invasion of privacy?	□Yes	□No
Is discomfort or harmful impact to the participants likely to result from the study?	□Yes	□No
Is there a possibility that the safety of the researcher may be in question?	□Yes	□No
Will the research require the researcher to be deceptive or dishonest with the participants?	□Yes	□No
Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to the participants?	□Yes	□No
Will the research have negative intrusive physical or psychological effects on the participants?	□Yes	□No
Will the names of the participants or the institution appear in the research?	□Yes	□No
Does the research involve the condition of destroying recorded data after it is used?	□Yes	□No
Medium Risk		
Will the research involve governmental institutions or participants such as, for example, the military or the judiciary?	□Yes	□No
Will the study involve discussion of sensitive or potentially sensitive topics and issues?	□Yes	□No
Does the research involve potentially vulnerable participants (for example children, prisoners, or people with disabilities)?	□Yes	□No
Does the research involve participants that are unable to give consent?	□Yes	□No
Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?	□Yes	□No
Will the research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given?	□Yes	□No

Risk level identified	□ Low	□ Medium	□ High

The researcher undertakes not to deviate from the original consent granted by the University's Research Ethics Committee. The researcher bears full and sole responsibility for any deviation from this consent and all consequences arising from such deviation. The researcher waives all right of appeal in the event of any penalties applied by the University arising from such deviation.

Declaration by the Researcher:

Having read the University's Research Policy I declare that the information contained herein is to the best of my knowledge and belief accurate.

I am satisfied that I have attempted to identify all risks that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations as researcher and the rights of participants. I am satisfied that all researchers (including myself) working on the project have the appropriate qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached document and that I, as the lead researcher, take full responsibility for the ethical conduct of the research in accordance with subject-specific and University Ethical Guidelines (Policies and Procedures Manual), as well as any other condition laid down by the Research Ethics Committee. I am fully aware of the timelines and content for participants' information and consent.

Name: Salem Naif Alenizi

Signature:

Date: 07/07/2023

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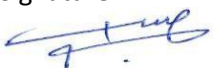
Staff	
Chair of Ethics Committee Name:	
□ Approved □ Not approved	
Signature:	Date:

Students	
Dean of Faculty Name: Professor Aymen Masadeh	
■ Approved □ Not approved	
Signature: 	Date: 28.8.2023

Authorisation for conducting research (only if approval is obtained):

The Committee has confirmed that this project fits within the University's Policies for Research and I authorise the low-risk *research proposal on behalf of BUiD's Research Ethics Committee.*

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Chair of the Research Ethics Committee)

Appendix B: Survey Questionnaire

Dear Participants,

Greetings! My name is Salem Naif Alenizi, and I am currently pursuing my Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) degree. I want to express my deepest gratitude for considering taking part in this important study project. The tourism business has a crucial role in fostering mutual understanding, economic development, and the dissemination of culture. Against this backdrop, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has become a fascinating and rapidly growing tourism hotspot. The KSA is an alluring destination for those in search of culturally stimulating travel experiences because of its remarkable combination of ancient history, stunning natural beauty, and thriving contemporary life. This research is about tourists' intention to visit the KSA and determining the factors impacting it. The research is focused on analysing tourists' visit intention who are visiting the KSA, specifically for leisure purposes.

Your participation in this survey will help us gain a deeper understanding of the factors that influence tourists' decisions to visit the KSA. Your sincere and considerate responses will assist us in drawing meaningful conclusions and formulating suggestions for the promotion of tourism in the KSA.

Your responses will be treated with the uttermost discretion, and your personal information will remain confidential. I appreciate your time and consideration. Your participation in this study is essential to advancing the knowledge of the tourism dynamics in the KSA. If you agree to participate in this research, please click 'Next'.

Best regards,

Salem Naif Alenizi

Contact E-mail: 21000008@student.buid.ac.ae

Demographics

Please select the most relevant.

Gender	Male
	Female
Age	Less than 25 years
	26–35 years
	36–45 years
	46–55 years
	More than 55 years
Education level	Diploma level
	Bachelor's level
	Master's level
	Doctorate level
	Do not have any degree
Marital status	Single
	Married
	Divorced
	Widowed
Nationality	Please indicate your nationality: _____
Occupation	Employed
	Self-employed
	Unemployed
	Student
Annual income	Less than 25,000 USD
	25,000–49,999 USD
	50,000–74,999 USD
	75,000–99,999 USD
	100,000–149,999 USD
	Greater than 150,000 USD
Religious orientation	Islam
	Christianity
	Hinduism
	Buddhism
	Judaism
	Other (Please specify)
How do you travel generally?	As a solo traveller
	As a couple
	With family
	With friends
What is your travel frequency?	Once in a month
	Once in 6 months
	Once in a year
	Once in 2 years or more

Survey Questions

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Sr. No.	Questions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	The KSA has always been a dream-destination to visit sometime during my lifetime							
2	The KSA as a dream tourist destination expresses itself as a suitable vacation choice							
3	The KSA as a destination helps me put knowledge that I have in use (i.e., knowledge of history, geography, philosophy)							
4	The KSA as a destination always constitutes a personal goal for vacations							
5	The KSA as a destination choice stems from a personal need of mine that had to be fulfilled							
6	The KSA as a destination choice has evoked my persistence to visit it							
7	The KSA as a destination choice encapsulates positive attributes that help in the growth of my personality							
8	The KSA as a destination choice makes me believe that my vacation there may be the best reward/gift I can offer myself							
9	I will be careful and mindful of crime in the KSA							
10	I will feel worried about my personal safety in the KSA							
11	In the KSA, I might become a victim of a crime							

12	People have warned me that the KSA as a country is dangerous
13	The KSA as a country is unsafe
14	The KSA is just as unsafe as other destinations
15	I often read and review other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions and positively impact others
16	To make sure I choose the right destination (like the KSA), I often read other tourists' online travel reviews
17	I often investigate other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination (like the KSA)
18	I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination like the KSA
19	When travelling to a destination like the KSA, if I do not read tourists' online travel reviews, I worry about my decision
20	When travelling to a destination like the KSA, tourists' online travel reviews make me confident while traveling to the destination
21	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for relaxing
22	My motivation to travel to the KSA is to be emotionally and physically refreshed

23	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for enjoying good weather
24	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for spending time with the people I care deeply about
25	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for seeking adventure
26	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for having fun
27	I am motivated to travel to the KSA as an escape from my home
28	I am motivated to travel to the KSA to mix with fellow tourists
29	I am motivated to travel to the KSA for increasing my knowledge of new places
30	My motivation to travel to the KSA is to meet local people
31	I am motivated to travel to the KSA to visit historical and cultural sites and other attractions
32	As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very good
33	As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very valuable
34	As a tourist destination, I think the KSA is very pleasant
35	Visiting the KSA will be meaningful
36	Visiting the KSA will be worth it
37	Visiting the KSA will be a wise choice
38	I would like to visit the KSA in the future
39	It is likely that I will visit the KSA in the future

40	I intend to visit the KSA in the future
41	I would visit the KSA rather than any other tourism destination
42	If everything goes as I think, I will visit the KSA in the future