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# The relationship between place attachment and return visits to heritage sites : A case study of Ras Al khaimah

Ahmed Alshemeili  
*Edith Cowan University*

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# Edith Cowan University

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**The relationship between place attachment  
and return visits to heritage sites: A case study  
of  
Ras Al khaimah**

**By**

**Ahmed Alshemeili**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

**Doctor of philosophy**

**School of Business**

**Faculty of Business and Law**

**EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY**

Principal Supervisor: Dr Maria Ryan

Associate Supervisor: Associate Professor Madeleine Ogilvie

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## **Abstract**

Over the past decade, heritage tourism has become a significant growth industry worldwide. Fuelled in part by nostalgia for the past, tourists seem to have the desire to visit archaeological sites. A review of the literature reveals that many visitors return to heritage places repeatedly over a short period of time. While the reason visitors return to heritage sites vary and may be individualistic; place attachment may be a major intrinsic element.

The main purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between place attachment and tourists' intentions for return visits to heritage sites. The overall objectives of the research include to (a) clarify the intrinsic reasons why tourists tend to associate themselves with a place and subsequently revisit that site, (b) develop a model based on an adaptation of the theory of planned behaviour to understand people's intention to revisit heritage places in the United Arab Emirates and specifically in Ras Al khaimah (RAK), and (c) determine whether the addition of place attachment to Shen's previously modified theory of planned behaviour adds significantly to the explanatory power of the model.

This research addresses visitors' intentions to revisit heritage sites in Ras Al khaimah (RAK), one of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), as a case study. The study explores the impact of heritage tourism on the economy of RAK. In order to develop a sound framework for the research, the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), which has been used to explain behaviour in a variety of contexts, is utilised as the basis for the framework proposed for this study (Ajzen, 1991). This theory, however, was adapted to include the additional construct of place attachment (Shen, Schuttemeyer, & Braun, 2009).

The design of the study includes both quantitative and qualitative methods for data analysis. The data for the quantitative portion of the study was obtained via a self-administered questionnaire utilising a convenience sample of 392 tourists visiting RAK. The qualitative methodology consists of interviews with four Chief Executive Officers

(CEOs) of the tourism department and 13 private tourism agencies of the four major emirates in the UAE, which are: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and RAK.

The findings of this study revealed that the main relationships between the respondents and the place were positive. Correlation analysis and a series of multiple regressions were conducted to explore the relationship between place attachment and intentions for return visit to heritage sites. The results indicate that the impact of place attachment on intention for return visit to heritage sites were significant predictors of different periods after the first-time visit. Additionally, there was a significant positive relationship between tourism and the economy of the UAE in general and RAK in particular through increasing the numbers of international and resident tourists. The potential implications of the study clarified that a number of plans should be considered by the Government to develop and increase the number of visitors to RAK. The cooperation between government departments and travel agents within and external to the UAE was considered to be the most important focus for future planning.

## USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.





## **Declaration**

I, Ahmed Alshemeili, declare that The relationship between place attachment and return visits to heritage sites: A case study of Ras Al khaimah is my own original work and that all sources have been accurately reported and acknowledged, and that this document has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university in order to obtain an academic qualification.

**Ahmed Alshemeili**

**Signature**

.....

**Date**

.....



## **Acknowledgements**

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# **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

## **1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the thesis. This chapter is divided into six sections. Section 1.1 focuses on the background of the study, followed by section 1.2, which presents the research questions. Section 1.3 describes the significance of the study, and section 1.4 discusses the objectives of the study. Finally, section 1.5 reviews the outline of the study, followed by section 1.6, which summarises this chapter.

### **1.1 The background of the study**

Heritage has been deemed an important resource for tourism development worldwide. Classified as a form of special interest tourism (SIT), heritage tourism is usually related to the domains of cultural and urban tourism (Barros & Assaf, 2012). To acquire tourists' support and active participation in heritage tourism, the values and meanings that tourists along with residents attach to places within their immediate and wider community should be understood, respected, and preserved (Su & Wall 2010).

#### ***1.1.1 Heritage tourism***

Nostalgia, or the yearning for things from the past, is an integral part of human nature. As such, it often leads people to travel to archaeological sites to experience life from other eras by immersing themselves in the surroundings of old buildings and markets (Yeoh & Kong, 1996). This experience of visiting 'old sites' and immersing oneself in the past is commonly known as heritage tourism. Nuryanti (1996) considered the broader meaning of heritage to be associated inheritance, that is, something transferred from one generation to another. Conversely, tourism can be seen as a form of modern consciousness. Modern travellers usually solicit the services of a travel agent who is responsible for making airline reservations, finalizing accommodation and suggesting places (including heritage sites) to visit (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2009).

According to Poria, Butler and Airey (2001, p. 1048), the concept of heritage tourism is based on two ideas, which may be expressed as questions. The first concerns the motivation of the tourists: namely, are tourists motivated due to the heritage sites'

attributes? The second idea relates to the perception of the heritage sites: more specifically, do tourists see these sites as part of their own heritage? The linkage between heritage and tourism may be equated to society's perception of the connection between past and present. Therefore, heritage tourism can be viewed as a link between tourist attractions and local life practices, accounting for local facility improvements and heritage conservation (Crouch, 2000).

### ***1.1.2 The framework of the study***

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is one of the most frequently used theories for predicting various social behaviours (Armitage & Conner, 2001). According to Ajzen (1991, p. 181) "a central factor in the TPB is the individual's intention to perform a given behaviour". As the current study proposes to identify tourists intention to revisit heritage sites, this model was deemed appropriate as a starting point. In the proposed model, there are six research variables starting with the original theory of planned behaviour. The model to be tested also includes two constructs that were added by (Shen et al., 2009) as well as the place attachment construct, which was added by the researcher. This adaptation of the theory will explain human behaviour in particular situations (Francis et al., 2004). Since the focus of this study is on investigating the relationship between place attachment and return visits to heritage sites, this theory with its added elements was deemed appropriate as the foundation for the research framework. The theoretical framework that is developed and tested in this research attempts to confirm this relationship.

### ***1.1.3 Place attachment***

Place attachment may be linked to people's social lives and the places where they live (Hidalgo & Hernades, 2001). Integrating an understanding of place attachment and the attraction of heritage sites may help to explain visitation patterns, particularly repeat visits (Gross & Brown2006). In general, place attachment is defined as the relationship between a certain place and people, and can be measured within three ranges: house, neighbourhood, and city (Hidalgo & Hernades, 2001). According to Lewicka (2005), place attachment is usually a positive phenomenon for visitors, society and specific neighbourhoods. Proshansky et al. (1983) consider that place attachment consists of at least two important dimensions: place dependence and place identity. They also assert the importance of place conformity, which is the "combination of attitudes, values,

thoughts, beliefs, meanings, and behaviour tendencies, reaching far beyond emotional attachment and belonging to particular places” (p. 61).

Similarly, place attachment can also be viewed as a function of the human emotional relationship between a tourist and the place (Kusuma, 2008). It is influenced by the prior experiences of tourists, and strongly affects their decisions regarding visiting heritage sites (Backlund & Williams, 2003). Tsai (2011) argues that place attachment has become an important element in tourism marketing. He notes that place attachment can be a vital feeder for revisiting behaviour, particularly if tourists have had a positive experience due to good tourism management (Tsai, 2011).

#### ***1.1.4 The relationship between tourism revisits and place attachment***

People relate the value and meaning of places to their lived experiences and attachments. The experience of the destinations creates permanent attachments to people’s lives in many countries, which, in turn, according to Dredge (2010), makes tourism investment a key economic driver of national incomes. Hwang, Lee, and Chen (2005) found that for visitors to a national park in Taiwan both involvement and place attachment, which they related to the symbolic and emotional expression connected to an awareness of place, had positive effects on perceived service quality and the satisfaction obtained.

Gross and Brown (2006) note that the relationship between tourism and place attachment is expressed through the feelings of the tourists and how they consider the place because of their own experiences and home environment. Other decision-makers consider the relationship between place and tourism to be significant for policy-making, and for developing market oriented strategies (Jenkins, 2003). However, the question remains as to why visitors revisit heritage sites. Do they do so for educational, entertainment or other motives (Poria, Bulter, & Airey, 2004) ? This study endeavours to provide the answer to this question and to address a topic with limited research. This study applied the theory of planned behaviour, plus the factors that have been added by Shen and the researcher to test the relationship between these constructs, place attachment and return visits to heritage sites within the case study location – RAK. The following section describes Ras Al Khaimah (RAK).

### ***1.1.5 The focus of the study***

Tourism has become an important means to increasing income in many countries (Haggag & Rashed, 2003); and like many others, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has attempted to develop this sector (Sharpley, 2002). This study focuses on one emirate in the UAE which as a whole has numerous heritage sites dating back thousands of years. Ras Al Khaimah (RAK), one of seven emirates that comprise the Federation of the UAE, occupies 1680 square kilometres, (2.2 per cent of the UAE) and includes a city of the same name which is divided into two distinct areas by a winding creek (Council, 2003). The areas of interest that are promoted in RAK are the white sandy beaches, majestic Hajar Mountains and the magnificent desert sand dunes. RAK is probably the only destination in the UAE where tourists can travel between the beach, the mountains and the desert in 10–15 minutes of driving time. The emirate of RAK, with a history dating back more than five thousand years, has a wealth of archaeological sites, which makes it an attraction for visitors (Alkhaimah, 2008). Archaeological and historical sites are evident from various eras such as the Ubaid Period (5500 – 3800 BC), the Hafit Period (3200 – 2600 BC), the Umm al Nar Culture (2600 – 2000 BC), the Wadi Suq Period (2000 – 1600 BC), the late Bronze Age (1600 – 1250 BC), the Iron Age (1250 – 300 BC), Hellenistic & Parthian Period (300 BC – 300 AD), the Abbasid Period (750 – 1250 AD) and the later Islamic Era (14th – 19th Century) (Alkhaimah, 2008).

The current government of RAK is committed to supporting the trend towards heritage tourism by formulating a strategic plan to protect heritage sites in the emirate (Stensgaard, 2005). The tourism plan currently in place sought to attract 2.5 million visitors to the emirate by 2012 (State, 2009). It was thought that this level of visitation would lead to future prosperity in the economy as the development of tourism activities has been linked to the economic growth of the emirate ("Room for more," 2010). While RAK has beautiful scenery, which enhances it as a tourist destination, this is not the major attraction in the emirate. The antiquities of RAK emirate help to position it as a heritage tourism city. Because there has been limited research on heritage tourism in the UAE, the current study will begin by identifying the heritage sites in RAK that are significant for heritage tourism and carrying out interviews with key personal in the UAE Tourism sector. These interviews will examine how tourism stakeholders in the UAE United Arab Emirates currently perceive heritage tourism. Furthermore, the

research will examine the relationship between motivators of return visits to these heritage sites within RAK specifically.



**Figure 1.1:** Map of Ras Al khaimah adapted from Travel (2011)

## 1.2 Research questions

The overall purpose of this study is to understand the relationship between place attachment and return visits to heritage sites. Overall the research aims to explore visitor's intentions to return to these sites and the factors that influence these decisions. The study addresses the following research questions:

- How do tourism stakeholders in the UAE United Arab Emirates currently perceive heritage tourism?



- What is the relationship between the theory of planned behaviour, past experience/ cultural tour involvement, place attachment and people's intention to revisit heritage sites in RAK?
- Does place attachment contribute to (Shen et al., 2009) adapted model of the theory of planned behaviour within the tourism context of repeat visits to heritage sites in RAK?
- Is there an emotional relationship between heritage sites and return visits?

### **1.3 The significance of the study**

Heritage tourism, which is considered one of the most widespread forms of tourism, has garnered considerable interest over the past 20 years (Kerstetter, Confer, & Bricker, 1998). Previous studies in this field attempted to determine the relationship between heritage destination attributes and tourist satisfaction taking into account tourists' demographic and travel behaviour characteristics. However, the specifics may differ, with some tourists interested in ancient dwellings, archaeological sites and places where interesting and significant culture stands out, while others are interested in museums, old markets or locations where historic events occurred. These different interests provide a multiplicity of reasons for tourists to visit heritage sites, including nostalgia or connection with the tourists' historical roots and the desire to know about life in the past (Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003).

A number of countries have become aware of this interest in heritage sites, which encompasses aspects such as traditional buildings, old markets, museums and/or collections of traditional tools. In addition to maintaining these sites, countries that are home to significant heritage places are keen to attract tourists by providing high quality services that may motivate tourists to return more than once. While research has addressed the growth in heritage tourism, no studies have been found that examine the relationship between place attachment and return visits. The current research is important because it is an attempt to establish and explore a link between heritage tourism and place attachment, thereby filling a gap in the literature. In addition, the research attempts to determine why tourists visit or revisit heritage places. Using a case study approach, this research also seeks to clarify the relationship between heritage and tourism and how the relationship contributes to economic development in the UAE (and

RAK in particular) in order to provide tourism sectors with a better understanding of their customers' needs and to help tourism planners develop strategies to attract visitors. The results from this case study will provide an insight into why tourists revisit heritage sites in RAK in particular, and the UAE in general. Furthermore, this study may provide a beneficial method that can be used to conduct similar research in other countries.

#### **1.4 The purpose of the study**

For many countries, heritage tourism has become an important economic resource, one that complements other economic elements (Kerstetter et al., 1998). In these countries, the regulation and reinvigoration of heritage tourism is viewed as an important sector of the economy. This case study will examine heritage places in the UAE and specifically the emirate of RAK. The purpose of this study is:

1.4.1 To gain a greater understanding of the complexities of heritage tourism within UAE, in particular RAK, and its potential for future contribution to the economy.

1.4.2 To develop a model based on an adaptation of the theory of planned behaviour to understand people's intention to revisit heritage places in RAK.

1.4.3 To determine whether the addition of place attachment to Shen's et al.'s (2009) previously modified theory of planned behaviour adds significantly to the explanatory power of the model.

#### **1.5 Design of the thesis**

In order to achieve the objectives of the study discussed above, the researcher has divided the thesis into eight chapters:

##### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter describes the background of the study. It provides a general introduction about heritage tourism, the framework of the study, and the relationship between tourism and place attachment. It also provides the focus of the study and the research questions. Finally, it provides the significance and the objectives of the study.

## **Chapter 2: Literature review**

This chapter provides a literature review of the study. It gives an overview of tourism in the UAE and RAK. It also provides information about heritage tourism, with a definition and a discussion of its growth. Additionally, the chapter provides an overview of place attachment and heritage tourism as a specialized activity.

## **Chapter 3: Research frameworks**

Chapter 3 presents two frameworks – the theory of planned behaviour with the elements added by Shen et al. (2009) and the researcher, which are used to understand the relationship between place attachment and return visits; and, a framework for exploring intentions to return visit. The chapter discusses the aim of the study to understand visitors' intentions to return to heritage sites within the UAE region. In addition, it provides the conceptual framework for this study and explores the relationship between place attachment and return visit to heritage sites. This chapter also provides the population of interest for this study.

