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## Residents' Attitudes Towards Tourism Development in AL-Salt City, Jordan

### LES ATTITUDES DES RESIDENTS A L'EGARD DU TOURISME DEVELOPPEMENT DANS LA VILLE D'AL-SALT, EN JORDANIE

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#### Abstract

This paper investigates the attitudes of the local community in regards to tourism development in the city of Al-Salt, located 15 kilometers northwest of Jordan's capital, Amman. Five focus group interviews were conducted with 56 participants from the local community. Using qualitative analysis of the data, a model of resident's attitudes has emerged. The models explain how the residents do shape their attitudes towards tourism development programs. This paper argues that the local community is neither fully aware nor involved in the tourism projects that are being implemented in their city. Although they might have some concerns about tourism practices they support tourism development in their city. The study provides suggestions for the Jordanian tourism decision-making sector to improve awareness and increase further participation of the locals in the tourism projects in their city.

**Key words:** Tourism; Marketing; Culture; Residents' Attitudes; Tourism Development; The Middle East

#### Résumé

Cet article étudie les attitudes de la communauté locale en ce qui concerne le développement du tourisme dans la ville de Al-Salt, située à 15 kilomètres au nord-ouest de la capitale de la Jordanie, Amman. Cinq entretiens de groupe de discussion ont été menées avec 56 participants de la communauté locale. En utilisant l'analyse qualitative des données, un modèle d'attitudes résidents a émergé. Le modèle explique comment les résidents ne façonner leurs attitudes à l'égard des programmes de développement du

tourisme. Cet article soutient que la communauté locale n'est ni pleinement conscient, ni impliqué dans les projets touristiques qui sont mises en œuvre dans leur ville. Bien qu'ils puissent avoir des préoccupations au sujet des pratiques de tourisme qu'ils soutiennent le développement du tourisme dans leur ville. L'étude fournit des suggestions pour le tourisme jordanien prise de décision du secteur afin d'améliorer la sensibilisation et rehausser davantage la participation des habitants dans les projets de tourisme dans leur ville.

**Mots-clés:** Tourisme; Du marketing; De la culture; Les attitudes des résidents; Le développement du tourisme; et Le Moyen-Orient

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#### INTRODUCTION

Investigating the residents' attitudes towards tourism development programs before during and after the implementation is vital for tourism projects. According to Lepp (2007) the residents' attitudes towards tourism are important indicators of tourism's appropriateness. In fact, it is generally agreed that the residents' attitudes towards the impact of tourism are likely to be an important planning and policy consideration for successful development, marketing, operation, and sustainability of existing and future tourism programs (Sheldon & Abenoja, 2001 ; Ko & Stewart, 2002).

The favorable attitude of the local population towards tourism generates positive interactions with tourists, promoting their satisfaction. This particularly important in the developing world where tourism projects aim to include and benefit local communities. Moreover, gaining

insights into the locals' attitudes is the crucial point of tourism development and sustainability (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2010). Planners are now challenged with understanding how the public perceives and feels about tourism in order to gain local support for tourism projects and initiatives (harrill, 2004).

The recent interest in host communities' perception of tourism and tourism impacts arouse the interest in qualitative methods (Lepp, 2008). Nevertheless, the intention of employing the qualitative methods is still in initial stages. The under-utilization of the qualitative methodologies is more apparent in tourism and hospitality research (DeCrop, 1999; Walle, 1997). The majority of studies on the topic have been written from a positivistic perspective, based on quantification while qualitative studies have not kept pace. Less than 5% of the articles published in the main tourism Journals are qualitative (Riley & Love, 2000, pp. 175).

Qualitative studies are important because they allow the in-depth analysis of residents' attitudes to tourism and allow more nuances in attitudes to be captured. Moreover, qualitative methods provide researchers with the tools to achieve a better understanding of the social and cultural context of peoples' real lives (Myers 1997). The qualitative techniques use subjective information that is not limited to rigidly definable variables, and also it examines complex questions that can be impossible with quantitative methods. Therefore, it builds new theories through exploring new areas of research (Dann & Phillips, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; and Seale, 1999).

Tourism is the second largest source of currency inflow to the balance of payments accounting for 18.2% of service sector receipts and equivalent to 38% of Jordan's domestic exports. The tourism industry is also a major source of employment with a total of 40,092 people being directly employed in the tourism sector in 2009 (MOTA, 2010). The tourism industry also serves to indirectly create employment via the construction, retail, food, transportation and industrial sectors (Jordan National Tourism Strategy, 2010).

With support of international agencies such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), MOTA has a plan to promote Al-Salt old city as one of the main destinations in Jordan. MOTA is working with international agencies to prepare the old city of Al-Salt to be ready to receive tourists. Hence, the government needs to work with the local residents to facilitate and enhance their acceptance and involvement in tourism activities.

