

Can Salalah be a round-the-year Tourism Destination? – Visitors' Experiences & Expectations

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Abstract

Purpose: The aims of the study were to identify and evaluate the internal controls used in a computerized accounting system of the SMEs, to identify and evaluate the merits and demerits of the internal controls used in the companies, and to identify the challenges in the implementation of internal control systems in the computerized accounting system of the SMEs.

Design/methodology/approach: A questionnaire was prepared for the study and the responses were obtained through the questionnaire circulating the same among the public of the Al Batinah region of Oman. The samples were selected on a random sampling basis. 201 completed samples were obtained. Further, the study was restricted to the selected variables such as Infrastructure, Services available, Marketing & promotion, and Government support.

Findings: The study revealed that Salalah was busy during the Khareef festival season and that there was a lack of infrastructural facilities such as Highways, Hygiene, Emergency health facilities, Telecommunication facilities, and personal amenity services. It was concluded that the marketing to promote Salalah as a year-round destination was inadequate. However, it was observed that the private sector started contributing to the development of Salalah tourism through establishing tourist offices/tourist guide centers/transports for tourists.

Research limitations/implications: The study suggested that the Government should educate the youth of Salalah, train and prepare them for the future tourism industry. The study was conducted in the Al Batinah region of Oman and it can be extended to the entire people of Oman to know their expectations.

Social Implications: Government should support the people of Salalah through land development schemes etc. and jointly with the private sector need to work involving all the stakeholders to improve tourism in Salalah to attract more people. Green initiatives for the sustainability of tourism in Salalah should be triggered as the natural eco-friendly environment will support it.

Originality / Value: The study of its first kind as the study expects to add value to the tourism industry in Oman and particularly Salalah and the Dhofar region.

Keywords: Tourism Industry in Oman, Infrastructure Facilities, Government Support and Community Involvement, Services, Marketing and Promotion, Salalah-Oman.

Introduction

Tourism is one of the important sectors which plays a key role in the economic development of a country ([Ashley et al., 2007](#)). The Sultanate of Oman, one of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, is striving with continuous efforts to bring forth the tourism sector towards contributing more to the gross domestic product (GDP) of Oman. As an economic diversification strategy to move away from the oil-based economy, the Government is striving to make the tourism sector one of the leading economic sectors. The national tourism strategy developed by the ministry of tourism in Oman aims at boosting the contribution of the tourism sector towards the GDP.

Tourism has a wide range of direct, indirect, and dynamic effects and it can affect the livelihood, growth of the national economy, create a conducive business climate for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and will also improve the infrastructure or natural resource bases. The tourism sector opens opportunities for employment and local products such as handicrafts.

The vision of the Ministry of Tourism, Oman is to explore the cultural, heritage, historical places of value in Oman to benefit the tourism industry. Salalah falls on that list. Salalah is the capital of the Dhofar governorate and the third-largest city in Oman. It is dignified as the birthplace of the former Sultan Qaboos bin Said. It attracts many tourists from different parts of Oman and the Gulf region especially during the Khareef Season which falls between July 15th and August 15th.

Oman consists of very attractive tourist places and is very famous in the gulf region. Salalah is popular for its natural flora and fauna as it is encompassed with places like Wadi Darbat, Attin plain, natural caves, Maghasil natural beach, Khawr Rawri bird sanctuary, waterfalls, lakes, and Souq Al Haffa the market popular for frankincense, perfumes, and other traditional products. Further to that, it has many historical sites like the Albaleed site (– the one which was added to the world heritage list in the year 2000), Tomb of Prophet Ayoub, Ayn Humran Castle. Though there were two major cyclones during 2018 and most of the parts of Salalah was devastated, Dhofar governorate was restored by Government agencies with the help of the private sector and the governorate received 826,000 tourists in 2018 with an average of 8000 visitors per day, Maitha Al Mahrouqi, Under-Secretary to the Ministry of Tourism in Oman reported ([Oman Observer, 2019](#)).