## **Chapter 4: Research methodology**

This chapter outlines the research methodology. It presents the research design and the scope of the study. In addition, it reviews structural equation modelling, which has been used to analyse the quantitative data in this research. An explanation of the research procedure that was conducted in two phases, qualitative and quantitative, is provided. The chapter at the same time provides tests of the validity, reliability of the instrument and the limitations of the study. Finally, the chapter provides confirmation of ethics approval, and a summary of the chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Descriptive data analysis**

Chapter 5 describes the sample size and demographics of the study. In addition, the chapter provides information about the participants' social background obtained from the research questionnaire. It concludes with a summary of this chapter.

## **Chapter 6: Qualitative results**

This chapter provides the experiential data from the qualitative phase of the study. It addresses the analysis of the interviews with the CEOs of tourism departments and the travel agencies in four emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, and Ras Al khaimah. The chapter concludes by presenting the findings of the data and a summary of the chapter.

## **Chapter 7: Quantitative results**

In this chapter the empirical data is interpreted in the context of the study. The chapter begins with an analysis of the variables and a review of the instrument reliability of the results. In addition, this chapter describes the regression models and explores the relationship between the dimensions and constructs. The chapter concludes with the findings of the data.

## **Chapter 8: Discussion; Chapter 9: Conclusion**

Chapter 8 discusses the findings, answers the research questions, and concludes the dissertation. It reviews the study in terms of the research problem, construct development and empirical findings and ends with recommendations for further study.

### **1.6 Summary**

This chapter introduced the background and context of the study. It provided general information about the concept of heritage tourism and place attachment. It presented the framework and the focus of the study. The primary research questions were stated and the significance of the study was discussed in this chapter, concluding with the objectives of the study and a summary of the chapter. The following chapter presents a literature review for the study.



## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2 Literature review**

Tourism has grown rapidly over the past few decades and has become one of the most important sources of income in the world (Mason, 2012). There are numerous types of tourism whose focus will vary from country to country. In this chapter the researcher reviews the existing literature on tourism, place attachment, and heritage tourism, all of which are relevant to this thesis. The chapter is divided into six sections: section 2.1 focuses on tourism in general; section 2.2 presents mass tourism and alternative tourism as types of tourism; section 2.3 focuses on the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Ras Al khaimah (RAK) as a case study; section 2.4 reviews the literature on heritage tourism, including its definition, growth, the emotional responses to heritage locations and resource issues; section 2.5 discusses place attachment; and finally, section 2.6 concentrates on heritage tourism as a specialised activity.

#### **2.1 Tourism**

Based on the existing tourism literature, it appears that the concept of ‘tourism’ does not have an exact or well acknowledged definition (Franklin & Crang, 2001). Sharpley and Telfer (2002) argue that the term tourism has several interpretations and many definitions in the existing tourism literature. The lack of a precise definition reveals the multidisciplinary and abstract nature of tourism. Smith & Eadington, (1992) suggest that tourism literature provides several definitions because tourism has many purposes, however, at its’ most basic level tourism is defined as ‘travel for pleasure.’ The growth of niche tourism has seen this definition evolve so that there are as many definitions as types of tourism.

Tourism in countries around the world has made a significant contribution to economic and societal infrastructure, especially in the last decade. Many countries, particularly those with a lack of resources and developing countries, are focusing on tourism as a means to provide economic support for their country (Turtureanu, Tureac, & Andronic, 2012). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) notes in its 2014 report that “international tourism arrivals grew by 5% to a total of 1,087

million tourists (2013) compared with 1,035 million in 2012. Furthermore, the UNWTO projections for 2014 forecast continued growth of 4–5 per cent (see Table 2.1) (Turtureanu et al., 2012, p. 181).

**Table 2.1:** International tourism: projection full year 2014 adapted by United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2014).

Region	2013	Projection 2014
World	+5%	+4% to +5%
Europe	+5%	+3% to +4%
Asia and the Pacific	+6%	+5% to +6%
Americas	+4%	+3% to +4%
Africa	+6%	+4% to +6%
Middle East	0%	+0% to +5%

Based on the UNWTO long-term projections, international tourist arrivals are predicted to reach more than 1.8 billion by 2030, with a notable increase in global tourism market shares in Asia and the Pacific and a decline in Europe (see Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2:** The global tourism market share in 2010 and 2030 based on UNWTO 2012

Region	Market Share	
	2010	2030
Asia and the Pacific	22%	30%
Middle East	6%	8%
Africa	5%	7%
Europe	51%	41%
The Americas	15%	14%

Given the continued growth of tourism, it is evident that this sector is one of the most important means through which countries can build their economies. It can be seen from the UNWTO data presented in these tables that tourism has increased, and is forecast to continue to increase, in most of the world regions. However, the tourism trend in some countries has not kept pace compared with others. For example, in Table 2.1, the number of visitors to the Middle East in 2013 experienced nil growth which is at odds with the rest of the world. In addition, the forecast growth for this area remains low and has a wide projected percentage margin. The growth pattern exhibited and forecast for tourism travel is the Middle Eastern region may exhibit volatility due to the perceived stability of the region.

This perception may be enhanced by recent historical events such as the September 11 attacks on the USA. According to Al-Hamarnah and Steiner (2004), following these

events, many tourists, especially from Europe and America, believed that Middle East countries were a very dangerous place to visit. Continued volatility in the region has cemented these beliefs and as a whole, the region is struggling to regain tourism share. Despite this region-wide stagnation, some countries remain relatively unaffected by the downturn in tourism traffic. For example, the UAE remains a popular destination for tourists to visit, despite the reputation held by neighbouring countries in the Middle East. Dubai, in particular, remains an attractive place for international travellers to visit as it is viewed as a safe environment with numerous activities on offer (Al-Hamarneh & Steiner, 2004). The first nine months of 2013 saw tourist numbers to Dubai reach 7.9 million.

Timothy and Boyd (2006, p. 1) note that there are different types of tourism such as “sport tourism, religious tourism, shopping tourism, adventure tourism, cultural tourism, sex tourism, beach and resort tourism, cruise tourism and heritage tourism”. They propose that heritage tourism is a subset of cultural tourism and additionally has links with political tourism. Furthermore, they argue that for visitors who come to a heritage site, special strategies or planning have to be organised. For example, “in state-socialist countries, tours typically involve visits to shrines and monuments dedicated to great communist leaders and patriots” (Timothy & Boyd, 2006, p. 3). There is an expectation on the part of tourists that a visit to these countries will encompass these sites. With the realisation that these heritage attractions contribute significantly to the country’s economy, governments started to make plans and develop this sector (Barros & Assaf, 2012). An understanding of what heritage sites exist, and their potential for development, has become a key focus of many tourism departments. While this type of alternative tourism does not appeal to everyone, it is a significant growth industry, particularly for developing countries. In the next section the researcher provides more details about mass and alternative tourism.

## **2.2 Mainstream (mass) and alternative tourism**

Tourism can be classified into two broad types: mainstream (mass) and alternative (Verbeke & Bagozzi, 2003). Shaw and Williams (2004) propose that mass tourism has the following common features: it involves popular destinations; there is a demand for familiarity by tourists; there is a sameness of its products, inflexibility of production,



low prices and many discounts; and finally, it involves a large number of tourists. Font (2000, p. 226) found in his research that mass tourism destinations are favoured by people who are seeking to visit many places and gain more value from their journey. Furthermore, he adds in his research that mass tourism provides many “activities such as guide services, camping, and equipment”, which offer more variety and enjoyment to the tourists.

Aguiló Perez & Juaneda, (2000) believe that governments’ attention to mass tourism and their ability to see the importance of destinations, is crucial to its continued growth. Boissevain (1996) discusses how the European economy has increased due to its focus on mass tourism, while Garín-Munoz (2006, p. 282) notes the volume of visitation in the Canary Islands (in Spain) has made tourism the most important determinant for their economic development, with tourism accounting for approximately 50 per cent of the island’s GDP.

While mass tourism is a significant factor in the economic climate, alternative tourism is considered to be more sustainable because it enhances the level of involvement of local communities in the process of decision-making, as well as increasing tourists’ participation in tourism growth.

Smith and Eadington (1992, p. 6) state that the ‘alternative’ to mass tourism are tours such as walking tours, bird safaris, camel safaris, guided nature walks, horse riding, barge and canal tours, bicycle tours, home and farm stays, and youth tourism. Domestic tourism, which has experienced a rise in popularity (Wu, Zhu, & Xu, 2000), is also considered a form of alternative tourism. Development of alternative tourism has commences in certain countries where an alternative approach had already been implemented. For example, Sindiga, (1999) mentioned that when alternative forms of tourism started many countries had already developed their infrastructure to create an integrated tourist atmosphere. However, Higgins-Desboilers (2008) found that alternative tourism in some countries was not accepted by non-governmental institutions.

McGehee (2002) noted that alternative tourism should have a strategic marketing plan to be successful and it should have a strong relationship with the local community. In

the Canary Islands, local homes have been opened to tourists for a homestay (Abram, Waldren, & Macleod, 1997). This allows visitors to experience daily life as the residents do (Macleod, 1999), while providing an economic benefit to the community. Holden (1984) proposes that the expansion of alternative tourism worldwide is partially linked to the development of environmental awareness for tourists. Holden suggests that there is a demand for a new kind of tourism with leisure activities that are novel and less damaging to the environment than is the case with mass tourism. As such, RAK with its low population and remote, natural environment serves as a perfect location to harness the new consumer demands for holidays and the heritage sites to promote travel.

Whether it is mass or alternative forms, the implementation of a tourism industry will create difficulties. For example, Smith and Eadington (1992, p. 33) provided examples of some of the negative impacts that appear during the development of tourism. These include: price rises, change in local attitude and behaviour, loss of resources, access, rights and privacy, reduction of aesthetics, pollution in various forms, lack of control over the destination's future, and specific problems such as vandalism, litter, traffic, and low-paid seasonal employment. Despite this, many countries are looking to tourism as a major means of increasing their income. This is especially true for those countries that have a lack of resources. The success of tourism in all of its forms depends on the satisfaction of the tourists when they visit the destinations. Cerina Markandya and McAleer (2011), claim that visitors' satisfaction is significant both during their visits and after departure as it will impact word of mouth as well as revisit intention. The UAE in general and RAK in particular, are looking to alternative tourism as an important sector for increasing the number of visitors (Anwar & Sohail, 2004). The next section gives more detail about tourism in the UAE and RAK.

### **2.3 The United Arab Emirates**

In the contemporary world, states are focussed upon efficient production capabilities in order to enhance economic levels, wealth redistributions and increase entertainment and consumption levels (Ponzini, 2011); (Tourenq et al., 2011). Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world that enhances and develops an effective regional economy and attracts foreign investment into countries (Tkaczynski, Rundle-Thiele, & Beaumont, 2006). For this reason, Asian countries often look at tourism as a significant

economic sector (Chhabra et al., 2003). However, competitiveness has had a major impact on tourism destinations in the world market. For example, competitiveness has caused degradation of the environment in some countries. Because of the strong competition between tourist countries, the marketing of tourism and maintaining a positive image in the minds of tourists has become more challenging (PeiMey, Mohamed, Jantan, & Mohamed, 2008).

For a long time the Arab region used to be a selected tourism region for pilgrims, leisure seekers, and adventurers. However, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the concept of structured popular tourism was developed. It was the British firm Thomas Cook and Sons that led tourists towards the Nile River and through Palestine (Hazbun, 2003). In 2003, although Arab tourists' numbers declined, the Middle Eastern markets were in a leading position for per capita expenditure (Zahri et al., 2009). Additionally, the Arab region was ready for growth within many of its tourism categories such as, beach and sports-related leisure activities, heritage and nature-based tourism, family-oriented holidays, and business travel and conferencing (Hazbun, 2003).

The UAE is one of the countries that is seeking a stronger presence in the tourism market (Anwer & Sohail, 2003). The UAE is comprised of seven Emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah. Located in Asia, and occupying an area of 83,000 square kilometres along the south-eastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula (Al Abed, Hellyer, & Vine, 2006), the UAE, is affected by continental tropical and maritime tropical air masses as well as continental polar and maritime polar air masses. As a consequence cool weather is present in winters (October–April) as the continental polar air from central Asia has an average temperature of 27°C. During the winter months, the rainfall levels are high, especially in Abu Dhabi Emirate because of the Al Hajar Mountains in north-eastern Oman. The aerographic effects present in the area are strong which is why the rainfall is considered unreliable and erratic (Tourenq et al., 2011).

There are many geological features in the UAE that could be promoted by tourism management, for example, Dalma Island, Seer Bani Yas, and Hafeet Mountain. This could improve the tourism products offered and lead to a new category of tourists

(Allan, 2013). Thus, the nature and scope of tourism products in the UAE could be improved through this form of development (Allan, 2013).

In the UAE, the covered alleys of Souq (the markets) are situated beside the water and the merchandise extracted from the sea (seafood) is traded in this market. Furthermore, the houses are constructed above the high watermark, and the inhabitants of the cities located on the double waterfronts are able to fish much more than usual in all kinds of weather conditions and climates (Haggag & Rashed, 2003). The society of the UAE is regarded as highly traditional with its unique dietary habits' along with rituals, symbols, values, and contextual elements. Traditionally, the resources are shared amongst families, with importance given to family ties. The husband is given the authority and is the decision maker of the family. The wife is responsible for the purchase of household items and it is the husband who provides all the luxury items (Spethman & Singh, 2009).

The tourism industry has a large effect on any economy in the world because it has a direct and indirect effect on the development of other sectors as well (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007). The same is the case with the UAE. The country is constantly struggling to become the largest foreign exchange earner in an oil-based economy by providing an ultimate tourist destination in the Middle East (Bualhamam, 2009). The UAE was formed in 1971 and since then there has been rapid urban development in the region. Massive conservation efforts have been made to preserve many of the historic urban districts. Nearly 70 historic buildings in Dubai have been restored and the rest have been subjected to modernisation and rebuilding while retaining some traditional characteristics (Haggag & Rashed, 2003) .

The UAE has numerous elements that arguably make this country a worthwhile tourism destination in a highly competitive market. In historic times, the people of UAE were reliant on falconry in a social and economic manner which is part of their traditions and has become part of the tourism experience. Falcons helped humans survive in the desert, which is why they were regarded as part of the family (Wakefield, 2012). The Gulf coast, specifically the UAE, has a unique mix of habitats that are of natural, tourism and heritage importance. Four kinds of landscapes—desert environment, coastal region, mountain region and a fertile plain—can be found in the UAE. There are also some

important archaeological sites along with important settlement areas (Bualhamam, 2009). In addition, each of the seven emirates in the UAE provides a particular aspect of tourism. For example, the Emirate of Abu Dhabi has clean and picturesque beaches and oases; the emirate of Dubai has the advantage of shopping and various festivals; the emirate of Sharjah has a cultural aspect, which distinguishes it from other Emirates; and the emirate of RAK, which is the subject of this study, has numerous heritage sites and scenic beauty.

Since the UAE has become an independent entity, and is known to be rich after extracting oil in large quantities, the government has focused on preserving the heritage that has become an integral part of the community (Piction, 2010). The UAE, and especially the emirate of RAK, is rich with heritage sites dating back to the last century and earlier, and aims to become one of the most important tourism destinations for people who seek heritage sites. Sustainable development is a requirement of the tourism industry by the UAE and this sustainability must be in terms of social, environmental and economic aspects. The northern part of the UAE consists of complex resources, which is why the activities for sustainable development must be effective (Bualhamam, 2009).