Therefore, the current study seeks to explore the residents' experiences with tourism development programmes that are being implemented in Al-Salt city, in particular, to address the following research questions:

- What are the residents' attitudes towards tourism development programs that are being implemented in their city.
- How do the residents in Al-Salt city shape their attitudes towards tourism development programs.

Therefore, the findings of this study may help the decision makers in attracting the locals' involvement in tourism development and foster positive attitudes that inspire pro-tourism behaviour.

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## 1. SETTING

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Al-Salt city is an ancient agricultural town and administrative centre in west-central Jordan. It is on the old main highway leading from Amman to Jerusalem. Situated in the Balqa highland, about 790-1100 meters above sea level, the town was tightly built on a cluster of three hills, close to the Jordan River valley. One of the three hills (Jebal Al Qal'a) is the site of a 13th century ruined fortress. It is the capital of the Balqa Governorate (Al-Salt Greater Municipality, 2010).

It is not known when the city was first inhabited, but it is believed that it was built by the Macedonian army during the reign of Alexander the Great. The town was known as *Saltus* in Byzantine times (which means the Valley of Trees or "Thick Forest") and was the seat of a bishopric.

Al-Salt has several other places of interest, including Roman tombs on the outskirts of town and the Citadel and site of the town's early 13th century Ayyubid fortress which was built by al- Ma'azzam Isa, the nephew of Saladine soon after 1198 AD. There is also a small museum and a handicraft school where the visitors can admire the traditional skills of ceramics, weaving, silk-screen printing and dyeing. Al-Salt's Archaeological and Folklore Museum displays artifacts dating back to the Chalcolithic period to the Islamic era as well as other items relating to the history of the area. In the folklore museum there is a good presentation of Bedouin and traditional costumes and everyday folkloric items (JTB, 2011). The city of Al-Salt is anticipating increased tourist flow through development programmes by the Ministry of Tourism in conjunction with USAID- Jordan Tourism Development Programme and the World Bank-funded Third Tourism Project (JTB, 2010).

Recently, MOTA, USAID and JICA are working on tourism development and boost in Al-Salt city (the Jordan Times, 2009). The ministry is working to renovate and conserve historic buildings such as mosques and the houses of wealthy merchants, in order to give tourists a taste of the Kingdom's urban heritage and how life was at the turn of the 20th century when the foundations of the country were being built. The ministry is also working with the USAID-supported Jordan Tourism Development Programme to promote local investment in the area, en-

couraging Al-Saltis to develop shops, cafés, restaurants or other ventures that can benefit from the Kingdom's growing tourism sector (MOTA, 2007)

Meanwhile, JICA has been working to highlight the "Golden Age of Al-Salt", the period between the late 19th century and early 20th century when the city stood as the Kingdom's social, economic and political epicenter. These activities include Souq Al Hammam, the Kingdom's oldest commercial strip, where tourists can browse the various spices, incense and crafts in Al-Sale at the vibrant and traditional market (the Jordan times, 2009).

Trails have designed for tourists, leading them through recently refurbished Al-Ain Plaza, Daoud House, the city's old English Hospital, Qaqish House, Al-Salt Archaeological Museum, each site complete with signage and interpretation, in addition to recently refurbished lookout points providing panoramic views of the Balqa highlands. Furthermore, JICA aims to train local guides steeped in the history of Al-Salt to utilise the area's oral traditions, providing anecdotes and insight into the diverse heritage of the city, long a crossroads for merchants between historic Palestine, Damascus and the Arabian Gulf.

This background provides the setting for this research to explore the attitudes of local community of Al-Salt city toward tourism development.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The middle East region generally, and Jordan particularly, has received scant attention from tourism researchers. For instance, there was no published research on some tourism issues in Jordan, such as destination image, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Schneider and Sonmez, 1999). In fact, It has been recognized that, residents' attitudes towards tourism development is important for tourism sustainability (Fyall & Garrod, 1998; Gursoy et al., 2009).

The focus of residents' attitudes literature shown a dramatic changing in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as argued by Jafari (1986) and Lankford and Howard (1994). The focus of residents' attitudes research focused on the positive aspects of tourism during the 1960s, while the focus was shifted to the negative aspects of tourism during the 1970s (Jafari, 1986).

However, residents' attitude research achieved a balanced view of cost/benefits during the 1980s and 1990s (Lankford and Howard, 1994). During the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, researchers identified a wide range of positive and negative impacts of tourism that may affect the resident's attitudes towards tourism development (Yoon et al. 2002; Gursoy, et al. 2002; Ko and Stewart; Jurowsky and Gursoy, 2004; Dyer et al. 2007; Lepp, 2007; Vargas-Sanchez et al. 2009; Cui and Ryan, 2011; Mbaiwa, and Stronza, 2011).