The tourism & hospitality industry has contributed to Oman's economy around RO 1.293 billion in 2019, with an increase of 4.9% compared to 2018 ([Prabhu, 2020](#)). Tourism contributes to the 2.5% GDP of Oman. But this is low compared to revenue potentialities Oman has got and can generate through tourism. Thus, Oman as a means of economic diversification from the oil economy, paying more attention to encourage tourism mainly to explore the tourism potentialities especially now when there is a significant drop in oil prices.

Statement of the Problem

The tourism industry acts as one of the catalysts in diversifying the fuel-based economy. Due to the coronavirus pandemic since last year, the sector which is promising socio-economic development in rural areas and assuring job opportunities for local Omanis needs to be analyzed with the expectations of the tourists. The rapid growth of tourism in Oman and has a significant impact on the country's economy because it contributes to the economy in creating jobs and creating good opportunities for local businesses. It helps airlines and the transport sector and attracts large investments in the country ([Aulia & Almandhari, 2015](#)). The development of tourism in the country through culture and heritage may cause tourists to be more comfortable ([Al Balushi et al., 2014](#)).

So it becomes important to find out how tourism in Salalah can be increased during the period other than the Khareef season period of two months and why not Salalah be made attractive tourists place during all the month of the year – around the year tourism destination. Keeping in mind this idea, the study was conducted to know the experience and seek the opinion of the visitors to Salalah.

Research Questions

The study tries to answer the following questions:

1. What were the infrastructural facilities, service facilities, marketing facilities, and Government support available in Salalah?
2. What were the opinion and the expectation of tourists visiting Salalah from the Al Batinah region?

Research Objectives

In line with the above research questions, the following research objectives were framed:

1. To analyze the infrastructural facilities, service facilities, marketing facilities, and Government support available in Salalah.
2. To critically analyze the opinion and the expectation of tourists visiting Salalah from the Al Batinah region

Keeping in mind the above research objectives, the review of literature was done.

Review of Literature

Infrastructure

[Mustafa \(2019\)](#) found that infrastructure has an impact on tourism on a short-term as well as long-term basis. [Boers and Cottrell \(2007\)](#) reported that sustainable tourism infrastructure planning helps tourist areas to experience an increase in the number of tourists and needs subsequent development of resources. [Jovanović and Ivana \(2016\)](#) suggested that tourism development requires extensive investment in the modernization of infrastructure, as an important factor of development. An increase in demand in relates to infrastructure and the related facilities are the part of maturing phases of tourism development ([Mandić et al., 2018](#)). Modern infrastructure facilities accommodate the tourists so that new directions of tourism can be introduced at the level of international standards ([Olimovich et al., 2020](#)). Modern management practices along with destination image building only can bring improvement in the infrastructural facilities ([Bunja, 2003](#)). [Al Ghazali et al. \(2021\)](#) clarified that the tourists will be willing to pay more at the destined stay if there are green initiatives and innovative sustainability initiatives undertaken so that the guests expect their stay to be a memorable one. COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the whole tourism industry globally and Oman in particular and the number of tourists inflow has reduced very much ([Krishnamurthy & Krishnan, 2021](#)). Besides, the main cause for the decreasing trend in the number of visitors is the lack of good infrastructure facilities and services by the tourists ([Cságoly et al., 2017](#)). Frequent congestion and traffic jams make feel tourists avoid visiting tourist spots during seasonal periods ([Antara & Sumarniasih, 2017](#)). Conservation and improvisation of services and infrastructure will help to main tourism interest in the coastal regions ([Phillips & Jones, 2006](#)). [Dewantara \(2018\)](#) concluded that tourism stakeholders and Government should have put basic infrastructural facilities like airports, etc. as main priorities looking at its implication for the tourism industry.