Natural and cultural conservation can co-exist with domestic and international tourism as the government has managed to extract and capture the economic characteristics of the heritage. Domestic and international tourism are also responsible for community education, policy influence and generation of funds for the conservation process (Mohamed, n.d.).



**Figure 2.1:** Map of UAE adapted from Lonely Planet.

### 2.3.1 *Ras Al khaimah (RAK)*

The emirate RAK occupies 1680 square kilometres, (2.2 per cent of the UAE). The city RAK is divided into two distinct areas by a winding creek (Council, 2003) that connects the sea to a backwater lake system (Goudie, Parker, Bull, White, & Al-Farraj, 2000). The main annual rainfall tends to be in winter, but there is a considerable variability in the rainfall from year to year (Goudie et al., 2000, p. 124).

The emirate of RAK dates back more than 5000 years. It has a wealth of archaeological sites which makes it a focus for visitors (Alkhaimah, 2008). Archaeological and historical sites date from various eras, such as the Ubaid Period (5500–3800 BC), the Hafit period (3200–2600 BC), the Umm al Nar culture (2600–2000 BC) Wadi Suq period (2000–1600 BC), the late Bronze Age (1600–1250 BC), the Iron Age (1250–300 BC), the Hellenistic and Parthian period (300 BC–300 AD), the Abbasid period (750–1250 AD), and the Islamic era (14th–19th AD) (Alkhaimah, 2008). One of the most famous archaeological sites from the Sasanian period in the thirteenth century AD is ‘Kush’, located in the Shimal territory in RAK emirate (Kennet, 1997). In addition, some tombs from the Iron Age in the early second millennium B.C. have been found in Kush (Kerstetter, Bricker, & Li, 2010). The white sandy beaches, majestic

Hajar Mountains and the magnificent desert sand dunes are other interesting areas that are promoted in RAK. Even though RAK has beautiful scenery, which is itself considered a tourist destination, it is not the major attraction in the emirate. The antiquities of RAK make it a heritage tourism city, and it is for this that visitors come. For instance, Thompson (2001) shows that Aljazeera Al Hamra's village, which is situated in RAK, is one of the most important heritage sites in the UAE. This village consists of mosques, a fort, a market, and more than 100 ancient houses. However, Thompson suggests that this village is on the verge of collapse due to erosion and is in need of restoration and protection.

The current government of RAK is committed to supporting the trend towards heritage tourism sites in RAK by formulating a strategic plan to protect these heritage sites (Desbiolles, 2008). The present tourism plan aimed to attract 2.5 million visitors to the emirate by 2012 (Andriotis, Agiomirgianakis, & Mihiotis, 2007), in the hope of increasing the economic propriety and growth of this Emirate. The RAK government was trying to reach this target by providing many more facilities for tourists. The number of tourists to RAK has increased despite the world financial crisis and the instability in the Middle East region. Table 2.3 shows the increasing numbers of visitors to the RAK emirate during the last three years. For example, the number of tourists increased from 600,000 in 2010 to 1,105,191 in 2012, which represents an increase in guest, hotel and room occupancy rates of 6.57% in 2012. In addition, the number of hotels and their attachments also increased from 11 in 2010 to 15 hotels in 2012. Table 2.4, demonstrates the diversity of visitors and their country of origin to RAK.

In 2012 the highest number of visitors came from Europe (666,798) with America and Oceania (9,457) accounting for the fewest visitors. Additionally, Table 2.4 indicates the increasing number of residents who visit from different emirates within the UAE. Table 2.5 provides the same information for the year 2013. Again, the number of European visitors is the highest, followed by UAE residents, while the Americas and Oceania' accounted for the lowest numbers of visitors.



**Figure 2.2:** Map of Ras Al Khaimah adapted from *Travels* (2011)

**Table 2.3:** Hotels, rooms, beds and occupancy rate for Ras Al khaimah  
(Adapted from Ras Alkhaimah Tourism Investment and Development Authority)

Details	Year-to-date (2013)	Full Year 2012	Full Year 2011	Full Year 2010
No. of hotels	15	15	14	11
No. of rooms	2,975	2,975	2,761	2,503
No. of beds	4,218	4,218	3,872	3,514
Guests	98,229	1,105,191	835,200	600,000
Nights	59,544	727,470	682,309	521,014
Occupancy	66.34%	69.05%	68.92%	62.48%



**Table 2.4:** Visitors by nationality for year 2012

(Adapted from Ras Alkhaimah Tourism Investment and Development Authority)

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Average nights stayed</b>	<b>Guests per nights</b>	<b>No. of guests</b>
UAE	2.0	193,799	302,516
G C C countries	2.0	9,152	11,923
Other Arab countries	1.5	5,416	9,496
Other Asian and African countries	1.5	33,391	37,062
Europe	5.0	465,519	666,798
Americans and Oceania	2.0	7,615	9,457
Others	1.2	12,578	67,939
<b>Total</b>		<b>727,470</b>	<b>1,105,191</b>

**Table 2.5:** Visitors by nationality for month of January 2013

(Adapted from Ras Al khaimah Tourism Investment and Development Authority)

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Average nights stayed</b>	<b>Guests per nights</b>	<b>No. of guests</b>
U.A.E	2.00	16,140	24,946
G C C countries	2.00	1,177	1,550
Other Arabs countries	2.00	665	1,030
Europe	5.00	38,226	65,210
Americas and Oceania	2.50	669	877
<b>Total</b>		<b>60,735</b>	<b>98,229</b>

The development of tourism is a promising source of increasing employment in rural areas. The data analysed for this study also demonstrates that there is significant interest to increase tourism in RAK. Clear objectives should be set so that development can be managed for sustainable long-term development that is mindful of the negative impacts caused through tourism, such as social intrusion. The following section will focus on these aspects in more detail with a discussion of heritage tourism.

## 2.4 Heritage tourism

Cultural tourism has experienced significant growth worldwide and, with this growth, heritage tourism has been discovered throughout the world (McKercher, Cros, & McKercher, 2002). Heritage tourism includes the cultural environment, landscapes, historic sites, and built environments. Historic sites and their related history provide a context for modern day life and act as a foundation to understand the local, indigenous, regional and national identity of society. Each individual has their own sense and perspective of heritage and its continuation for the next generation (Mohamed, n.d.).

However, the development of heritage tourism has had some detrimental effects on the economic, environmental and socio-cultural aspects of the community. In turn, this damage has its effects later on the bond between the place and community, which can be seen and perceived in people's views and perceptions of tourism. This degradation alters communities' behaviour and eagerness towards tourism development and they participate in it willingly. So while developing heritage tourism is extremely important, the bond between place attachment and participation of the community must be understood for the effective development of heritage tourism (Su & Wall, 2010). For an environment to become 'heritage' entails the conversion of locations into destinations, while 'tourism' makes these locations economically viable, which is why heritage tourism is regarded as a collaborative industry. In a tourist economy, locations are observed to be museums in and of themselves for people to visit and appreciate (Mohamed, n.d.)

#### ***2.4.1 Definition***

It should be noted that heritage attractions are regularly considered as a commodity for economic use, particularly for tourism in modern communities (Ho & Mckercher, 2004), and different kinds of heritage attractions are being promoted in many non-beach holiday destinations (Um, Chon, & Ro, 2006). Broadly speaking, heritage tourism is considered as one of the oldest forms of tourism activities and also one of the most popular types of tourism. Additionally, heritage tourism fits easily with the view of cultural tourism (Hosany, 2011).

Heritage tourism is a type of tourism where the attention of visitors is concentrated on heritage locations (Yan & Morrison, 2008). Studies have found that in heritage tourism, the motives of visitors may vary. For example, some prefer archaeological landscapes, others are seeking local handicrafts (Chhabra et al., 2003). To date there have been many arguments about the concept of heritage tourism and defining heritage tourism is problematic because of the contrasting explanations in the literature. Prentice, (2010, p. 253) considers that "heritage tourism essentially has two categories, namely a special interest and place specific". Some researchers regard heritage tourism as part and parcel of cultural tourism; others see it as a distinct type of tourism. But what about the word 'heritage'? Hewison (1998, p. 21) states the meaning thus: "Heritage is gradually effacing history, by substituting an image of the past for its reality". At a time when the

country is obsessed by the history, it has a fading sense of continuity and change which is being replaced by a fragmented idea of the history constructed out of costume dramas on television, with re-enactments of the civil war battles and misleading celebrations of events such as the glorious revolution (Ouellette & Wood, 1998) .

There are not only different definitions of heritage tourism, but also different approaches. For instance, the State Heritage Parks Program in Pennsylvania (USA) considers heritage tourism as a journey with the chief goal of visiting historical sites in order to learn from the past in an enjoyable way (Dunlap, Schleicher, Keptner, & Denk, 2001). Heritage tourism is defined by the Ohio Legislative Service Commission (2001) as travelling to go through the experience of visiting places and doing activities that genuinely represent the stories and people of the past (2001). These studies involve “the analysis of museums, landscapes, artefacts, and activities that concentrate on representing different aspects of the past” (Halewood & Hannam, 2001, p. 566). The definition of heritage tourism put forth by Poria, et al. (2001, p. 1047) is as follows “Heritage tourism is a phenomenon based on tourists’ motivations and perceptions rather than on specific site attributes”. Poria, et al. (2004) in their research found that some researchers considered heritage tourism as a part of “cultural tourism”, whereas others believed that heritage tourism depends on the attitude of the visitors. Despite different definitions, one can find at the core of each the interaction with the past.

#### ***2.4.2 The growth of heritage tourism***

The decision-making process for the conservation of heritage areas needs to be effective since these places are irreplaceable and must be conserved for the next generation. In today’s world, things are changing fast; and in some demographics, there is less importance placed on heritage. This may explain why in general, the tourism industry may not be very focussed on the aspect of heritage or cultural tourism (Mohamed, n.d.). Rather, the heritage tourist relies primarily on self-developed travel. Chandler & Costello (2002) found that heritage tourism has grown rapidly since 1992, and this has encouraged many researchers to write about heritage tourism. Moreover, the discovery of heritage sites in different countries in the world has allowed visitors the opportunity to view more heritage places (du Cros, 2001). Caffyn and Lutz (1999) suggest in their research that a link could be made between past tourism and modern tourism through specific strategies to increase the number of tourists and thereby increase the economic

growth of the related countries. Alzua, O’Leary and Morrison (1998, p. 2) say that “heritage tourism is not only fast growing , but also influences the economy”. They adopted a report from the WTO that predicted by 2005 heritage tourism would be a five trillion plus economic activity, with almost 125 million employees, and more than 500 million travellers growing to more than one billion.

#### **2.4.3 *Emotional responses to heritage locations***

Nuryanti (1996) claims that heritage tourism has helped visitors to understand how people lived in the past; they reconstruct the past in their minds through interpretation. The central challenge in establishing a connection between heritage sites and tourism lies in reconstructing the past through rebuilding heritage sites and old buildings. Specialists advocate this experience for tourists be enhanced by providing detailed information about the heritage sites (Nuryanti, 1996).

Some tourists travel to heritage sites to search for information relating to their own ancestral roots (McCain & Ray, 2003), which provides an emotional response to the sites. Poria et al. (2004, p. 24) note that “the reasons to visit could be linked to the heart and the emotional experience or may be linked to the brain and the intention to learn but might not be linked to the core of the site”. Visitors to these locations are likely to become attached to them and to identify with the site. Howes and Obregon (2009) discuss in their research that expression of emotion has evolved gradually over time and varies from person to person. Furthermore, Park (2010) mentions that the emotional attachment of visitors to Changdeok were manifested in strength of visitors feeling when they found something related to their home or past; he added that the human memory has a major role in the tourist’s passion to visit heritage places.

#### **2.4.4 *Resource issues***

While there are many buildings and archaeological sites in the world that deserve to be preserved, because they can provide both an experience and historical knowledge for visitors (Edwards & Coit, 1996), the cost of maintaining these sites and the nature of the location may be prohibitive. For example, very old mines may require substantial equipment and maintenance to provide safe access for tourists (Edwards & Coit, 1996). Other sites may not be as challenging but still may require substantial public investment and may need to be repaired and continuously maintained so they can serve as a magnet

for tourists. One such example is the historical Soho House in the United Kingdom (UK), which the Birmingham City Council purchased, restored and made available to the public for a small entrance fee (Caffyn & Lutz, 1999). The cost of the purchase and the restoration of Solo House was substantial and was not covered by the entrance fee charged. It is clear that while some historical places deserve to be given consideration, and that attention should be paid to their historical importance because of their significance to tourists (both domestic and international), the government cost involved may be prohibitive, particularly in restricted or depressed economies.

Because heritage tourism has become a major contributor to the world economy, many countries have reinvigorated this sector by regulating and managing heritage sites to increase the number of visitors (Hosany, 2011). In order to achieve this, substantial amounts of money, work and management have been invested to invigorate the sites in these countries and thus to attract visitors. Heritage tourism has other benefits, including the much needed preservation and maintenance of these sites and public participation in decision-making (Garrod & Fyall, 2000). An appropriate balance between traditional and modern technologies may be needed to sustainably secure the integrity of these resources for future generations (Garrod & Fyall, 2000).

Nasser (2003) argues that old buildings worldwide can be preserved through the effective use of materials. There are international agreements, although not all countries are signatories, which emphasise the responsibilities of local governments for preserving and maintaining important heritage sites. These responsibilities can present significant challenges for developing countries whose primary focus is on raising the material and physical health and wellbeing of their people, not restoring heritage sites (Prentice2010). However, to provide support for heritage sites in developing countries, there are some international organisations that offer support. For instance, the United Nation has developed programs in some countries not able to restore their heritage sites (Prentice2010). In the UAE, the government has restored many heritage sites during the last 20-year period and they are still working on some of them (Franklin & Crang, 2001). The restoration of these sites leads to increased visitor satisfaction as they are better able to experience the attractions. This satisfaction is a key driver for the government of the UAE as satisfaction is viewed as crucial to increasing the number of visitors/revisits.

## 2.5 Satisfaction

Satisfaction is a key element of tourism programs. Laws (1998, p. 546) found in his research that the management “in any services” should put in their plan a strategy for the quality of the services provided to the visitors. He gave as an example, Leeds Castle, one of Britain’s oldest heritage places which strives to provide a perfect quality of services for visitors. Moreover, these services should be attuned to the experiences of the tourists attending the heritage places. Visitors who come from different countries have their own cultural expectations. Kozak (2001, p. 398), when comparing British and German tourists’ satisfaction during their visit to Turkey and Mallorca, found communication skills to be a critical factor. Those who spoke English appreciated being able to use their own language in these countries.

Andriotis, et al. (2007) asserted that the tourism industry must confront the problems it faces, especially regarding tourist's satisfaction, and it should bring these problems to the attention of the people who will be responsible for tourism in the country. For example, if a tour package includes food, drinks, shopping and, activities, but the actual services do not meet the visitors’ requirements then visitor satisfaction will suffer. Andriotis, et al. (2007) found in their study that safety and security are the most significant variables and provide the highest satisfaction to visitors.