The major positive aspects of tourism, as reported by previous studies, include economic benefits

(better income, employment opportunities, business opportunities), and cultural benefits (increased knowledge by locals of own culture, promoting of community pride, sense of cultural identity, preservation of cultural and historical monuments). On the other hand, the major negative aspects of tourism include economic cost (lack of economic diversifications, high inflation rates, over use of infrastructure, congestions and disruption of daily life), cultural cost (undesirable behavior, crime levels, cultural distortion, over use of cultural monuments), and environmental cost (pollution, noise, extra demand on limited resources).

Most recent research employ quantitative methods to study resident's attitudes towards tourism (e.g. Cui and Ryan, 2011; Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2011). However, The predominance of quantitative methods limits the ability to gain a more in-depth understanding of the residents' attitudes and support of tourism development projects (Deery et al., 2012). Furthermore, qualitative methodology is more relevant to tourism areas at the initial stage where is no previous research published as is the case of the current study. For instance, the main attempts to build a model of attitudes towards tourism employed quantitative techniques to test models that entirely generated from the previous literature (e.g. Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2011; dyer et al, 2007; Gursoy, and Rutherford, 2004; Ko, and Stewart, 2002).

For instance, Vargas-Sánchez et al., (2011) attempted to construct a universal model of residents' attitudes to tourism, they reviewed the previous literature, and they incorporated the wide range of variables that mentioned in the literature to establish a universal model. Furthermore, Gursoy, and Rutherford (2004) built a model depending on the previous literature and tested the model using structural equation modeling (SEM) techniques.

An extensive review of tourism attitude literature led to identify three dominant theoretical framework that explain residents' attitudes to tourism development, mainly, social exchange theory (SET), tourism area life cycle (TALC) and theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Haley et., al, 2005; Diedrich and Garcia-Buades, 2009; Ward and Beron, 2011). SET model claims that, those employed in the tourism sector, who receive more direct benefits from the industry, have more positive attitudes toward tourism development (Haley et., al, 2005). It has been argued that, SET is not adequate on its own to explain and interpret attitudes towards tourism development (Ward and Beron, 2011).

Butler (1980) developed the TALC Model that interprets tourism development as a series of stages, through which a destination evolves-exploration, involvement, development, consolidation and stagnation. This model supports Doxey (1976) suggestion that, locals' attitudes are positive during the initial stages of tourism development but become negative in the later

stages. However, other studies found destination at similar stages of development with different attitudes (e.g. Horn & Simmons, 2002). In fact, Butler (2009) stated that the TALC model works well with destinations established in earlier days, when the life span of a destination might have been a century or more, which is not applicable in the case of this research.

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a hierarchical model developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1980). TRA asserts that, behavior is influenced by behavioral intent, behavioral intent is influenced by attitudes, and then attitudes are influenced by beliefs. There is a widespread support for the validity of TRA in tourism field. There are connections between tourists' attitudes and their behavioral intentions (e.g. MacKay and Campbell, 2004; Yu and Litterll, 2005).

TRA were employed in the previous literature to understand residents' attitudes towards tourism related issues (e.g. Whittaker et al., 2001 ; MacKay and Campbell, 2004). For instance Whittaker et al, (2001) employed TRA to understand public attitudes towards a proposed urban moose hunt near Anchorage, Alaska. And MacKay and Campbell (2004) employed TRA to examine public perceptions and support for hunting as a tourism product.

It has been noticed that, focus group interviews are used in conjunction with TRA model . Furthermore, it has been argued that, TRA model can provide a fertile ground for hypothesizing relationships between residents' attitudes towards tourism and residents' behavior (lepp, 2007), thus TRA model was employed in this research to design the focus group interviews to generate relevant data to answer the research questions.

### 3. METHODS

Investigations were conducted in Al-Salt City between February and September 2010. Qualitative methods were used as they produce a more detailed and nuanced assessment of attitude than quantitative methods (Shanahan *et al.*, 1999). Based on the trade off between advantages and disadvantages of qualitative methods that are explained in the literature (Calder 1977; Krueger, 1994; Morgan, 1988 and 1996) a decision has been made to use focus group interviews.

In fact, there are three reasons to support this decision. Firstly, focus groups offer interaction between participants and the interviewer, which lead to greater emphasis on participant's point of view. Secondly, while individual interviews are also interaction, the key point is that focus groups offer a strong mechanism for placing the control

over the interaction in the hands of the participants rather than the researchers. Thirdly, group interview requires less preparations, and they are more economical to organise in terms of material and time resources.

The researcher is familiar with facilitating focus group interviews (Alhammad et al., 2011 ; Hyasad Alhammad, 2010), keeping in mind the fact that, qualitative methodology generally, and focus group interviews particularly are not popular in Jordan, beside the limited budget for this research, the researcher decided to facilitate the focus group interviews himself.