Government support/Community Involvement

Stakeholders in tourism development include Governments, tourism agencies, tourism financiers, tourism employees and consultants, tourism educational institutions, tourists and visitors, and the local populations ([Pololikashvili, 2005](#)). The residents of the local community support tourism and involve themselves in tourism activities as they strongly agreed that tourism increased employment opportunities, property values, the image of the city, the appearance and infrastructure of the cities ([Chandralal, 2010](#)). [Mustafa \(2019\)](#) recommended that the Government is the key player in improving the infrastructure facilities to increase tourists' arrival in Sri Lanka. Long-term sustainability can be possible only if all the stakeholders of the tourism industry including the Government, Tourist operators, and local people come together ([Bhap, 2017](#)). Social entrepreneurship including voluntary services, recreation, educational guidance, and other activities like health improvement, etc., can only bring in a variety of potential services in the industry ([Plotnikova, 2018](#)). On the other hand, Price discrepancy, low range/poor quality services, insufficient workers curtail the effective development of the tourism industry ([Bednarska, 2017](#); [Leonidova, 2017](#)).

Services

Services take an influential role in the complete satisfaction of tourists ([Neal et al., 2007](#)). Tourists expect modernized and diversified amenities, and services ([Craik, 1997](#)). [Mirzaev \(2018\)](#) assessed the tourist recreation facilities available in the tourist spots so that the effective use of recreational objects in the market of tourism services is enhanced. Shops, restaurants, public services, recreational facilities qualify a tourist spot as a welcoming one and attract more tourists ([Leiper, 1979](#)). [Al Badi and Khan \(2020\)](#) claimed that there are plenty of chances to excel with tourism entrepreneurship in Oman, through providing various modern satisfactory services to tourists but governmental support is a must to do so. Tourism services need to be enhanced strategically to cope up with the market trends and rise to the expectation of the tourists ([Tsiotsou & Goldsmith, 2012](#)).

Marketing and Promotion

Tourism advertising makes an impact on the minds of the visitors as the chances of visiting a destination is connected to information awareness of the place of visit and the top-of-mind awareness ([Kim et al., 2005](#)). Tourism advertisements make more influence especially on the minds of young tourists ([Fong et al., 2018](#)). Community support towards local development for successful place marketing along with promotion strategies will increase the visitors to the developed tourism destination ([Nel & Binns, 2002](#)). The construction of a brand image is a must for the modern tourism industry as it secures a place of competitive advantage in the market ([Latif et al., 2016](#)). Different types of promotional tools like advertisement through the internet, TV, newspapers and other media will help to expand the tourism industry and to build such a brand image ([Salehi & Farahbakhsh, 2014](#)). As different types of holidays are considered, the marketing of tourism also varies accordingly ([Goodall & Ashworth, 2013](#)). Understanding the opportunities and strategies

for a tourism destination is a must to develop a customer value-driven strategy to attract visitors ([Kotler et al., 2018](#)).

Tourism

Tourism as an industry determines not only the economic component but also the socio-cultural, educational, and ideological components of development, and implements the multiplier effect in related industries ([Dafuleya et al., 2017](#); [Reyes et al., 2017](#)). Omani people are going out of the country looking for private hospitals for having treatment and recuperation together as the eco-friendly environment has created a new arena called medical tourism ([Al-Balushi & Khan, 2017](#)). Tourism is established on the guideline of manageability, implying that tourism must be naturally and environmentally inviting, socially and socially adequate, and economically feasible ([Islam et al., 2019](#)). According to [Lu and Nepal \(2009\)](#) sustainability is a perplexing idea as the tourism industry requires heaps of resources, in this manner the local communities and tourists are to be responsible for environment-fused sustainable development.

Research Methodology

A questionnaire was prepared for the research and the responses were obtained through the questionnaire circulating the same among the public of the Al Batinah region of Oman. The samples were selected on a random sampling basis. As the sample is around one million the random sample selection of 193 is sufficient enough to justify the sample selection ([Ruane, 2010](#)). 225 samples were collected out of which only 201 were fully completed ones. Only these 201 completed samples were taken for analysis purposes. Further, the study was restricted to the selected variables such as Infrastructure, Services available, Marketing & promotion, and Government support.