Bosque and Martin (2008) found that there is a relationship between the emotions of a tourist and his or her satisfaction. Bowie and Cahng (2005) state in their research that past experience is a significant determinant of visitor satisfaction. Alegre and Garau (2010, p. 68) note that "dissatisfaction evaluations have a greater bearing on the intention to return than on overall satisfaction". Overall, satisfaction is key to a successful tourism experience.

Prentice (1993) notes in his research on tourists that there should be a particular motivation for tourists to visit heritage sites in order to improve the likelihood of these sites being included on their tours. Since the satisfaction of tourists is so important, the countries should focus more on the services they provide, and make sure they are of a high standard at the heritage place.

## **2.6 Place attachment**

Place attachment can be described as an emotional feeling that occurs when people are planning to leave specific places. In theory, there are various descriptions for place attachment but mostly these descriptions are based on the bond between the people and the landscape (Mah, 2009).

### **2.6.1 Definition of place**

The concept of place is defined in terms of a human experience that exists in the material world. It is an idea that can easily be understood but is difficult to define. A place is a location or area that has some special value and holds respected meaning to individuals. The connection between people and place is influenced by cognitive magnitude.

Overall, the concept of place has many different interpretations. For example, Williams (1992) argued that the concept of place has at least three general meanings in social science: 1. Its location involves the special distribution of different social and economic actions; 2. It includes different sets of behaviours for daily routine and social interaction occurring in one place; and 3. It focuses on the emotional and symbolic identification within a place (Bosque & Martin, 2008). Early sociological studies have considered attachment concepts in relation to both subjective sensations towards the geographical locale, and towards neighbouring behaviour (Pretty, Chipuer, & Bramston, 2003).

### **2.6.2 Place Attachment**

There are two elements to attachment: 'place attachment' and 'predictor of attachment'. These elements sometimes overlap but are not equivalent. Predictors of place attachment are divided into three groups: socio-demographic, social, and physical environment (Lewicka, 2011). Place attachment is an outcome of social psychological development (Gu & Ryan, 2008).

Some researchers have considered place attachment as one of the most significant types of attachment in our lives. Briker and Kerstetter (2000) note that the link between human beings and place attachment is about territory, and the sentiment of the people. Knez (2005) states that place attachment is a phase of psychological feeling about

something that happened in our life. It is important for tourism planners to identify the subtle differences of the behaviours of the residents while planning the new and long-term infrastructure of the place (Lokocz, Ryan, & Sadler, 2011).

Kyle, Graefe, Manning, and Bacon (2003) proposed a relationship between place attachment and the strength of psychological commitment at the level of place attachment. Within the academic literature place attachment is discussed mainly in two fields: environmental psychology and community studies or community development. Environmental psychology considers the psychological effects of residential mobility especially where someone is forced to move, whereas community studies considers the context of urban decline (Dearden & Harron, 1994).

Views and assumptions of place attachment differ on the basis of disciplinary perspective. However, with time this is changing in significance amongst individuals, groups and cultures of the community (Halpenny, 2010). Lewicka (2008) claims in his article that “place is the core concept in environmental psychology” and that there is some difference between place attachment and place identity because of the differences between people.

Gustafson (2001) thinks roots might be one of the significant parts of place attachment and Kaltenborn (1997) argues that places have different practicabilities and attachment understanding. For example, “people, infrastructure, landscape elements, bio ecological and sociocultural processes all contribute to creating places” (Kaltenborn 1997, p. 177). Furthermore, Milligan (1998) contends that a place becomes special by psychological and physical connection with the individuals.

Kaltenborn, Haaland, and Sandell, (2001) conclude that a place attachment could be promoted by individuals or a group of people. Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001) found there is no particular comprehensible meaning to place attachment. Furthermore, Vaske and Kobrin (2001) maintain that place attachment is linked to the people in a visible psychological manner and is divided into two parts : place dependence and place identity. Pretty, Chipur and Broen (2003), have supported Vaske and Kobrin’s idea that place is part of a person’s psychology and includes place identity and place dependence as portions of place attachment. Place identity is another important idea that



describes the bonding of people with place, it has a significant role in building a strong relationship between people and place (Butler, 1990).

Differences in place identity would depend on features like relative connections, climate and landscapes. Gross and Brown (2008) found assumed connections that were driven by frequency of use. Williams and Vaske (2003, p. 831) indicated that many disciplines seek better understanding of the attachments of people toward a specific place, such as, sociology, anthropology and human geography, as seen in Table 2.6.

**Table 2.6:** Place attachment concentration of different disciplines

Discipline	Concentration	Authors
Sociology	The symbolic meanings of setting influence the social context of human interactions	(Grieder and Garkovich, 1994)
Anthropology	Understanding the cultural significance of places in daily life.	(Gupta and Ferguson, 1997)
Human geography	Exploring the concept of sense of place	(Relph 1967, 1997; Buittmer and Seammon 1980; Tuan, 1977, 1980)
Environmental psychology	Place attachment	(Brown, 1987; Altman, and Low, 1992)

It appears that understanding the meanings of place is a crucial and fundamental issue for understanding the leisure phenomenon (Bosque & Martin, 2008). It is also important to study place attachment because it is related to many phenomena and applicable to many aspects. Thus, many definitions have been collected for place attachment. The literature on displacement further describes that place attachment has its roots in emotion and can be seen when individuals are forced to leave their place as in some event of war, immigration or relocation (Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

Sense of place is always amalgamated with an emotional or affective connection between people and a specific location. This connection varies among people from temporary sensations to long-term relations and attachments (Tuan cited in (Williams et al.1992). There are two main concepts that are attached to sense of place in the environmental psychology literature, namely, place (Su & Wall2010), (Proshansky et al., 1983), and place dependence (Hall, 2013). These concepts can be considered as “primarily cognitive, affective and conative variables” (Marcus, 2012).

Following from this, there are numerous definitions relating to the meaning of place attachment. According to Lalli (1992), place attachment is a component of place identity where people live and carry out normal everyday activities in which they develop a connection to that environment. In many studies which are mentioned above, place identity and place attachment are an extension of each other.

However, Brown et al. (2003, p. 260) stated that “place attachments are often related to, but not determined by, changing housing and neighbourhood conditions”. Although, there are many theories and experiences to identify the meaning of place attachment, there is still a need for further study in the context of tourism because it may be a key element influencing tourists to visit heritage sites (Bosque & Martin, 2008). Therefore, this research will study the relationship between place attachment and return visits to heritage sites.

Bricker and Kerstetter (2010) found in their research that management should be aware of the different effects of “resources or experiences” in place attachment. Furthermore, they recommended the “place attachment scale should be expanded to account not only for intensity and type of attachment, but also for the complex meaning associated with the various levels of attachment” (p. 254). Differences and similarities may be found on the basis of information about one’s place.

## **2.7 Heritage tourism as a specialised activity**

Heritage tourism in general encompasses different types of heritage attractions and varying preferences of tourists. The preferences of tourists, on the other hand, depend on their motives; some may be broadly interested in history and culture, whereas others have quite specialised heritage interests. Each country tends to have its own distinctive heritage resources, although neighbouring countries may share aspects of history and culture. However, many tourists seek unique or distinct heritage features within a country. According to McCain and Ray (2003) some tourists prefer to visit old traditional markets, as they are evocative of their own ancestry or heritage even if they are touring outside their own country. McCain and Ray (2003) found that “the travellers believe that the most important motivations for travel are the following: visiting historic sites, wilderness and undisturbed nature, mountains, and visiting friends and relatives”.

The major aspects causing tourism trips are cultural and historical attractions; these have prompted the heritage industry to develop greatly (Prentice2010).

Countries seeking to increase numbers of visitors often provide relevant information about their heritage sites, for example, the date of construction of the heritage sites, tools used and even the names of families who owned these sites. Given that individual motivations vary, some tourists will approach heritage tourism sites in a superficial manner, concentrating more on the purchase of souvenirs and limiting their time at the location. Conversely, many dedicated heritage tourists are interested in obtaining in-depth understanding of the culture and historical significance of each site.

These differences in approach towards heritage resources may depend on the social and demographic characteristics of the tourists and their experience of heritage sites (Caton & Santos, 2007). Some heritage areas offer multi-dimensional rewards for tourists. For example, a historic mine may be near an area of great scenic beauty, as in the west coast of New Zealand. Kerstetter, Confer, and Graefe (2001), found that heritage tourists tend to be more educated and have a higher annual income than the general travellers. In addition, heritage tourists tend to stay longer and spend more per trip. Some researchers say that the tourism countries should take advantage of the increasing number of visitors. For example, Inskeep (2007) suggests that there should be “tourism planning”, and he mentions the Asia-Pacific region as an example. Therefore, motivations of the visitors should be one of the key elements taken into account by the Tourism Departments in the UAE.

## **2.8 Summary of the literature**

Contemporary literature on the tourism phenomenon has grown considerably. Nonetheless, the literature on heritage and cultural tourism studies remains very limited. Therefore, there is a need for further investigation into areas of heritage tourism. In particular, little attention has been paid to the issue of revisitation to heritage places. This study will help to close that gap by exploring the relationship between place attachment and tourists' return visits to heritage sites.

The researcher's review of current literature has concentrated on the tourism industry and its two main streams: mass tourism and alternative tourism. In addition, the researcher reviewed the different studies on heritage tourism: its definitions, the emotional responses to heritage locations, and resource issues. The review also covers the issue of place attachment, and concentrates on heritage tourism as a specialised activity. In conclusion, the UAE in general and RAK in particular are seeking to increase the number of visitors by providing quality services to the heritage places and developing heritage resources to increase the tourists' satisfaction. Based on this review and the implications of the literature, the theory of planned behaviour is one of the theories used to test tourists' behaviour when visiting heritage sites.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

### **3 Research Framework**

In this chapter the researcher discusses their aim to contribute to the understanding of visitors' intentions to return to heritage sites within the United Arab Emirates (UAE) region. To achieve this, two frameworks are presented – the theory of planned behaviour incorporating elements added by Shen et al. (2009) and examining the relationship between place attachment and return visits. The conceptual framework for this study further develops work encompassing repeat visit intention to heritage sites, place attachment and the relationship between repeat intention and place attachment. The population of interest is also discussed within this framework. The chapter is divided into five sections: Section 3.1 presents the original theory of planned behaviour (TPB); section 3.2 focuses on the TPB incorporating place attachment; section 3.3 presents the population of interest; and, section 3.4 concentrates on the framework for repeat visit intention. Finally, section 3.5 presents the summary of this chapter.

#### **3.1 The theory of planned behaviour (TPB)**

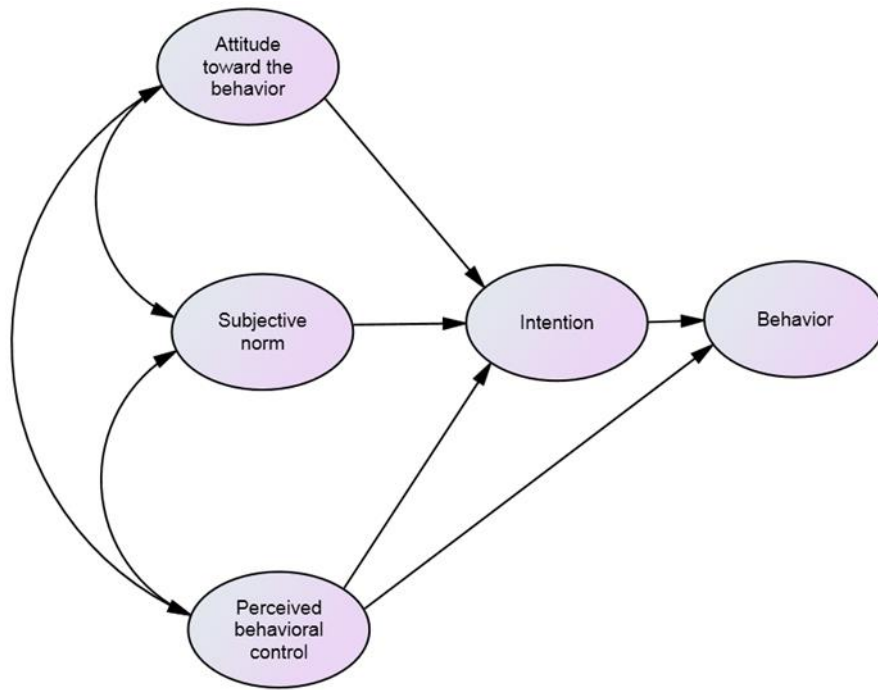
Theories addressing tourist behaviour have been a central focus of tourism literature (Lam & Hsu, 2004). One of the most often used, and adapted theories, to explain tourists' behaviour is the theory of planned behaviour (Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010; March & Woodside, 2005). Based on the theory of reasoned action, the theory of planned behaviour predicts an individual's intention to engage in certain behaviour at a certain time and place.

According to Beck & Ajzen (1991, p. 286), planned behaviour concerns an individual's intention to behave in a given manner: "the theory of planned behaviour postulates three conceptually independent determinants of intention: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control". Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2006), argue that the TPB was formulated as a means of explaining the way an individual behaves when placed into a certain situation.

A sensible action framework, for example, TPB, foresees that offering fresh information might alter the psychological basis of behaviour and intentions of the people (Bamberg, Ajzen, & Schmidt, 2003). The principal model of TPB is concerned with the issues of behaviour-centric features. Intention to execute behaviour has been found to be a dominant element in TPB (Kim & Han2010). Ajzen (1991) argued that the more motivated an individual was to be involved in a given task, the better she/he would perform it. However, Ajzen also describes how individuals prefer to adopt a behaviour that they have successfully applied in the past because it offers them greater comfort, not because it is necessarily the best behaviour to meet the needs of the situation.

Similar to attitude and personal tenet, a perceived control of behaviour may be quantified by eliciting direct responses about the ability to carry out behaviour or circuitously based on the principles about the capacity to confront particular underlying or supporting factors (Ajzen, 2002). Furthermore, two additional precursors of intention are found: subjective standard and attitude related to behaviour, which are recollected from the past the theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Armitage & Conner, 2001). A subjective standard denotes the person's awareness of common social forces to carry out or not carry out the behaviour. An attitude denoting the behaviour influences the person's holistic good or bad assessments of carrying out a specific behaviour (Armitage & Conner, 2001).

Therefore, TPB is a suitable theory to apply to human behaviour as it describes the factors that impact a person's behavioural intentions (Cheng et al., 2006). This theory has a useful role in determining a persons' behaviour in decisions to return back to heritage tourism. In order to obtain the choice of the respondent (the tourist), stated choice experiments were designed whereby the tourist was provided with a set of different destination attributes (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2008). For different samples collected from various countries of the world, the subjective norms and perceived behavioral control were shown to considerably influence the tourists' intentions (Quintal et al., 2010). Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that it is only possible for a behavioural intention to identify expression in behaviour if the subject behaviour is under volitional control, which means that an individual chooses to either perform or not perform behaviour according to his own free will (Ajzen, 2002).