A small number of participants in each focus group increases the interaction among participants as each one has a good opportunity to share insights (Morgan, 1988), while restricted size results in a smaller pool of total ideas according to Krueger (1994). On the other hand, large focus groups produce more diversified opinions that enrich the item pool, but beyond a certain number of participants (normally 12 participants) reduce the opportunity of each participant to participate and share their opinions (Morgan, 1996).

Group size can range from as few as four to as many as twelve according to Krueger (1994), but most often one finds that approximately six to ten participants are recommended (Morgan, 1996 and Krueger, 1994). For the purpose of this research a decision was made to recruit ten participants in each focus group session based on Morgan's (1988) suggestions that a few larger groups are recommended.

To get ten participants in each group, more than ten people were invited in case some of them do not come. Also, if all invited participants came to the session they should not be more than twelve people; hence twelve participant were invited to participate in each focus group session. five focus group interviews were conducted with one group of university students (n = 11), one group of university staff (n = 10), one group of workers in private sector related to tourism (n = 12), one group of workers in public sector related to tourism (n = 11) and one group of workers in sectors not related to tourism and unemployed people (n= 12). All participant were residents at Al-Salt city, the profile of the participants in the current study are presented in table 1.

Attitudes towards tourism were of particular interest so each focus group interview started with a general question about the meanings of tourism " what does tourism mean to you". Moreover, each focus group interview included questions like "how do you feel about tourism in Al-Salt" . respondents were then asked to explain their feelings.

**Table 1**  
**The Respondents' Profile**

Participant's Age		Participant's Gender		Participant's Job		Participant's Education	
Less than 20	10	Male	29	Student	11	Less than high school	6
20-24	12	Female	27	Private not related to tourism	11	High school	26
25-29	13			Private related to tourism	12	Under graduate	23
30-34	9			Public related to tourism	8	Postgraduate	1
35 and more	11			Public not related to tourism	10		
				unemployed	4		
Total	56		56		56		56

As the vast majority of participants only speak Arabic the interviews were conducted in Arabic, also the data was analysed in Arabic, and only the final results were translated to English.) All focus group interviews were recorded and transcribed, the database was analysed according to Glaser's and Strauss' grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990 and 1996). In a first step (open coding) the full text of the first focus group interview was screened carefully in order to identify noticeable statements regarding the research question. The statements were assigned to categories. Consequently, the categories contained factors that appeared to influence the residents' attitudes. The following focus group interviews were then analysed in the same way.

In a second step (axial coding), the interrelationships between the categories were investigated based on the data from all focus group interviews. The identification of the main categories and the interrelationships between them was then examined and revised until no more contradictions could be found in the data. Finally, in the third step (selective coding), the transcripts of the focus group interviews were screened again in order to find any possible contributions that further differentiated the main categories and their interrelationships.

Theoretical sampling technique was employed in the current research; focus group interviews are conducted in conjunction with the data analysis and continue until each criterion of interest has been saturated with information (Lepp, 2007). After conducting and analyzing the first focus group interview, each subsequent focus group interview were designed and conducted in the light of the result of the previous one. Therefore, to achieve theoretical saturation, the potential participant that are most likely to produce the most relevant data that will discriminate and test the emerging themes were selected.

Normally, researchers prefer flexible methods to data collection to achieve theoretical saturation, thus they try to avoid focus group interviews because they think gathering people every now and then is an extremely tedious task. In the case of the this study, the research lived and worked in Al-Salt city from 2007 until 2011 and he has strong

relations with the local community there, furthermore, the locals are very keen to participate in meeting and general discussions related to their city and culture.

The representative of the sample was based on comparison with available demographic data of the study area and consultation of the local informants. Of the 56 participants in the focus group interviews, 29 were men (52%) and 27 were female (48%). 39 participants were less than 30 years old (70%). Six participants had less than high school degree (11%), 26 had high school (46%) 23 of them were undergraduate students, 2 had diploma degree (4%), and 21 had bachelor degree (37%) and one had an MBA degree (2%). Twenty of the participants were directly involved in tourism (34%); they either own or work in shops in the main old street in Al-Salt city (Al-Hammam Street), some other participants work in public sectors related to tourism.

The latest published demographic information for Al-Salt city was by the Department of Statistics in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (HKJ) (2004). According to the statistics, men comprise 52% of the population in Al-Salt city while 68% are less than thirty years old. Educational demographics were not available for Al-Salt city.

#### 4. FINDINGS

Thirty-nine of the fifty-six participants (70%) expressed positive attitudes towards tourism activities and developments in the city of Al Salt. Fifteen out of the twenty participants that are directly involved in tourism (75%) expressed negative attitudes towards tourism. As the participants that are involved directly in tourism may have more knowledge and concerns, this result called for kearful analysis of the main themes and the potential interdependency among them. As a result of data analysis, three main themes emerged as dominant namely: (1) community benefits, (2) cost, and (3) barriers. Table 2 displays these themes, codes, and sub codes associated with them. These themes are discussed below.