Findings

Table 1 Demographic Details of the Respondents

Characteristics		Frequency	%
Nationality	Omani	175	87.1
	Other GCC national	17	8.5
	African	3	1.5
	Asian	6	3.0
Gender	Male	67	33.3
	Female	134	66.7
Age	< 25 years	88	43.8
	25- < 40 years	85	42.3
	40-54 years	20	10.0
	> 55 years	8	4.0
Qualification	Secondary Or Below	18	7.5
	High School	42	20.9
	Diploma	40	19.9
	Advanced Diploma	37	18.4
	Bachelor	64	31.8
	Masters	11	5.5
	Professional	7	3.5
Employment Status	Student	77	38.3
	Employed	69	34.3
	Unemployed	27	13.4
	Retired	15	7.5
	Own Business	13	6.5
Income level	< RO 500	89	44.3
	RO 500 – RO 1000	72	35.8
	RO 1000 – RO 1500	27	13.4
	> RO 1500	13	6.5

Reason for selecting Salalah as the Tourism destination	Business	20	10.0
	Meeting friends/to be with family	28	13.9
	Vacation	31	15.4
	Khareef Festival, Salalah	63	31.3
	Studying	6	3.0
	Visiting Place	49	24.4
	Others	4	2.0
Difficulties faced during a visit to Salalah	Lack of services	58	28.9
	Costly accommodation/transportation	57	28.4
	Limited Transportation	26	12.9
	Lack of infrastructure	11	5.5
	Lack of accommodation/hotel	30	14.9
	Others	19	9.5
You came to know about Salalah through	Social Media	56	27.9
	Media	58	28.9
	Friends and relatives	63	31.3
	Conferences/exhibitions	18	9.0
	Others	6	3.0
Transportation used to go to Salalah	Car	91	45.3
	Bus	25	12.4
	Motorbike	10	5.0
	Air/flight	75	37.3
Number of visits to Salalah in a year	Only once	88	43.8
	More than once	69	34.3
	Visit often	30	14.9
	Never	14	7.0
The period during which you prefer to visit Salalah	Jan. – Mar.	16	8.0
	Apr. – Jun.	24	11.9
	Jul. – Sep.	139	69.2
	Pct. – Dec.	22	11.0
Kind of places you like to visit in Salalah	Natural sites	84	41.8
	Religious sites	27	13.4
	Places of cultural heritage	49	24.4
	Archeological places	12	6.0
	Festival arena	12	6.0
	Exhibitions	6	3.0
	To attend conferences	3	1.5
	Others	8	4.0

Source: Questionnaire

Table 1 Infrastructure Facilities at Salalah

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	K-S Value	χ^2	p-value
Accommodation was comfortable enough	45 22.4%	71 35.3%	36 17.9%	32 15.9%	17 8.5%	.573	148.010	.000
Various types of food courts and restaurants were there in Salalah	50 24.9%	69 34.3%	45 22.4%	29 14.4%	8 4.0%	.556		
Many shopping malls and supermarkets were there in Salalah	41 20.4 %	55 27.4%	61 30.3%	38 18.9%	6 3.0%	.610		
Highways and roads in Salalah were not big enough to avoid the traffic crowd	68 33.8%	58 28.9%	45 22.4%	24 11.9%	6 3.0%	.574		