**Figure 3.1:** Theory of planned behaviour adapted from Ajzen (1991).

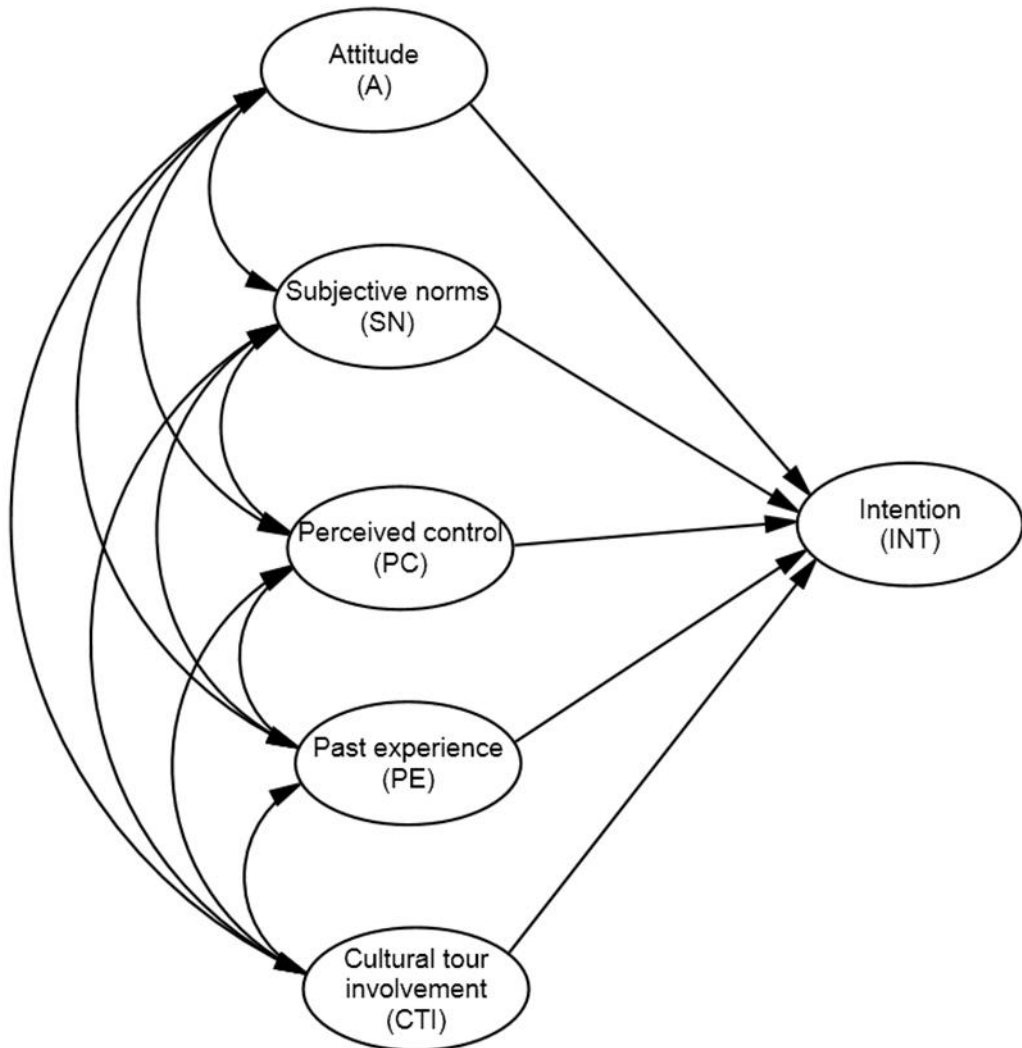
According to Ajzen (1991), the theory of planned behaviour has three major strands: Firstly, the level at which an individual reacts towards a particular positive or negative behaviour and the way in which he/she consequently analyses that behaviour and adopts an attitude to questioned behaviour. Secondly, the manner of predicting the behaviour is known as subjective, and is based on a social factor. It is described as the social pressure on the subject who predicts whether the particular behaviour will be performed or not. Thirdly, the comprehended behaviour is controlled and is based on the easy or difficult performance of the predicted behaviour. In this strand, it is also presumed that the particular behaviour is not based on past experiences or assumed difficulties and barriers (Ajzen1991).

TPB has previously been used in tourism research. For example, March & Woodside (2005, p. 910) state that “a tourism consumption system is the set of related thoughts, decisions, and behaviours by a discretionary tourist prior to, during, and following a trip”. Choices and behaviours entertained by tourists and travellers manifest a rich fabric of interconnected factors out of multifarious combinations of variables. Time span for stay, money spent, and lodgings used may differ from one visitor to another according to their variable segments related to basic factors for touring a destination (March & Woodside, 2005). The researcher will, therefore, use the TPB as the basis of

the frameworks while also considering the relationship between place attachment and repeat visits to heritage sites.

### 3.2 The theory of planned behaviour incorporating place attachment

Some researchers have added other elements to the TPB. According to Shen et al. (2009), past behaviour can be used for predicting behavioural intention. Similarly, Ouellette and Wood (1998) consider past behaviour to be the best indicator of intention. Shen et al. (2009) argue that adding two elements to the theory of planned behaviour will strengthen its ability to explain the intention to make return visits to world cultural heritage sites. The first element is past experience, and the second is cultural tour involvement (CTI). Visiting a world cultural heritage site can be considered as a type of cultural tour.



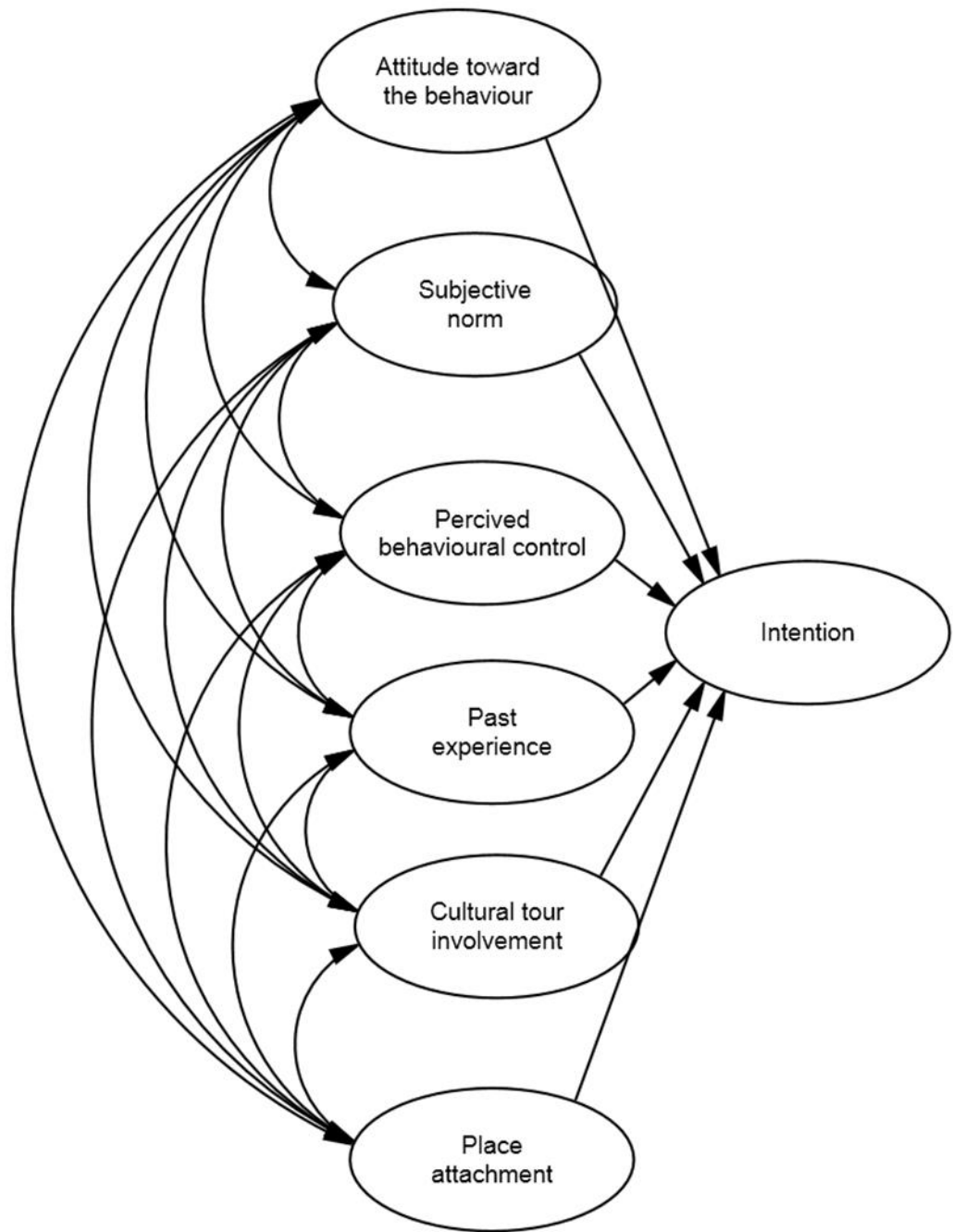
**Figure 3.2:** The theory of planned behaviour with two additional factors adapted by Shen et al. (2009).



The level of importance, interest or enjoyment attributed by a tourist to a given cultural tour is termed involvement (Shen et al., 2009). Many more tourism-related choices are probably made during the assessment of factors relevant to monetary and economical areas: whether an individual has time for the tour; how much money she/he has for the tour; which destination choices are best for the time he/she can spare; which choices of destination can return the best financial deals; when trade-offs are needed; and what experimental choice making should be applied in the selection of destinations among many at hand (March & Woodside, 2005).

This research adopts Shen et al.'s (2009) expanded model of the TPB and incorporates the concept of place attachment and its measurement. The aim is to construct a more composite model and to test the relationship between place attachment and return visits to heritage sites Figure 3. This will involve developing a measure of the intensity because experience relates to the motivation of tourists to consider paying return visits to a heritage site. Since the TPB consists of different beliefs, the components of Ajzen's (1991) model will be used in conjunction with the additions of Shen et al. (2009) additions to the model as well as with the place attachment element.

Figure 3 delineates the conceptual framework of this research, and the variables, such as attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control, past experience, cultural tour involvement, and place attachment, that influence, directly or indirectly, a respondent's intention of return visits to heritage sites.

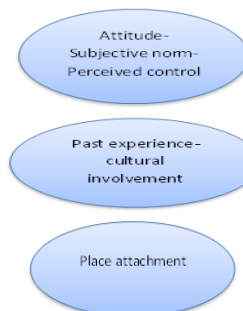


**Figure 3.3:** Conceptual framework of research.

Original elements from Ajzen (Ajzen, 1991)

The theory of planned behaviour by Shen et al. (2009)

Element added by PhD researcher



### **3.3 Population of Interest**

International visitors and residents from other emirates inside the UAE were used to demonstrate the relationship between place attachment and return visits to heritage sites. This research particularly focuses on a specific set of visitors who are most interested in heritage sites. This study, therefore, selected visitors from four different places: 1) RAK airport, 2) hotels, 3) shopping centres, and 4) heritage sites. This was done to provide a good cross section of respondents. More detailed information regarding the selection process is provided in Chapter 4.

### **3.4 Framework for intention to return visits**

Courneya and Bobick (2000) found that intention is decided by, in order, attitude, subjective norm, and assumed control of behaviour. However, it is also influenced by three perceptually unconnected variables known as attitude, subjective act, and perceived behavioural control (PBC) (Courneya, Plotnikoff, Hotz, & Birkett, 2000).

Tourism is a system that is developed through a combination of relevant perceptions, choices and behaviours. Accounting for the reasons that people travel, and the factors that impact on their behavioural decisions when selecting a destination, are valuable to tourism marketing and planning (Lam & Hsu2006).

### **3.5 Summary**

The Researcher selected the TPB with factors added by Shen et al. (2009) and added place attachment to measure the relationship between the place attachment and return visits to heritage sites. The Researcher examined the relationship between place attachment and return visit to heritage sites by gathering data from two methods: interviewing and a survey. The researcher used the adapted TPB as a model to measure the intention to return to heritage sites within RAK. The next chapter presents more detailed information on the research design and methods.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4 Research methodology**

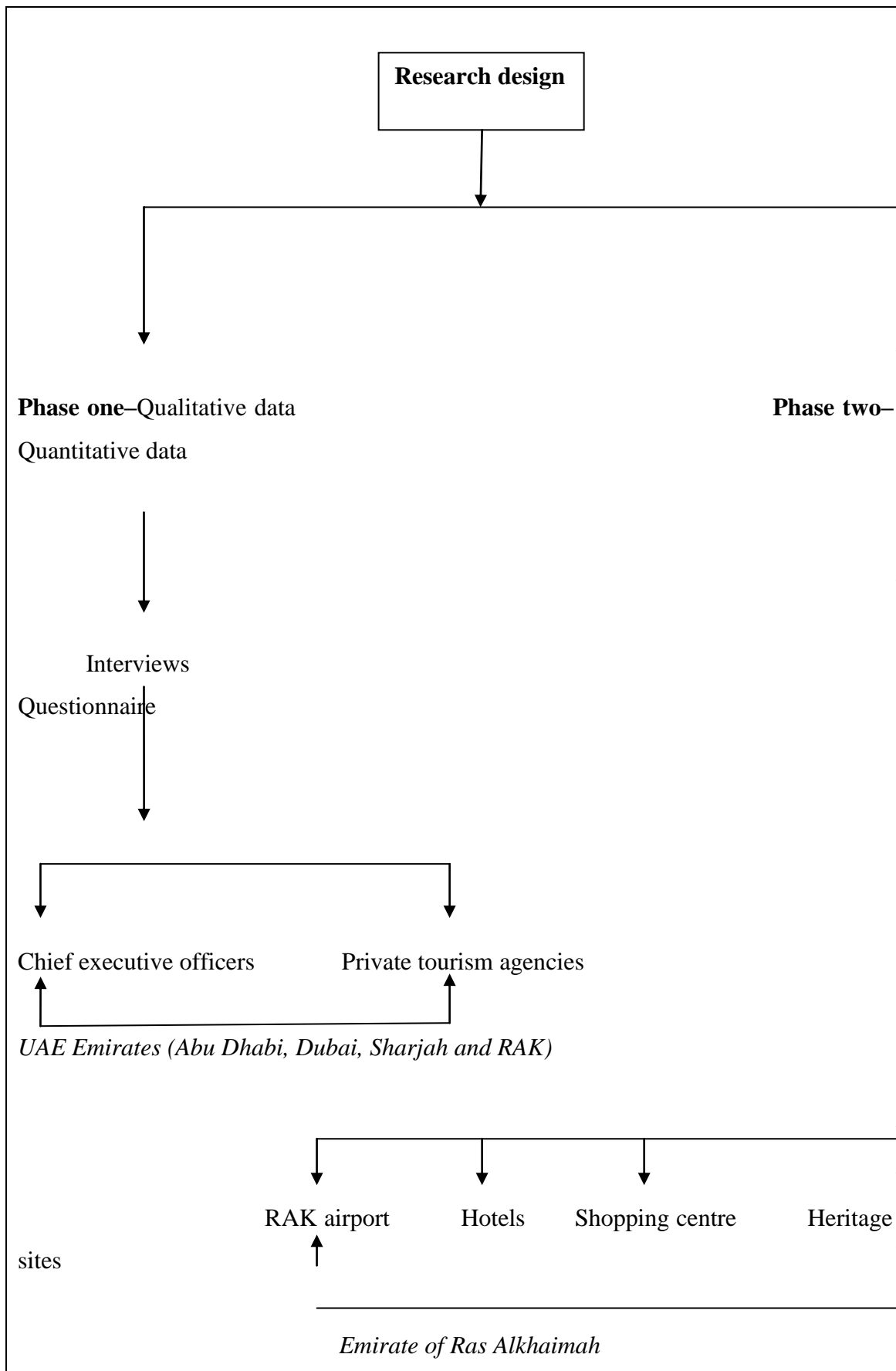
In this chapter the researcher describes the research methodology used in this study. Chapter 3 proposed and described the research objectives and framework. In this chapter, the place attachment element, which was added by the researcher to the theory of planned behaviour, is reviewed. Additionally, this chapter provides clarification of the mechanisms of this theory.