#### 4.1 Community Benefits

The participants of this study identified the community benefits as a primary factor influencing their attitudes towards tourism development in Al-Salt city.

“I support tourism development in my city as long as this will benefit our community” (Sammera, interview, July 22, 2010). This participant believes that, tourism is beneficial to her community, and because of that she has positive attitude towards tourism. Another participant explained that “if bringing more visitors to the city will bring benefits to the city, I am definitely with it” (Omara, interview, Feb 25, 2010). According to the respondents, the positive community benefits of tourism were economic, cultural, publicity and sustainability.

The participants support tourism development because they believe this will provide a good economic benefits to their community, namely, new job opportunities, economic prosperity, and good conditions for their small business, these community benefits were mentioned by forty of the fifty-six participants (71%).

Furthermore, the participants support tourism development programs at their city since they expected cultural benefits of tourism. They think that, interaction with the foreign tourists may enhance the local’s acceptance of other cultures, beside their knowledge about other culture will be improved, also locals feel proud of their heritage, for example, one participant commented,

“ It is really something good, I feel proud when I see the tourists visit my city” (Basheer, interview, September 6, 2010). The cultural benefits were mentioned by thirty-two of the fifty-six participants (57%)

The third community benefit of tourism according to the participants is the sustainability. One participant said, “tourism development projects will encourage the government and the local community to safeguard the historic buildings and keep them for the next generations” (Alaa, interview, September 6, 2010). Sustainability was mentioned by twenty-one of the fifty-six participants (38%).

Finally, participants considered publicity as one of the benefits of tourism, they like the idea of promoting their city worldwide, and promoting their traditions and customs. One participant said, “tourism projects will make more Jordanian and foreign people know about Al-Salt” (Khalid, interview, may 3, 2010). Publicity was mentioned by fourteen of the fifty-six participants (25%).

Moreover, the participants showed no awareness of tourism development project that have been running in their city by the government and international agencies such as USAID and JICA. Those participants who are fully aware of these international agencies and their activities they mentioned they have this awareness because they worked directly with these agencies.

**Table 2**  
**Categories for Emerging Themes**

Themes	Codes	Sub code
Community Benefits	Economic	New jobs Economic prosperity Good condition for small business
	Cultural	Accepting other cultures Improving the locals’ knowledge about other cultures Feel proud
	Publicity	Promoting Al-Salt City Promoting the community’s traditions and customs
	Sustainability	Safeguarding the historic buildings Improving the working skills of the local people
Cost	Cultural	acquisition of bad behaviour Loss of traditional values
Barriers	Services	Shortage of accommodations for tourists Shortage of catering
	Streets Infrastructure	Narrow streets Shortage of parking Narrow pavements
	Cultural	Conservative society Disregard work in tourism

In spite of the first two benefits of tourism (economic and cultural) were discussed in the previous studies (e.g. ), the third and fourth benefits (publicity and sustainability)

have not discussed very often (Yoon et al. 2002; Gursoy, et al. 2002; Ko and Stewart; Jurowsky and Gursoy, 2004; Dyer et al. 2007; Lepp, 2007; Vargas-Sanchez et al. 2009;

Cui and Ryan, 2011; Mbaiwa, and Stronza, 2011). Thus, it included that, the residents are fully aware of the nature of tourism benefits to their community. Furthermore, the residents considered the publicity (namely, promoting the city and the community traditions and customs) as benefits, that refers to the residents' feeling proud of their city.

## 4.2 Cost

The second theme emerged from the data described the cost that the community is expected to pay for the tourism development programs. For example, one participant believed that, "there is a price for everything" (Hani, interview, Feb 25, 2010), another participant said, "there must be a price that our community will pay" (Emad, interview, May 3, 2010). The participants expected unfavorable effects on the local culture.

Acquisition of bad behaviour was mentioned by twenty of the fifty-six participants (36%). They referred to the possibility of adopting some bad habits from the tourists. This point was subject to debate, some participants did not indicate this will happen because the community is not closed any more, most locals are now able to browse the internet and watch satellite channels. For example, one of the participants said "people see everything on the internet and satellite channels, tourism will not be worse." (Ahmmad, interview, August 17, 2010).

On the other hand, some participants are more concerned about the direct face-to-face contact with the tourists. For example, another participant replied, "But the tourist comes physically to the city and interacts with locals, that is why tourism threatens our culture." (Ali, interview, August 17, 2010). The participant had some fears about the loss of traditional values, this was mentioned by eleven of the fifty-six participants (20%). One participant said, "I am afraid that, the kids and teenager may start changing their beliefs" (Basheer, interview, September 6, 2010).