The electric power supply never broke down during our visit to Salalah	51 25.4%	65 32.3%	46 22.9%	29 14.4%	10 5.0%	.576		
Never faced any water problem during our visit to Salalah	36 17.9%	73 36.3%	38 18.9%	43 21.4%	11 5.5%	.587		
Tourist spots in Salalah were quite large enough to accommodate the visiting tourists	56 27.9%	45 22.4%	55 27.4%	32 15.9%	13 6.5%	.636		
Cleanliness was not maintained throughout the year in Salalah	40 19.9%	57 28.4%	54 26.9%	40 19.9%	10 5.0%	.633		
Many masjids (mosques) were there in Salalah	55 27.4%	51 25.4%	67 33.3%	19 9.5%	9 4.5%	.599		
Petrol (fuel) stations were always crowded-long queues made us to wait	56 27.9%	55 27.4%	54 26.9%	30 14.9%	6 3.0%	.603		
Bank ATMs were not enough in Salalah	50 24.9%	47 23.4%	51 25.4%	39 19.9%	14 7.0%	.654		

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between the infrastructure facilities and the choices of the respondents.

From Table 2, it can be seen that the p-value is < .05. Therefore, it is evident that the null hypothesis gets rejected i.e. there is a relationship between the choices of the respondents and the infrastructure facilities. From the results obtained from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, comparing the K-S values it can be seen that 'Bank ATMs are not enough in Salalah' (.654) ranked first, followed by 'Tourist spots in Salalah were quite large enough to accommodate the visiting tourists' (.636) ranked second and 'Cleanliness was not maintained throughout the year in Salalah' (.633) ranked third.

Table 3 Service Facilities at Salalah

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	K-S Value	χ^2	p-value
Transportation facilities were sufficient enough to visit different places at Salalah	40 19.9%	51 25.4%	38 18.9%	56 27.9%	16 8.0%	.594	106.463	.000
Plenty of sport and amusement facilities were available in Salalah	48 23.9%	35 17.4%	62 30.8%	44 21.9%	12 6.0%	.603		
Emergency health facilities were not enough at Salalah	35 17.4 %	57 28.4%	58 28.9%	41 20.4%	10 5.0%	.560		
Security Services were satisfactory at Salalah	49 24.4%	75 37.3%	56 27.9%	17 8.5%	4 2.0%	.465		
24-hours civil defense services were available in Salalah	50 24.9%	63 31.3%	44 21.9%	33 16.4%	11 5.5%	.529		
Telecommunication-phone connection and internet facilities were not available in all the places of Salalah	49 24.4%	52 25.9%	48 23.9%	39 19.4%	13 6.5%	.555		
Tourist guides were available at all the tourist spots of Salalah	32 15.9%	51 25.4%	50 24.9%	54 26.9%	14 7.0%	.590		
Road directions and road maps were not available from tourism centers	45 22.4%	62 30.8%	42 20.9%	41 20.4%	11 5.5%	.532		
Laundry, Tailoring, Barber like amenities were not	48 23.9%	67 33.3%	34 16.9%	36 17.9%	16 8.0%	.540		

sufficient enough during the festival								
Money exchangers/Banks were not many in numbers and not enough	56 27.9%	53 26.4%	55 27.4%	25 12.4%	12 6.0%	.531		

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between the services facilities and the choices of the respondents. From Table 3, it can be seen that the p-value is < .05. Therefore, it is evident that the null hypothesis gets rejected i.e. there is a relationship between the choices of the respondents and the services facilities. From the results obtained from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, comparing the K-S values it can be seen that 'Plenty of sport and amusement facilities are available in Salalah' (.603) ranked first, followed by 'Transportation facilities are sufficient enough to visit different places at Salalah' (.594) ranked second and 'Tourist guides are available at all the tourist spots of Salalah' (.590) ranked third.