The research method in this chapter is arranged into five sections. Section 4.1 describes the research design, which includes the explanations of data collection tools, and how these data were collected and analysed. Section 4.2 presents the analysis method. The structural equation model and the scope of the study are introduced in 4.3 and 4.4. A research procedure, which includes the qualitative and quantitative data is explained in Section 4.5, followed by the validity of the research in 4.6. Reliability is covered in section 4.7 followed by the limitations of the study in 4.8. Finally, ethics and confidentiality are addressed in 4.9 and a summary is presented in 4.10.

#### **4.1 Research Design**

The study explores the following research questions:

- How do tourism stakeholders in the UAE United Arab Emirates currently perceive heritage tourism?
- What is the relationship between the theory of planned behaviour, past experience/ cultural tour involvement, place attachment and people's intention to revisit heritage sites in RAK?
- Does place attachment contribute to Shen et al. (2009) adapted model of the theory of planned behaviour within the tourism context of repeat visits to heritage sites in RAK?
- Is there an emotional relationship between heritage sites and return visits?



**Figure 4.1:** The research design reviewing the pertinent literature

The research design chosen for this study used a mixed–methods approach, comprising both qualitative and quantitative data. Using the mixed–methods approach ensured contextual factors were considered in the development of the model. Researchers in the last decade have used mixed methods, which can be a combination of qualitative and quantitative in a single study (Azorín & Cameron, 2010) or in different fields of study (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007, p. 113) explained that mixed methods has become a popular methodology. According to Kelley (1999), the use of quantitative and qualitative methodology is determined by the scale of measurement required to process the data, such as the questions of who, what and how will be measured as well as the areas that need further definition. In other words, it refers to how the researcher chooses to process and analyse the collected data.

Giddings (2006) claims that gathering quantitative and qualitative data together as a mixed method will support and strengthen the outcome with strong evidence. However, Hanson, Petska et al. (2005, p. 226) state that “The best paradigm is determined by the researcher and the research problem – not by methods”. Rocco Bliss et al. (2003), found that most researchers are looking for both objectivist and constructivist realities and that might be one reason to choose mixed methods for their study. Recent research in social and behavioral or human sciences has seen mixed methods research adopted by researchers and methodologists who worked on quantitative and qualitative perspectives and techniques to address research questions (Johnson et al., 2007). Therefore, as a rational measure, mixed methods are often employed with the perception that they are being applied to address a particular issue and to present information that will be useful in making evaluative judgments (Hall, 2013).

Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2004) noted that researchers have availed themselves of the mixed–methods approach more often, making their outcomes even more valuable and trustworthy for the readers. However, Cameron (2011) maintains that researchers should know everything about mixed–methods before using it.

In general, quantitative research refers to numbers and measurements in the collection and analysis of data. For instance, measuring the quantity of people who feel, think or act in a particular way; whereas qualitative research is used to gain an insider’s perspective of group’s behaviour; rather than numbers, qualitative researchers seek in–

depth information, such as how people feel and why they feel as they do (Kelley, 1999). Based on Kelley's definitions, a mixed qualitative–quantitative methodology would be suitable for the current study.

The overall concept of mixed-methods in social research is now well established. However, the exact role that has to be played by each method and the extent of its implementation is still open to discussion and debate (Howe, 2011). Moreover, government and private funding institutions, stakeholders, and evaluators have been emphasising the need to combine different methods to make use of this methodology for developing social policy (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

#### ***4.1.1 Sample size and population***

Since a mixed–method approach is used in this study, the data collection consisted of two phases. The qualitative phase used interviews with four Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of tourism departments in four emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, and Ras Al khaimah), as well as in-depth interviews with thirteen private travel agencies in the four emirates. The sample size for the qualitative approach is small, non–random and theoretically chosen. The researcher included these four large emirates to confirm the relationship between the Tourism Departments and travel agencies in each emirate. Moreover, these interviews clarified the important link between the travel agencies and the tourists who visit the heritage sites. It is the travel agencies who influence the tourists and the destination they choose while on holidays.

In the quantitative method phase of the research, data were collected via questionnaire in the emirate of RAK. The questionnaire was distributed to 392 participants in four places: RAK airport, shopping centres, hotels, and heritage sites. Although, large sample properties are required for full–information estimation methods, for the estimates they required a meaningful parameter and in natural way suited the requirement of sample size (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). This information is defined in an objective way and measured through technical and statistical tools (Rosner, 1990).

#### **4.2 The scope of the study**

This study is set in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a country that consists of seven emirates. As previously noted, the researcher chose four emirates for the qualitative

phase of this study: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and Ras Al khaimah (RAK). These four were chosen according to their size and population, and because they are known as targeted tourism places in the UAE. For example, the Emirate of Abu Dhabi is the capital and it is the political city of the UAE. Dubai is well-known as a commercial city with large numbers of travellers visiting each year. In addition, Dubai is the major business centre of UAE and as such hosts international visitors year round. The emirate of Sharjah is known as an old cultural city, and is the primary destination for visitors interested in cultural heritage. Lastly, the emirate of RAK is a unique place for heritage sites, and is located close to Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah. In addition to international visitors, a large number of travellers from these, and the other emirates visit RAK for tourism purposes as well. The quantitative phase of this study focused on RAK as the research of interest was on heritage sites.

### **4.3 Structural equation modelling**

The collected data were analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM). According to Lei and Wu (2007, p. 33), “SEM is a general term that has been used to describe a large number of statistical models used to evaluate the validity of substantive theories with empirical data”. The use of SEM for theory building and theory testing have many advantages which include: validity, reliability, complex models, and confirmatory approach (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Like all other models, SEM is also a model made up of various features; these include: capitalisation on chance, sample size, assessment of model fit and method of parameter estimation (Raykov & Widaman, 1995). This technique is appropriate for large data sets that contain several independent variables that could influence the dependent variables (Cela, Laankford, & Knowles-Lankford, 2009). SEM infers relations among variables that expand the old studies of regression and correlation.

SEM was used by Shen et al. (2009) to analyse a similar relationship and so is felt to be appropriate. AMOS software version of SEM was chosen because of its graphical user interface and its ability to visually develop and test models (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993). SEM enables the analysis of latent (or unobserved) variables and their relationship with multiple observed variables (Schreiber, Stage, King, Nora, & Barlow, 2006). A



confirmatory factor analysis was undertaken on each construct (dimension) and sub-construct (sub-dimension). This is further explained below.

#### **4.3.1 Measures of fit**

SEM has two fit indexes: “*comparative model fit index*” and the “covariance matrix reproduction index”. The first index compares the given model with that of a null model by reviewing and appraising the model fit. The second one is designed to compare the reproduced covariance with the sample covariance model. The null model itself is defined as the one with the least or zero relation with the model indicators (Fan, Thompson, & Wang, 1999). SEM is a process used to determine the fit between observed data and the hypothesized model (Mueller & Hancock, 2007). There is a link between the latent variables and multiple indicators. Using multiple variables makes it easy to measure the latent constructs more reliably and convincingly (Bullock, Harlow, & Mulaik, 1994). Additionally, for the evaluation of model fit, the most popular methods are the so-called fit indices and the chi-square goodness-of-fit statistic. These are offered to as a supplement to the chi-square test (Hu & Bentler, 1998).

In the current study, the researcher first conducted a confirmatory analysis of the measurement model specifying the posited relations of the observed variables to the underlying constructs with all constructs allowed to be freely inter-correlated. Before testing the overall measurement model, each construct in the model was analysed separately. The fit of the indicators to the construct and construct reliability and validity were also tested. The “chi-square test”  $T = n \cdot F$  is the fundamental test or measure (Hammervold & Olsson, 2012). However, the Chi-square test, has the limitation of not providing any direct indication of the degree of fit like it is available with normal indices within the range of 0 to 1 (Bagozzi & Foxall, 1996). According to Joreskog & Sorbom, (1993), the item having a coefficient below 0.3 is unacceptable and should be deleted from further analysis. Moreover, with the increase in sample size the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) also goes up.

The value of AGFI lies in the range between 0 and 1, with the goodness of fit index (GFI), and it has been established that the values of 0.90 or more shows that the models are well fitted (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). In covariance structure analysis the conventional overall test of fit assesses discrepancies in the magnitude between the

fitted covariance matrices and the sample (Hu & Bentler, 1998). The errors concerning observed variables relate to measurements that can be slotted into the data analysis; the errors help to obtain information from a model showing whether the collected data fits a specific a priori hypothesized structure having relations that are limited to be constant (e.g. zero effects among variables (Mueller, 1997). In fact, the model that is acceptable by convention is that in which the p-value is more than or equal to 0.05.

The square root of the difference between the hypothesised covariance model and the residuals of the sample covariance matrix gives the value of the SRMR (root mean square error of approximation) and the RMR (root mean square residual). Value of this measure lies in the range of 0.0 and 1.0 with NFI (normal fit index), and good fit is indicated by values approaching 1.0 (Hooper et al., 2008). It is estimated that the value of CFI (comparative fit index) should be in the range of greater than or equal to 0.90. Cases where the values are less than 0.90 indicate that a significant quantity of variance must be explained and in cases where the value is more than 0.90 or equal to it indicate that it is over fitted or there is no need for further relaxation of parameter constraints (Bagozzi & Foxall, 1996).

**Table 4.1:** Goodness of fit indices

Goodness of fit indices/ Best fit points			Incremental fit indices/ Best fit points			Parsimonious fit indices/ Best fit points		
Adjusted goodness of fit index	AGFI	0.90	Relative fit index	RFI		Parsimonious normed fit index	PNFI	
Goodness of fit index	GFI	>0.90	Normed fit index	NFI	>0.95	Rescaled Akaike's information criterion	CAIC	0–1
Root mean square residual	RMR	0.0–1.0	Incremental fit index	IFI		Parsimony goodness of fit index	PGFI	
			Comparative fit index	CFI	≥ 0.90	Expected cross-validation index	ECVI	
						Root mean square error of approximation	RMSE	<0.08
						Akaike information criterion	AIC	0–1

#### **4.4 Research procedures**

As noted previously, a mixed methods approach was used in this research. The two methods used were: interviews and survey. This study was conducted over the period November 2011 to September 2012 and consisted of two phases. The first phase was the qualitative data collection by interviews with four CEOs and 13 travel agents. The second phase was the quantitative data collection utilising a survey of 392 tourists. Tabachnick & Fidell (1996) recommend that a sample of 200 is fair and of 300 is good. In addition, Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998), and Holter & Schwartz, (1993) recommended a sample size of 200 to test a model using SEM, because 200 is a ‘critical sample size’ that can be used in any common estimation procedure for a valid result.

##### ***4.4.1 Phase one – qualitative data***

In the first phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two different groups: Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the tourism departments and private tourism agents from the four major emirates in the UAE: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and RAK. The first group comprised one CEO of the tourism departments of each emirate as shown in Appendix 1, and the second group was 13 private tourism agents (3–4 from each emirate) as illustrated in Appendix 2. The qualitative research phase was exploratory and was used to better understand the points of view of the two sets of participants. First, the CEOs’ of tourism departments were interviewed to obtain information about the heritage tourists in each emirate and how to improve heritage tourism in the UAE and RAK.

Second, the Researcher used interviews to find out if there is a relationship between the UAE tourism departments and their tourists. Thirteen private tourism agents in the four emirates were interviewed to gauge the proportion of tourists who go to heritage sites and the agents’ opinions on how to make the UAE and RAK a better place to visit for heritage tourists. Interviews with travel agents also included questions about prior history of tourists visiting heritage sites. These interviews were recorded and the responses collected. The results were used to develop the quantitative survey questionnaire.

#### ***4.4.1.1 Chief Executive Officer (CEO) interviews***

The interviews with CEOs comprised two parts: First, the researcher gave CEOs an information sheet that explained the importance and significance of the study (see Appendix 3). The contact details of the researcher and supervisors of this research were also included in the letter, and the respondents were encouraged to contact either the researcher or the supervisors if they had questions. Once the respondents signed the consent form the interview started with general questions about the department and the existence of any future plans to increase the number of visitors to the UAE and in the particular emirate; in addition, questions were asked about the challenges faced by the departments. The CEOs were then asked about the most important opportunities for improvement in the area of heritage tourism in the UAE and RAK. Finally, questions were asked about security for the travel agencies' data and what problems the participants have faced in their departments (see Appendix 6 for more details). After the interview, the recordings were transcribed with the aid of a professional transcriber.

#### ***4.4.1.2 Private tourism agencies interviews***

The second group to be interviewed comprised the private tourism agents in the four emirates. These interviews had the same procedures as those for the first group. However, the questions (see Appendix 7) in these interviews were different; they focused more on the support available to these private agencies from the government and other sectors related to their services. There were also questions to find out whether tourists would like to visit the heritage sites in RAK. The questions to agents started with the period they had been in the market and their experience in tourism in the UAE and RAK. Then, respondents were asked what destination the visitors preferred on their visit to the UAE. Finally, questions were posed about what tourists enjoyed during their visits to heritage sites in the UAE and in particular RAK. All interviews were recorded and transcribed.

#### ***4.4.2 Pre-test study***

In deduction theory, a hypothesis is deduced from a particular domain in which the researcher is interested, and from the theories related to that domain. The hypothesis will then be subjected to an empirical study. Induction theory, on the other hand, leads to the construction of a hypothesis from the collected data. In other words, deduction is used for testing a theory whereas induction is used to generate a theory. Due to the

nature of this study, the questionnaire was chosen for collecting data for a pre-test. All pre-test surveys were distributed in the Ras Alkhaimah and Dubai airports. Since the airport is a confined place, there was the possibility of not finding enough respondents from each background category. Therefore, no specific criteria were made for the selections of respondents in this case. The aim was to collect approximately 30 people from different countries who had visited heritage sites and, ideally, to have equal numbers of males and females. More than 30 were collected because many travellers were not heritage tourists and as such were not responding to the relevant questions about activities and level of visitor satisfaction. The number of respondents in this pilot study was 62, comprising 36 male and 26 females. General tourism questions were asked, such as: were they tourist or residents, how many times had they visited RAK, how did they hear about RAK, what encouraged them to visit RAK, and the time of the year they prefer to visit RAK.

In the pre-test visitors who had visited heritage sites were asked if they would consider visiting the same, or different, heritage sites in the future as well as questions about their prior history of visiting heritage sites, the motivation for these visits, and their opinions on how their experiences of visiting the UAE heritage sites could have been improved. Furthermore, the researcher used the pre-test study for the purpose of testing the clarity of questions, instructions, and estimated time taken to complete the questionnaire. This thesis is categorized as deductive research since the purpose of this research was to profile the outgoing traveller inside the airports and discover their preferences as well as to explore the relationship between place attachments and return visits to heritage sites.