It has been noticed that, the previous studies explained a wide range of costs of tourism (e.g. Gursoy, et al. 2002; Ko and Stewart; Jurowsky and Gursoy, 2004; Dyer et al. 2007; Lepp, 2007; Vargas-Sanchez et al. 2009; Cui and Ryan, 2011; Mbaiwa, and Stronza, 2011). but in the case of Al-Salt city, the residents are concerned with only one type of costs, namely cultural cost. The residents are too concerned with their culture; they are worried about acquiring some bad behaviors and losing their traditional values. The residents focused only on cultural cost may be because they are not aware of other costs of tourism because tourism is still in the initial stage at Al-Salt city.

## 4.3 Barriers

The third theme emerging from the data described the barriers that may prevent the local community from utilizing the benefits of tourism. According to the participants, the barriers are, services, street infrastructure

and cultural barriers. One participant said, "getting the benefits of tourism is not straightforward, we still have some barriers" (Nadia, interview, July 22, 2010). Noha (interview, May 3, 2010) expressed her doubts "I am still not sure that Al-Salt will benefit from tourism, we still have some obstacles .... I doubt we can sort all of them soon".

The first concern is services, it was mentioned by forty-five of the fifty-six participants (80%). Participants of this study commented on the level and quality of service in Al-Salt city. I wonder, how many hotels do we have in Al-Salt? ... nil" (Mohammad, interview, August 17, 2010). Another participant commented on the restaurants, "there are just few restaurants here in Al-Salt, I don't think they can serve a big group of tourists" (Ahlam, interview, Feb 25, 2010).

The second concern is streets infrastructure, this barrier was mentioned by forty-one of the fifty-six participants (73%). According to the participants, the streets infrastructure is one of the main problems that may face the tourism development projects in Al-Salt city. For example, one participant said, "the streets are too narrow, the coaches and even the small buses can't pass through" (Ahlam, interview, Feb 25, 2010). indeed, the downtown, where the main attractions are located, suffers from a critical traffic jam most of the time.

Finally, the third concern is the shortage of parking areas, this problem was mentioned by twenty of the fifty-six participants (36%). One participant commented, "every time I came to the downtown, it took me ages to find space to park my car in" (Noor, interview, August 17, 2010). Finally, another problem that would affect the visitors is the "pavements". This problem was mentioned by seventeen of the fifty-six participants (30%). There is not enough space for the pedestrians to walk in the downtown. For example, a participant said, "with narrow pavements and plenty of cars, it is horrible there, I don't think a group of tourists can move there easily" (Nadir, interview, Feb 25, 2010).

The third barrier is cultural, the participants assumed that, there are cultural barriers that may prevent the community from utilizing tourism benefits. For example, one participant explained her concerns: "I feel, there is an obstacle, our culture has a problem with tourism" (Sammera, interview, July 22, 2010). The cultural barriers are explained in two points namely, conservative society, and disregard work in tourism.

Sixteen of the fifty-six participants (29%) assumed that, the Al-Salt city is a conservative society, and that it may not be fully compatible with tourism. The participants stated that Al-Salt is a closed culture as the locals are not used to deal with foreigners, and they may react aggressively with the tourists which may result in a bad image about Al-Salt. One participant explained that people here speak very loudly and seriously which may make



them look very aggressive (Sammera, interview, July 22, 2010). Moreover, some participants are skeptical about foreigners. For example one participant said, "foreigners bring problems and diseases with them" (Bayan, interview, September 6, 2010).

Finally, the participants believe that, some of the local community disregard work in tourism, particularly for women. Six of the fifty-six participants (11%) mentioned this cultural barrier. Some male participants do not recommend his relative women to work in tourism sector. For example, one participant said, "I don't allow my sister or daughter to work in some tourism jobs, such as tour guiding" (Salah, interview, May 3, 2010)

Previous studies have not been referred to "barriers" as a determinant of residents' attitudes (e.g. Gursoy, et al. 2002; Ko and Stewart; Jurowsky and Gursoy, 2004; Dyer et al. 2007; Lepp, 2007; Vargas-Sanchez et al. 2009; Cui and Ryan, 2011; Mbaiwa, and Stronza, 2011), on the contrary, the previous studies limited the determinates of residents' attitudes in the negative and positive effects of tourism. This may refer to the residents' awareness of the actual problems that may face tourism in Al-Salt city and may prevent the community there from gaining the value of tourism.

#### 4.4 Emerging Model

By looking at the interrelationship among the main themes, it has been found that a theoretical model of residents' attitudes towards tourism can be built. The participants associated between the main themes. Table. 3 represent the potential relationships between the main themes and the number of participants that mentioned each relationship. The emerging relationships are discussed below.

##### 5.4.1 Attitudes and the Comparison Between the Community Benefits & Cost

The participants do not look at benefits of tourism apart from the cost that the community must pay in return. Twenty-five of the fifty-six participants (45%) gathered between tourism costs and benefits.