Table 4 Marketing and Promotion

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	K-S Value	χ^2	P-value
Seen advertisements about Salalah on TV, Newspapers and magazines	59 29.4%	91 45.3%	30 14.9%	14 7.0%	7 3.5%	.415	167.761	.000
There were promotions and tour packages available for Salalah on the internet and social media	60 29.9%	70 34.8%	50 24.9%	15 7.5%	6 3.0%	.464		
In Salalah international exhibitions were hosted	46 17.4 %	56 28.4%	59 28.9%	34 20.4%	6 5.0%	.537		
Cruise trips were arranged to Salalah via sea	39 19.4%	51 25.4%	70 34.8%	32 15.9%	9 4.5%	.558		
Special events / exhibitions were conducted during Eid holidays	46 22.9%	59 29.4%	56 27.9%	20 10.0%	20 10.0%	.533		
Accommodations for discounted prices were provided by the Government during special occasions	36 17.9%	43 21.4%	60 29.9%	39 19.4%	23 11.4%	.603		
The price ceiling for the hotels/ accommodations had been fixed by Government to encourage Tourism	41 20.4%	31 15.4%	39 19.4%	50 24.9%	40 19.9%	.676		
The price ceiling had been set by the Government for consumer goods in Salalah	38 18.9%	37 18.4%	55 27.4%	45 22.4%	26 12.9%	.629		
Quality checks were done at the consumer markets of Salalah by the Government	41 20.4%	50 24.9%	51 25.4%	47 23.4%	12 6.0%	.566		
Government intervenes to organize the flights to Salalah – especially during festival season	37 18.4%	69 34.3%	44 21.9%	39 19.4%	12 6.0%	.518		

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between the services facilities and the choices of the respondents. From Table 4, it can be seen that the p-value is < .05. Therefore, it is evident that the null hypothesis gets rejected i.e. there is a relationship between the choices of the respondents and the Marketing & promotion. From the results obtained from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, comparing the K-S values it can be seen that 'Price ceiling for the hotels/ accommodations had been fixed by Government to encourage Tourism' (.676) ranked first, followed by 'Price ceiling had been set by the Government for consumer goods in Salalah' (.629) ranked second and 'Accommodations for discounted prices were provided by the Government during special occasions' (.603) ranked third.

Table 5 Government Support

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	K-S Value	χ^2	P-value
The Government provides education and training to the tourism industry people of Salalah	38 18.9%	60 29.9%	45 22.4%	44 21.9%	14 7.0%	.422	99.448	.000
Government organizes events and festivals at Salalah to boost tourism	60 29.9%	65 32.3%	49 24.4%	20 10.0%	7 3.5%	.371		
Private Sector invests in Salalah Tourism development	42 20.9 %	69 34.3%	49 24.4%	34 16.9%	7 3.5%	.398		
The private sector contributes to the development of Salalah tourism	41 20.4%	66 32.8%	49 24.4%	33 16.4%	12 6.0%	.402		
The Government encourages entrepreneurship in Tourism and small businesses	44 21.9%	61 30.3%	58 28.9%	28 13.9%	10 5.0%	.399		
The Government provides financial assistance to the new ventures at Salalah	47 23.4%	75 37.3%	37 18.4%	37 18.4%	5 2.5%	.366		
Government support the people of Salalah through land development schemes	40 19.9%	51 25.4%	57 28.4%	33 16.4%	20 10.0%	.441		

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between the Government and Non-government support, and the choices of the respondents.

From Table 5, it can be seen that the p-value is < .05. Therefore, it is evident that the null hypothesis gets rejected i.e. there is a relationship between the choices of the respondents and the Government support. From the results obtained from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, comparing the K-S values it can be seen that 'Government support people of Salalah through land development schemes' (.441) ranked first, followed by 'Government provides education and training to tourism industry people of Salalah' (.422) ranked second and 'Private sector contributes to the development of Salalah tourism' (.402) ranked third.