#### ***4.4.3 Phase two – quantitative***

The second phase of the study was the quantitative phase. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), quantitative research is deductive, and it is a process of generating and interpreting numerical data. Its results often contain descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics include measures of central tendency (averages – mean, median and mode) and measures of variability about the average (range and standard deviation). The quantitative method gives the reader a concept of the data collected and used in the research project. Inferential statistics are the outcomes of statistical tests, helping deductions to be made from the data collected, to test hypotheses set and relating findings to the sample or population. The study consisted of 25 questions which

included some questions about heritage sites in RAK. The questionnaire addressed the issues that arose from in-depth interviews and was distributed to travellers who came from different countries as well as residents who live in other emirates of the UAE. The questionnaire was distributed to visitors at RAK airport, hotels, shopping centres, and heritage sites in RAK.

The questionnaire was divided into four parts, as can be seen in Appendix 1. The first part comprised seven general questions. The second part consisted of standard questions. The third part was added to collect a better understanding of RAK travellers' preferences and their characteristic. In the final part of the questionnaire the participants were asked to provide demographic data.

#### **4.5 Analysis methods**

The survey data were entered into an Excel spread sheet and crosschecked manually. The data analysis was completed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS windows version 21) and frequency analysis was undertaken on each variable to check for outliers or data entry errors. Structural equation modelling was used to measure the statistical data. All analysis was based on the outputs and figures from SPSS. The analysis did not follow the order in the questionnaire; but was reorganized to choose the relevant questions that matched the framework and research problems ensuring that the results were presented in a more logical way.

#### **4.6 Validity**

Validity in a research project means an accurate measurement that leads to valid conclusions or inferences. In a broad definition, the concept of validity revolves around the question of whether the research investigates what was actually stated to be investigated. Research is no longer valid if the research aims state one thing and the investigation moves in another direction (Mckinnon, 1988). The concept of validity as evolutionary starts with the issue of validation (Cho & Trent, 2006).

Validity can be seen as a theoretically oriented issue, which prompts the question: "valid for what purpose"? A valid measure can be summarized as one that measures what it is supposed to measure, and the degree to which the evidence supports the

interpretation of the data. However, measurements may contain errors; therefore there is a need to assure the validity in advance. Accurate and relevant questions give qualified and correct answers to the research question (Zeller & Carmines, 1980).

#### **4.7 Reliability**

The reliability refers to the stability of the measure. A reliable measure should give consistent results across repeated measurements under different measuring procedures or conditions. Shook, Hult, & Kacmar, (2004, p. 397) found that the reliability “should be assessed when using SEM”. The reliability of the measuring procedure is higher if the same results are obtained by repeated measurements. The concepts of validity and reliability are defined in quite a few ways, but the overall understanding from the literature is that these concepts emphasise employing particular research instruments or methods (Mckinnon, 1988). The difference between validity and reliability becomes hazy if the research methods for investigation are neither clearly similar nor dissimilar (Mckinnon, 1988). Indeed, it is apt to state that reliability alone does not fulfil construct validity, but no tests whatsoever employed can be effective if they’re not reliable, that is, though reliability is quite essential, it is not the only thing that backs up construct validity (Mentzer & Flint, 1997).

#### **4.8 Limitations**

The following limitations occurred during the interviews: there was limited time for some of the CEOs as well as the private tourism agents; the distance between the UAE emirates was a little far; and some travel agents did not like to provide all information regarding their business. As stated above, the data involved: face-to-face interviews the CEOs and travel agents in four emirates and questionnaire to the outgoing traveller inside the RAK airport, the visitors in the hotels in RAK, malls, and some heritage sites. Veal (2011, p. 260) stated that “face-to-face “interviews have an advantage which gives more accurate and immediate responses from the interviewees. On the other hand, it may be time consuming for the interviewers”. Moreover, the participants’ responses are possibly biased by the interviewers’ personality and influence (Sharma & Dyer, 2009, p. 196).

As the questionnaire took place at the airports, there were some potential limitations. For example, it was not possible to distribute and collect the questionnaire from all participants at the same time. In addition, some participants did not have the time needed to fully complete the questionnaire (many visitors were unable to risk a delay). Therefore, this has limited the time and scope of the questionnaire.

Language was a key limitation factor in this study since some participants did not speak English or Arabic. To overcome language barriers, the researcher had the questionnaire translated into German as well (see Appendix 5). The advantages of the research approach were medium sample size of respondents, and giving the participants the opportunity to “have their say” in an anonymous way (Veal, 2011, p. 268). A total of 392 hand-delivered questionnaires were given to RAK visitors and the residents from other emirates of the UAE.

#### **4.9 Ethics and confidentiality**

The research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Edith Cowan University.

#### **4.10 Summary**

In this chapter the researcher presented the research design of the study, based on the conceptual framework that was introduced in Chapter 3. Furthermore, the Researcher described how the data were collected and used in this research, and the methods adopted to analyse the collected data. There are two methods applied in this research: qualitative methods to interview the CEOs of tourism departments and private travel agents, and the second method was quantitative, which was a questionnaire. Moreover, in this chapter the researcher outlined the pre-test study, which was conducted before distributing the questionnaire. Limitations regarding this research were also introduced in this chapter. The descriptive data analysis for this study is given in Chapter 5.





## CHAPTER 5: DESCRIPTIVE DATA ANALYSIS

### 5 Descriptive Data Analysis

In this chapter the researcher provides a description of the data analysis. The results are discussed in three sections. Section 5.1 describes the sample size and presents the demographic breakdown of the participants, including: nationality, gender, age, educational level, occupation and annual income. Section 5.2 describes the participants' background in relation to: whether they are tourists or residents, their number of visits, how they came to know about RAK, their motivation to visit, and the time of year they prefer to visit. Finally, section 5.3 provides a summary of the chapter.

#### 5.1 Sample size and demographic profile

A total of 392 participants formed the sample for this study. The participants were outgoing visitors from RAK. The majority of participants were tourists (72%) who came from outside the UAE and the rest were either UAE residents from other emirates (26%) or visitors from countries that were not specified by the respondents (2%). This section illustrates the demographic profile of the survey participants and provides a description of these results. The respondents' demographics are shown in tables 5.1 – 5.5 and figures 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3.

**Table 5.1:** Regional nationalities of survey participants and breakdown by number of times visited

Overall Sample			Number of times visited			
Regional nationality	Frequency	% of overall sample	Once (%)	Twice (%)	Three or more (%)	Total (%)
Arab	74	22.5	21.6	32.5	45.9	100
Asia	52	15.8	11.6	26.9	61.5	100
Europe	180	54.7	66.1	17.8	16.1	100
Russia and Eastern Europe	12	3.6	50.0	16.7	33.3	100
Australia	3	0.9	0	33.3	66.7	100
North America	5	1.5	0	0	100	100
South African	2	0.6	0	0	100	100
Latin America	1	0.3	100	0	0	100
<i>Total</i>	329	100				
<i>Missing responses</i>	63					
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>392</b>					

As can be seen in Table 5.1, the largest numbers of visitors to RAK were from Europe (54.7%), followed by 22.5% from Arab countries, 15.8% from Asia, and 3.6% from Russia and Eastern Europe. Table 5.1 also shows the largest number of first time visitors coming from Europe at 66.1%, followed by 50% from Russia and Eastern Europe, 21.6% from Arab countries, and 11.5% from Asia. Of interest is the number of visitors who had visited twice before. Although accounting for a relatively small per cent of the overall sample, Australians (0.9%), North Americans (1.5%) and South Africans (0.6%) were more likely to revisit. The large number of revisits by Australians, Arabs and Asians may be attributed in part to the proximity and the fact that Dubai, a neighbouring emirate, serves as a major hub for people travelling to Europe from these countries.

**Table 5.2:** Occupation of survey participants

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Business management	36	14.4
Engineering administration	33	13.2
Tourism and hospitality	36	14.4
Health	7	2.8
Education	98	39.2
Services	22	8.8
Art	7	2.8
Information technology	1	0.4
Transportation	10	4.0
<i>Total</i>	250	100
<i>Missing responses</i>	142	
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>392</b>	

As illustrated in Table 5.2, the predominant occupation of tourists surveyed was education at 39.2%. Business and tourism/hospitality accounted for the next largest groups at 14.4% each. It may be that those involved in education was high as RAK is viewed as a heritage area and as such would attract scholars interested in the area. The number whose occupation was listed as business or tourism/hospitality would also provide a promising market as 1) the proximity of RAK to Dubai and Abu Dhabi would lend itself to side trips by business people, and 2) tourism operators could be encouraged to come as they scope out new destinations for their clients.

**Table 5.3:** Annual income of survey participants

<b>Income</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b><i>Low income</i></b>		
Under \$20,000	35	9.0
\$21,000–\$30,000	60	15.5
\$31,000–\$40,000	137	35.5
<i>Total</i>	232	60.0
<b><i>Middle income</i></b>		
\$41,000–\$50,000	74	19.2
\$51,000–\$60,000	40	10.4
\$61,000–\$70,000	11	2.8
<i>Total</i>	125	32.4
<b><i>High income</i></b>		
\$71,000–\$80,000	10	2.6
\$90,000–\$99,000	6	1.6
\$100,000 and over	13	3.4
<i>Total</i>	29	8.6
<i>Total</i>	386	100
<i>Missing responses</i>	6	
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>392</b>	

Table 5.3 provides the participants' annual income. Fifty-nine per cent of the tourists in this sample were classified as being low income, 32% of the participant's middle income, and only 7% had high income. Results indicate that the sample comprised mainly low to moderate income earners. However, care must be taken with these results as the classification of low income is subject to respondent stage of life, nationality, willingness to provide factual information as well as other factors which may cause bias.

The proportion of males and females were 66.8% and 33.2% respectively. Interesting to note, there were more male respondents (66.8%) than female respondents (33.2%). This may be a cultural artefact as females, particularly of Middle East origin, may not have been willing to participate in the survey.

**Table 5.4:** Age of survey participants

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
18–30	81	20.7
31–44	184	46.9
45–54	92	23.5
55 and over	35	8.9
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5.4 shows that the majority of the respondents (46.9%) were in the age group 31–44 years, followed by 23.5% who were in the age group 45–54 years, while 20.7% of the tourists were between 18–30 years old, and 8.9% were aged 55 and over. This may have implications for marketing and resource allocation at sites as one would expect that different age groups have different expectations when it comes to tourism.

**Table 5.5:** Level of education of survey respondents

<b>Level of education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Primary	21	5.4
Secondary/ High school	60	15.5
Undergraduate	208	54.0
Postgraduate	83	21.5
Others	14	3.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>386</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Missing responses</i>	<i>6</i>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	

The educational levels of the respondents are illustrated in table 5.5. A majority of the respondents were highly educated with 71.2% of the participants having an undergraduate degree or higher. The high level of education may be a reflection of the type of tourism. Heritage tourism, with its focus on history, may be more likely to appeal to an educated audience.

## **5.2 Background of participants**

The following tables show the background of the participants. In addition, further questions examined the satisfaction levels of participants who visited heritage sites in Ras Al khaimah (RAK).

**Table 5.6:** Visitation characteristics of survey participants

<b>Survey question and response options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b><i>Are you a tourist or resident of Ras Al khaimah (RAK)?</i></b>		
Tourist	284	72.4
Resident	105	26.8
Other (Please specify)	3	0.8
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>392</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>
<b><i>Is this the first time you have visited RAK?</i></b>		
Yes	182	46.4
No	210	53.6
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>392</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>
<b><i>How many times have you visited RAK?</i></b>		
Once	170	43.4
Twice	99	25.2
Three or more times	123	31.4
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>392</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>

Respondents were asked if they were a tourist or resident of RAK or the UAE (as presented in Table 5.6). The majority of the respondents (72.4%) were tourist visitors to RAK and with the remainder being residents in RAK or other emirates of the United Arab Emirates. A majority of the respondents (53.6%) had visited RAK before, with 46.4% of the respondents being first time visitors.

In terms of the respondents that had visited RAK previously, a majority of the respondents (43.4%) had visited RAK once before; 25.3% of the visitors had been to RAK twice, and 31.4% of the respondents have visited three or more times. The large number of respondents who had previously visited provides positive support for the possibility of revisits of heritage sites.

**Table 5.7:** How survey participants heard about RAK

<b>How first heard about RAK</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Newspapers	36	4.8
Internet	131	17.4
Friends	170	22.5
Family	85	11.3
Television	114	15.1
Travel agencies advice	119	15.8
Advertisement	81	10.7
Other	18	2.4
<b><i>Total*</i></b>	<b><i>754</i></b>	<b><i>100</i></b>

\* Total more than 392 as participants could select more than one response

Table 5.7 provides responses to the question: How did you first hear about RAK? As can be seen, 22.5% of the respondents had heard about RAK from friends, 17.4 % heard

from the internet, 15.8 % heard from travel agencies, and the smallest number of respondents heard about RAK from others (2.4%). The relatively low number who had heard about RAK from travel agencies provides an opportunity for the emirate. Providing detailed information to travel agents about the sites available may encourage them to more actively promote RAK as a heritage tourist destination.

**Table 5.8:** Survey participants' reason for visiting RAK

<b>What encouraged you to visit these heritage sites?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
To gain more knowledge about historical places	147	30.6
To learn more of the history of RAK	114	23.7
To see something new	139	28.9
Went as part of tour group	78	16.2
Other reasons	3	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Total more than 392 as participants could select more than one response

When prompted as to *What encouraged you to visit these heritage sites?*, 30.6% noted they would like to gain more knowledge about historical places with a further 23.7% interested specifically in the history of RAK. The 16.2% who visited as part of a tour group were likely those who responded they had learned of RAK from a travel agent. One area of interest would be of those who had visited more than once, how many were interested in historical places in general, and RAK in particular. This insight could aid in the formulation of marketing strategies to promote RAK as a site to revisit.

**Table 5.9:** Survey participants preferred time to visit

<b>What time of the year is normally best for you to visit RAK and RAK heritage sites?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Winter time in RAK	206	52.5
Spring time in RAK	116	29.6
Autumn time in RAK	38	9.7
Summer time in RAK	32	8.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Not surprisingly, the majority of the respondents preferred to visit RAK in the winter months, with 52.6% indicating this as their preferred time of the year to visit. Nearly 30% of respondents liked to visit in the spring, with the warmer months being less popular (7% of the sample liked autumn, and 8.2% liked summer time). Temperatures in RAK can be quite uncomfortable in the summer while the winters are considered mild.