Through the analysis, the researcher observed that, the participants compare between the community benefits and cost to identify their attitudes towards tourism programs in their city. The respondents' attitudes depend mainly on the perceived differences between the community benefits and cost from tourism. Six of the fifty-six participants (11%) associated their attitudes towards tourism to their comparison between the community cost and benefits from tourism. For example, a respondent said, "if we get more than what we pay, yes I support tourism" (Noha, interview, May 3, 2010). Consequently, the research decided to look carefully at the respondents' answers in

order to figure out any potential relationships between the main themes. These comparisons are discussed next.

##### 4.4.2 Linkage between Tourism Benefits and Cost Separately with Attitudes

The respondents associated separately between the community benefits and costs and their attitudes towards tourism programs in their city. Forty of the fifty-six participants (71%) associated between the community benefits and attitudes separately in different occasions. For example, a participant explained his attitude toward tourism in Al-Salt city, "yes I support tourism because our community will get several advantages as soon as foreign visitor start flow in" (Adel, interview, Feb 25, 2010). this relationship is the strongest association between two themes in this study as forty of the fifty-six participants (71%) stated while they explain their attitudes.

On the other hand, thirty-six of the fifty-six participants (64%) associated between tourism costs and their attitudes towards tourism in several occasions, they restricted their acceptance of tourism activities in their city to the size and type of cost that their community is expected to pay in return. For example one participant said, "my support to tourism in Al-Salt is subject to the size and type of cost that we must pay in return" (Hoda, interview, Feb 25, 2010). as well, the participant focused only on the cultural cost as explained above.

##### 4.4.3 Barriers, Benefits and Attitudes

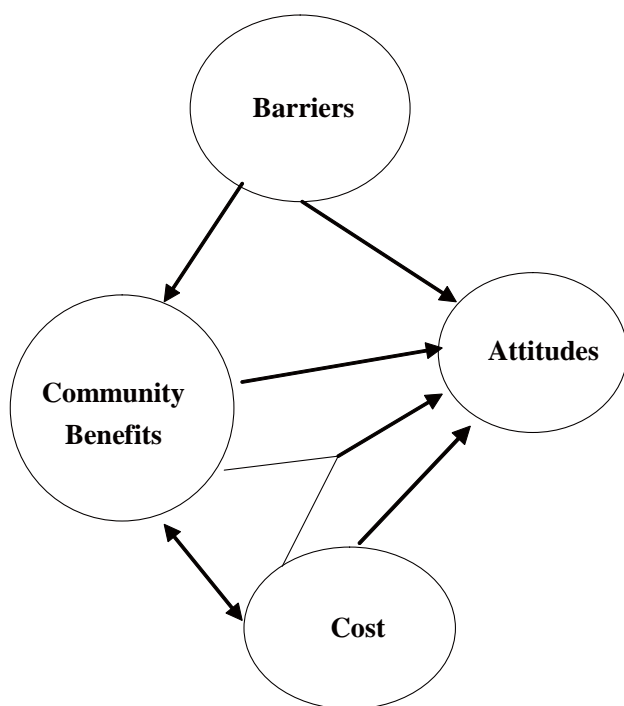
The results of data analysis revealed the existence of relationships between the barriers and both benefits and attitudes. The participants are concerned with the possibility of utilizing from tourism in their city due to the barriers that may reduce the value of tourism, ten of the fifty-six participants (18%) associated between the community benefits and the barriers. For example, a participant explained his worries, " yes sure there are several benefits of tourism, but I doubt we could get these benefits because we have several problems .... For example, we don't have hotels, restaurants ..." (Ali, interview, May 3, 2010).

Furthermore, the participants associated between their attitudes towards tourism and the barriers. Fifteen of the fifty-six participants (27%) stated that, their support to tourism is affected by the size of problems that may prevent their community from receiving any benefits from tourism. For example one participant said, "we are not ready yet to receive foreign tourists here in Al-Salt ..... we must sort the problems first to be able to benefit from tourism .... then I will say yes I support tourism" (Ola, interview, May 3, 2010).

**Table 3**  
**Relationships between the Main Themes as Mentioned by the Participants**

	Community Benefits	Barriers	Community Cost	Attitudes
Community Benefits	\	10 Participants	25 Participants	40 Participants
Barriers	10 Participants	\	0	15 Participants
Community Cost	25 Participants	0	\	36 Participants
Attitudes	40 Participants	15 Participants	36 Participants	\

By combining these potential relationships between the main themes, a model can emerge. This model explains how the local community identify their attitudes toward tourism development programs. the local community in Al-Salt city evaluates the cost and benefit of tourism development programs in order to identify their attitudes towards these programs, there attitudes depend mainly on the kind and size of benefits and cost. They also do not focus only on the benefits but rather they consider the possibility of attaining these benefits. Thus, a new theme namely, Barriers, has emerged.