Table 6 Salalah as a Tourism Destination

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	K-S Value	χ^2	P-value
Places at Salalah could be easily reached without any practical hindrances	30 14.9%	58 28.9%	49 24.4%	47 23.4%	16 8.0%	.542	152.327	.000
The climate was good and having a good flora and fauna	66 32.8%	65 32.3%	40 19.9%	24 11.9%	6 3.0%	.468		
I learned from websites and media that Salalah having beautiful places to visit	62 30.8%	65 32.3%	48 23.9%	20 10.0%	6 3.0%	.472		
Salalah was the right place for rest and recuperation – vacation	73 36.3%	62 30.8%	40 19.9%	18 9.0%	8 4.0%	.462		
Attracted by the natural products available at Salalah like incense, frankincense, etc.	62 30.8%	69 34.3%	48 23.9%	12 6.0%	10 5.0%	.455		
I visit Salalah to attend the grand gala festival	57 28.4%	73 36.3%	36 17.9%	30 14.9%	5 2.5%	.453		

I was visiting Salalah as I was intending to start a business	50 24.9%	34 16.9%	46 22.9%	50 24.9%	21 10.4%	.582		
I am planning to start a tourism-related business at Salalah	54 26.9%	40 19.9%	42 20.9%	41 20.4%	24 11.9%	.575		
People of Salalah were very friendly and receptive which inspired me to visit Salalah	80 29.8%	51 25.4%	42 20.9%	22 10.9%	6 3.0%	.491		

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between Salalah as a tourism destination and the choices of the respondents.

From Table 6, it can be seen that the p-value is $< .05$. Therefore, it is evident that the null hypothesis gets rejected i.e. there is a relationship between the choices of the respondents and the services facilities. From the results obtained from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, comparing the K-S values it can be seen that 'I am visiting Salalah intending to start the business' (.582) ranked first, followed by 'I am planning to start a tourism-related business at Salalah' (.575) ranked second and 'Place at Salalah can be easily reached without any practical hindrances' (.542) ranked third.

Table 7 (a), (b), (c) & (d) Regression Analysis

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Government support, Service facilities, Marketing & Promotion, Infrastructure facilities ^b		...

^a Dependent variable: Salalah as a Tourism Destination

^b All requested variables entered

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.511 ^b	.261	.246	4.44884

^b Predictors: (constant), Government support, Service facilities, Marketing & Promotion, Infrastructure facilities

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1357.907	4	339.477	17.152	.000 ^b
Residual	3839.691	194	19.792		
Total	5197.598	198			

^a Dependent variable: Salalah as a Tourism Destination

^b Predictors: (constant), Government support, Service facilities, Marketing & Promotion, Infrastructure facilities

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	5.532	2.032		2.723	.007
Infrastructure	.078	.067	.084	1.164	.246
Services	.268	.075	.254	3.582	.000
Marketing & Promotion	.147	.062	.168	2.370	.019
Government support	.201	.076	.188	2.633	.009

^a Dependent Variable: Salalah as a Tourism Destination

From the coefficient table, it can be seen that the p-value for the independent variable infrastructure is more than 0.05. Therefore, eliminating the variable infrastructure, the linear regression analysis is carried out again the results are as follows:

Table 8 (a), (b), (c) & (d) Revised Regression Analysis

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Government support, Service facilities, Marketing & Promotion ^b		...

^a Dependent variable: Salalah as a Tourism Destination

^b All requested variables entered

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.506 ^b	.256	.245	4.45290

^b Predictors: (constant), Government support, Service facilities, Marketing & Promotion

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1331.072	3	443.691	22.377	.000 ^b
Residual	3866.526	195	19.828		
Total	5197.598	198			

^a Dependent variable: Salalah as a Tourism Destination

^b Predictors: (constant), Government support, Service facilities, Marketing & Promotion

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	6.293	1.925		3.268	.001
Services	.296	.071	.281	4.202	.000
Marketing & Promotion	.162	.061	.185	2.645	.009
Government support	.215	.076	.200	2.844	.005

^a Dependent Variable: Salalah as a Tourism Destination

From the above table, it can be seen that the p-value F (22.377) is $.000 < .05$, and the p-value for the independent variables – Service facilities, Marketing & Promotion, and Government support are all less than 0.05. i.e. There exists a linear relationship between the dependent variable – Salalah as a Tourism Destination and the independent variables – Service facilities, Marketing & Promotion, and Government support. In other words, Services, Marketing & Promotion, and Government support impact Salalah as a Tourism Destination but there is no effect of infrastructure facilities on Salalah as a Tourism Destination. Therefore, the derived linear regression can be written as follows:

$$SD = 6.293 + 0.296 S + 0.162 M + 0.215 G$$

Where SD – Salalah as a Tourism Destination
S – Service facilities
M – Marketing & Promotion, and
G – Government Support

Discussion

Among the infrastructure facilities, the majority of the respondents reported that ‘Bank ATMs are NOT enough in Salalah’ followed by ‘Tourist spots in Salalah are quite large enough to accommodate the visiting tourists’ and ‘Cleanliness is NOT maintained throughout the year in Salalah’.

Among the Service facilities, the majority of the respondents reported that ‘Plenty of sport and amusement facilities are available in Salalah’, followed by ‘Transportation facilities are sufficient enough to visit different places at Salalah’ and ‘Tourist guides are available at all the tourist spots of Salalah’.

Among the Marketing factors, ‘Price ceiling for the hotels/ accommodations has been fixed by Government to encourage Tourism’ followed by ‘Price ceiling has been set by the Government for consumer goods in Salalah’ and ‘Accommodations for discounted prices are provided by the Government during special occasions’.

Among the Government support factors, ‘Government support people of Salalah through land development schemes’, followed by ‘Government provides education and training to tourism industry people of Salalah’ and ‘Private sector contributes to the development of Salalah tourism’.

Among the Tourism destination deciding factors, ‘I am visiting Salalah intending to start the business’, followed by ‘I am planning to start a tourism-related business at Salalah’ and ‘Place at Salalah can be easily reached without any practical hindrances’.

Among all the independent variables – Service facilities, Marketing & Promotion, and Government support have an impact on the Tourism Destination factors.

Conclusion

Most of the respondents complained about the following services, during their visit to Salalah:

1. The capacity of high ways and roads of Salalah was not enough to bear the seasonal crowd
2. Cleanliness was not maintained
3. The emergency health facilities were not enough
4. The telecommunication (phone/internet) facilities were not sufficient
5. The road directions and road maps were not available from tourism centers
6. Laundry, tailoring, barber were facilities are not enough during the festival
7. Money exchange / ATM count was not enough

However, they did not complain about the electricity/water supply ever got disrupted whereas the petrol station was reported to be always crowded. From the study, it was observed that the private sector started contributing to the development of Salalah tourism through establishing tourist offices/tourist guide centers/transport for tourists and thus started investing in Salalah tourism development.

To sum up, the study revealed that Salalah was busy during the Khareef festival season and that there was a lack of infrastructural facilities such as Highways, Hygiene, Emergency health facilities, Telecommunication facilities, and personal amenity services at Salalah. It was concluded that the marketing to promote Salalah as a year-round destination was inadequate.

Recommendations

Based on the above, the following recommendations are done:

- There are promotion and tour packages available for Salalah on the internet and social media which attracts more tourists; however, more effort is required.
- As suggested by (Al Ghazali et al., 2021) green initiatives for the sustainability of tourism in Salalah should be triggered as the natural eco-friendly environment will support such a mechanism.
- The natural products of Salalah - Incense (bakhoor), Frankincense (Luban), etc. are very famous, and proper marketing/sales facilities should be provided by the Government.
- Small entrepreneurs visiting Salalah especially from the Al Batinah region planning to venture into Salalah. Government should encourage entrepreneurship tourism and small business at Salalah (Al Badi & Khan, 2020).
- Though Government provides financial assistance to the new ventures at Salalah to encourage tourism attraction, it should educate the youth of Salalah, train, and prepare them for the future tourism industry as suggested by (Khan & Krishnamurthy, 2016).
- Government should support the people of Salalah through land development schemes etc. It should jointly with the private sector need to work involving all the stakeholders to improve tourism in Salalah to attract more people.

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