**Figure 1**  
**Model of Local Community Attitudes Towards Tourism**

The results and the emerging model are discussed below with referring to the findings of previous studies in the field.

**5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

There are some attempts, in the previous literature, to

establish a model that explain the residents' attitudes towards tourism (e.g. Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2011; dyer et al, 2007; Gursoy, and Rutherford, 2004; Ko, and Stewart, 2002), nevertheless these attempts relied on the previous literature to build the intended models and then verify them and use them to investigate attitudes. Indeed, a good model that explain the resident's attitudes must be established based on a qualitative investigation of the residents themselves rather than combining variables from the previous studies that were conducted in different context and perspectives.

The current study attempts to understand residents' attitudes at Al-Salt city. As the Jordanian government is working on preparing Al-Salt city to be ready to receive international visitors, thus the study provides a model of residents' attitudes towards tourism programs at the initial stage of tourism development .

the current study established a hierarchical model that indemnify the potential relationships between the main variables of residents' attitudes towards tourism, as Gursoy, and Rutherford (2004) suggested, the hierarchical model performed better than alternative representations in capturing residents' attitudes.

The model indicates that, the residents attitudes depend, not only on the cost and benefits of tourism, but also depend on the perceived barriers that may reduce or prevent the value of the tourism programs from their community. perceived barriers and the residents' perception have not been addressed sufficiently and adequately in the literature, despite the fact that, some previous studies employed statistical techniques, such as structural equation modeling to study these issues and found that, the resident attitudes is affected by their perception (e.g. Ko and Stewart, 2002).

The results reveal differences in attitudes between those who are involved directly in tourism and those who are not. Residents who are involved in tourism have negative attitudes towards tourism, 75% of them reacted to tourism with anxiety. This finding somehow supports (Jurowski and Gursoy, 2004) suggestions that, residents living closer to the attraction may feel more negatively about tourism. Furthermore, the results found that, the residents are not involved in tourism development projects that are carried out by international agencies such as USAID and JICA. Indeed, they are not fully aware of the tourism de-

velopment projects that are being carried out in their city and the value of these projects.

The local community in Al-Salt City has concerns such as infrastructure and the quality of services, they are not happy with traffic jams in their city. And it appears that the city suffers from a serious infrastructure problem, the streets are narrow and traffic jams are an everyday problem, the locals reported that this problem will get worse. Furthermore, authorities must communicate with the local community to find out practical solution to reduce traffic jams. Furthermore, the local community is concerned with the probability of acquiring bad habits and behaviour from interacting with tourists. The decision makers must expand the dialogue with the local community to find out different ways to sustain and minimize the local culture from being diminished.

With effective dialogue between the local residents and government opportunities will be created to help overcome their fears and concerns, and also improve their involvement and cooperation in the tourism development programmes. Despite their concerns, the local residents are interested in tourism, they expected economic prosperity as a result of tourism development in their city. However, those who are involved directly in tourism are still not sure about the economic benefits because their businesses are not designed or adapted to tourism. Subsequently, the Jordanian government needs to redesign its tourism development strategy to involve practical methods to adapt different types of businesses to be compatible with tourism in the city. Furthermore, tourism development programmes must pay much attention to traditional handicrafts and establishing strong partnerships between local community and other players in the tourism sector.

Furthermore, most of the shops owners in Alhammad Street (the main street) complain about the tour guides, they reported that the tour guides discourage the tourists from buying from their shops. The value and benefits from tourism needs to be explained both to the residents and the tour guides, and tour guides' behaviour must be monitored. There is sufficient evidence that the local community is not involved in the development projects, the locals are being physically separated from the decision-making, and they are not aware of the development projects that are being implemented by national and international agencies such as USAID and JICA. In fact USAID carried out similar projects in Ghana, the implementing agencies for USAID projects were US agencies while local agencies were not involved in these projects (Teye *et al.*, 2002, p. 673). The residents expects real enhancement of the quality of their life as a result of tourism development in their city. The tourism development strategies and programmes must focus on achieving the locals' expectations and make them visible and clear.

The local community is looking forward for further enrichment of the culture of local people as a result of the

cross-cultural interactions with international tourists. In other words, they expect more acceptance of other cultures among the local residents. On the other hand, much attention must be made to prepare the local community for further interaction with the tourists, because there are indications of anxiety in mixing with other cultures. There must be a plan for change and improve the locals' attitudes toward tourism and other cultures.

The findings of the current study are not free from limitations. As is the case with all qualitative research, the respondents cannot be considered representative of the whole community. Therefore, further quantitative study is crucial to validate the model and the findings on a representative sample of the local community in Al-Salt city. Moreover, further qualitative research is however required for better insight in residents' attitudes towards tourism issues. Furthermore, the author does not claim that the model is universal and suitable to study attitudes in different situations and context, in contrast, the author encourage other researchers to employ qualitative techniques to provide insight into the phenomenon under study.

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