**Table 5.10:** Mean ratings of satisfaction, recommendation and expectation of survey participants visitors

	Mean	Standard deviation
Visiting heritage sites in RAK would be useful to give me more knowledge about the history of this place.	4.19	1.492
The services provided during my visit to the heritage sites were satisfactory.	4.31	1.445
I would recommend visiting heritage sites in RAK to my friends and family.	4.09	1.592
The heritage sites in RAK met my expectation of what heritage sites should be.	4.29	1.423
Overall would you consider that your interest in heritage sites has changed as a result of your visit to RAK?	4.32	1.491
Overall, how satisfied are you with your visit to RAK heritage sites	4.36	1.466
Generally speaking, how much do you care if you do not visit heritage sites in RAK	4.34	1.425

Measured using a seven point scale (Likert scale), Table 5.10 shows the mean scores and standard deviation for each of the four items used to measure visitor satisfaction. In addition it includes statements relating to overall satisfaction and perception. The services provided during my visit to the heritage sites were satisfactory had the highest mean score 4.31, closely followed by “the heritage sites in RAK met my expectation of what heritage sites should be” (4.29). This indicates that visitors were satisfied with the services at the sites and the presentation of the sites and the heritage information. While still positive, the lowest mean score was for the statement, I would recommend visiting heritage sites in RAK to my friends and family. This should be of concern to the tourism industry as one of the primary means of knowledge of RAK was from friends (Table 5.7). As is evident from the overall statements, visitors are satisfied with their visits and feel that their interest in heritage sites has grown as a result of their encounter. Whether this will translate into repeat visits is unclear, however, overall the results are positive and could lead to campaigns to attract more visitors to these particular sites.

### ***5.2.1 The relationship between satisfaction and repeat visits to RAK***

Tables 5.11, 5.12, and 5.13 provide the results of tests to measure the relationship between satisfaction and repeat visits to RAK. An independent sample T-test was conducted to investigate the question of whether this was the visitors first visit to RAK and to cover the four items previously shown (B21, B22, B23, B24) as well as the overall satisfaction (D7). The results, as shown in Table 5.11, indicate that repeat



visitors had higher overall levels of satisfaction than first time visitors ( $t=-3.378$ ,  $df = 374$ ,  $p = .001$ ).

**Table 5.11:** Correlation between satisfaction and repeat visits to RAK

Satisfaction survey question	Type of visitor		N	Mean	t-value	Df	P-value
Overall, how satisfied are you with your visit to RAK heritage sites (D7)	First time visitor		182	4.09	-3.378	374.484	.001
	Revisit		210	4.59			
Visiting heritage sites in RAK would be useful to give me more knowledge about the history of this place (B21)	First time visitor		182	4.07	-1.538	365.093	.125
	Revisit		210	4.30			
The services provided during my visit to the heritage sites were satisfactory (B22)	First time visitor		182	4.27	-.498	382.742	.619
	Revisit		210	4.35			
I would recommend visiting heritage sites in RAK to my friends and family (B23)	First time visitor		182	3.96	-1.513	383.858	.131
	Revisit		210	4.20			
The heritage sites in RAK met my expectation on what a heritage sites should be (B24)	First time visitor		182	4.26	-.358	389.677	.720
	Revisit		210	4.31			

An ANOVA was then conducted to investigate differences between the five satisfaction questions (B21, B22, B23, B24 and D7) and the frequency of visit (A3). For all of the satisfaction questions, with the exception of B24 (The heritage sites in RAK met my expectation on what a heritage sites should be) , as frequency of visits increased, so did the visitors levels of satisfaction as seen in Table 5.12 and 5.13. This may indicate that people are returning to RAK because they value the experience they are getting from touring the heritage sites. In order to encourage this, the government needs to be continually improving the experience so that repeat visitors find a valid reason to return. In addition, focus needs to be put on first time visitors. Prior satisfaction leads to repeat intentions so it is important to ensure that the first experience is positive, and while the results tend in that direction, they are not strong positive responses.

**Table 5.12:** Means for each satisfaction item by frequency of visit

Satisfaction survey question	Frequency of visit	N	Mean	SD
Overall, how satisfied are you with your visit to RAK heritage sites (D7)	Once	170	4.06	1.466
	Twice	99	4.44	1.280
	Three or more	123	4.71	1.530
Visiting heritage sites in RAK would be useful to give me more knowledge about the history of this place (B21)	Once	170	3.94	1.587
	Twice	99	4.22	1.329
	Three or more	123	4.51	1.428
The services provided during my visit to the heritage sites were satisfactory (B22)	Once	170	4.16	1.434
	Twice	99	4.18	1.335
	Three or more	123	4.63	1.506
I would recommend visiting heritage sites in RAK to my friends and family (B23)	Once	170	3.84	1.549
	Twice	99	4.12	1.507
	Three or more	123	4.42	1.665
The heritage sites in RAK met my expectation on what a heritage sites should be (B24)	Once	170	4.16	1.343
	Twice	99	4.29	1.402
	Three or more	123	4.46	1.538

**Table 5.13:** ANOVA of differences between survey participants' responses to satisfaction questions by visitation frequency

Satisfaction survey question		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Overall, how satisfied are you with your visit to RAK heritage sites (D7)	Between	30.964	2	15.482	7.441	.001
	Within	809.320	389	2.081		
	Total	840.283	391			
Visiting heritage sites in RAK would be useful to give me more knowledge about the history of this place (B21)	Between	23.396	2	11.698	5.371	.005
	Within	847.255	389	2.178		
	Total	870.651	391			
The services provided during my visit to the heritage sites were satisfactory (B22)	Between	17.493	2	8.747	4.259	.015
	Within	798.912	389	2.054		
	Total	816.406	391			
I would recommend visiting heritage sites in RAK to my friends and family (B23)	Between	24.744	2	12.372	4.982	.007
	Within	965.950	389	2.483		
	Total	990.694	391			
The heritage sites in RAK met my expectation on what a heritage sites should be (B24)	Between	6.279	2	3.140	1.554	.213
	Within	785.721	389	2.020		
	Total	792.000	391			

Finally, respondents were asked if they had any comments on how their experience could be improved. This open-ended question was intended to capture any ideas which were not explored in the questionnaire.

**Table 5.14:** Survey participants' response on comments for improvement.

<b>Do you have any comments on how to improve the experience of visiting the RAK heritage sites?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	22	5.6
No	370	94.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Not surprisingly, few (5.6%) respondents provided additional information. This may be due to the time pressures they were under, survey fatigue or simply lack of interest. Of the respondents who did provide answers, the most common response was that more information on the heritage sites should be provided, either via advertising or through the travel agents. This information is beneficial as it will provide the government with the possible avenues for increasing tourism.

### **5.3 Summary**

The current chapter described the study's sample and provided background information about the participants. The descriptive results of the respondents' profile and their perceptions towards RAK tourism were also provided. European tourists accounted for the majority of visitors to RAK heritage sites although Australians, North Americans and South Africans were more likely to revisit. The majority of the tourists reported having a positive feeling about the heritage sites in RAK. Furthermore, the visitors were satisfied with the services provided by the sites visited.

## **CHAPTER 6: QUALITATIVE RESULTS**

### **6 Qualitative Results**

In this chapter the researcher presents the results from the data of the participants involved in the qualitative phase of the study. The chapter consists of five sections. Section 6.1 outlines data from the interviews with the CEOs of Tourism Department Authorities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Section 6.2 presents responses from the interviews with travel agents, followed by overall results from the interviews with the CEOs and travel agents in section 6.3. Finally, a summary is presented in section 6.4. These interviews were conducted by the researcher to gain insights into heritage tourism in the UAE and RAK, with the results informing the design of the measurement used in the second phase of the study. Although tourism grew rapidly over the last 10 years, few tourists visited the heritage sites in RAK despite their potential as an attractive tourist destination. In addition, the qualitative research conducted in this phase of the study was aimed at understanding the heritage sector in the UAE and in RAK.

As previously noted, in-depth interviews were conducted with selected participants from the Tourism Department Authority and travel agencies because they play a major role in developing heritage tourism in the UAE and RAK. Initially the Tourism Department Authorities CEO's in four emirates were interviewed. Key travel agencies were also interviewed for their perspective on the tourism to heritage sites in the UAE.

Since the travel agents have a close working relationship with the visitors, these interviews aimed to identify what visitors were looking for during their visit to heritage sites, and more specifically what the tourists enjoyed and gained through visiting the heritage sites in the UAE. The interviews also provided insights of how key stakeholders perceived heritage tourism in the UAE and RAK. Having a clearer understanding of these important issues assisted the researcher to develop the measurement instrument for the second phase of the study.

#### **6.1 Tourism Department Authorities CEO Interviews**

Initially four CEOs from the Tourism Authority of the four Emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, and Ras Al Khaimah were interviewed. The CEOs highlighted the

greatest challenges and the major problems facing the department. These interviews were exploratory in nature to establish how the Tourism Departments endeavoured to improve heritage tourism in the UAE. The interviews also sought to understand the service CEOs provide and the formal strategic planning that is in place to support personal and professional growth to increase the number of visitors to heritage sites.

#### ***6.1.1 Current planned restructure of the Tourism Department.***

Of the four CEOs interviewed, only the CEO of the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing was reluctant to answer questions about the current state government's planned restructuring in the Tourism Department. According to the CEO of RAK Tourism Investment and Development Authority, the government has an aggressive plan to grow the tourism sector as one of the keys to social and economic advancement. Their target is fifteen to twenty per cent of the gross GDP. Therefore, the CEO claims, the government provides maximum support to promote RAK as a tourist destination. According to this informant, in order to continue the development of RAK, the tourism department has plans to restructure. First, they have planned their new website, and promotion materials that will contribute to all exhibitions in the world. For example, IDP Leisure in Germany, the World Travel Market in London, and the Arabian Travel Market in Dubai. Secondly, the department is planning a range of promotional road shows to new source markets. Finally, the Government has also built more hotels and resorts with competitive rates to attract more tourists.

The CEO of Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority believes that Sharjah has been heavily promoting tourism and that the department has developed many unique projects in the sector, such as the one in the east coast, specifically Khor Fakkan, which is a coastal city on the shores of the emirate of Sharjah.

#### ***6.1.2 The service provided by the four departments***

The Department employs 60 people with about 80% of these people providing a tourism service. The remaining 20% of the employees work in the management sector. The main service of the Sharjah Authority is the hotel certification and the provision of a promotional arm for participating in international tourism and international affairs. To enhance the visitors from around the world coming to Sharjah, the Department has

created many events that can be sold as packages. The Department also is in charge of all the electronic marketing in the form of websites and social media, like Twitter.

Similar to Sharjah, the Dubai Department of Tourism has 75 employees. This Department also markets and promotes heritage sites within the emirate of Dubai, not only to the tourists, but also to the expatriate residents.

For the RAK, the CEO advises there is a special section called the Business Development Area that is responsible for the promotion, advertising, road shows, and exhibitions around the UAE. Under the control of this section there is a separate department that is in charge of e-commerce and distribution who manage their online activities and website updates. Even though they have only 20 employees, this department has sections that focus on different areas *“We have a marketing side that manages our videos, our photos, our brochures, collaterals that we communicate to the guests that come to Ras Al Khaimah, to the hotels, to the tour operators,”* said the CEO. In addition, there is another section, which is purely responsible for licensing. They license the hotels, travel agencies, night clubs, floating boats, water-sport activities, and restaurants.

In comparison, the specific roles of Abu Dhabi Cultural Department are all for the cultural district of Saadiyat Island<sup>1</sup>, which is a tourist destination dedicated to culture. The important role of the one hundred employees who work at the Abu Dhabi Cultural Department is to work with the museums department and with international and regional partners. Additionally, they supervise and create the museums, including the acquisitions, collections, training and structuring of the museum. Furthermore, their second role is to create awareness and translate the mission of these museums to the community. Through a public program, of exhibitions, conferences, educational forums, and publications everyone in the UAE and in the region can be part of this cultural institutions development. Most CEOs in this study were looking to provide good services in their emirates similar to those provided in Abu Dhabi.

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<sup>1</sup> Saaduyat Island is in the Arabian Gulf, lies 500 meters of the coast of Abu Dhabi, the island will host six cultural institutions, including outposts of the Guggenheim and louver museums; a museum dedicated to Abu Dhabi's heritage and the UAE's first president, Sheikh Zayed; a Maritime Museum; a performing arts centre; and a campus of New York University.

### **6.1.3 Visitors' preferences for heritage sites**

Of course visitors have preferences when they visit countries. The CEO of Dubai Authority believes that the unique architecture, distinguished cuisine, and the cultural folklore really grab the attention of many tourists. *"If we know about the past, we can understand the future because the past is the root of everything"*. As stated by the CEO of Abu Dhabi Authority, visiting a heritage site of a new country helps to understand the country. *"It is part of the vision of the people today to have a better understanding of the long past history of the UAE"*. He added that everyone wants to explore something new. The CEO of Abu Dhabi expressed the main thing that will interest tourists is to go to a heritage site where they can gain a connection to their own story or their own past and at the same time experience a connection that is very much linked to the future. The CEO, explained that what would make visitors interested in heritage tourism is when the site is organized, prepared and presented to enable the visitor to have a positive understanding of the site. For this to happen the history must be communicated in a simple way so tourists could really understand the significance of the site.

Having similar beliefs, the CEO of the RAK Authority assumed that tourists always come and want to know about the culture of Arabic countries: how they live, what they eat, how they dress, and what language they speak. He added that the nice weather and the accessibility of flights contribute to the visitors' enjoyment.

On the other hand, the CEO of Sharjah Authority expressed a different perception about why people were coming to Sharjah to visit heritage sites. He stated that Sharjah has always been known to be the heart of the cultural movement for the UAE and the region. In 1998 it was chosen by UNESCO as the cultural capital of the UAE. That is why the museums and all the events throughout the year centred around the cultural and heritage activities have attracted a lot of tourist to Sharjah. These responses helped the researcher to develop the questionnaire and identified the need to include questions about the satisfaction of RAK heritage places. The responses were congruent with the assumption of the study, that there was a link between the visitors and 'place' in the UAE and RAK.

#### **6.1.4 Opportunities for improvement in heritage tourism**

There are many areas for improvement of cultural heritage as a source of revenue and tourism. One idea, put by the CEO of Abu Dhabi, is to integrate the study of heritage into the national curriculum of the primary, secondary, and tertiary education systems. *“It will help a lot because the children will be the future cultural leaders and they might need to be confronted with the sites and the history and the way of presenting the cultural heritage,”*. By integrating it into the education system, the CEO of Abu Dhabi believes educators can give the right tools for the people to understand their heritage, *“...whatever is this idea of the past, is translated through modern tools so people can understand it.”* He believed that by translating history into a more contemporary context using modern tools and innovations that linked this heritage to the present and future help maintain its relevance in society.

Meanwhile, the CEO of Dubai Authority claimed that the refurbishment of the existing traditional habitats, homes, and buildings, in addition to the creation of a central museum, would definitely add value and help improve the area of heritage tourism in UAE.

The CEO of Sharjah was not clear in explaining his ideas about how to improve heritage tourism. However, he believed there should be more value added to tourists where they can gain additional information and understanding about the history of the site rather than merely replicating old building styles. He did not elaborate on how or what could be done to add value for tourists, it was evident he did not believe the construction of replica buildings was sufficient to engage the tourist in a meaningful and authentic experience to understand the history of the site.

Despite discussing improvements in the area of heritage tourism, the CEO of RAK Authority has his own opinion that a mix between learning history, experiencing the tradition, and enjoying the weather are some of the reasons why tourism in these destinations has become more popular worldwide and affected why heritage tourism is gaining popularity. *“It offers the culture, history, and lifestyle of any country and its people,”* he noted.



### ***6.1.5 The Tourism Department support for personal and Professional growth***

Heritage tourism has become one of the most important parts of tourism worldwide (Hazbun, 2003). To increase the number of visitors to heritage sites in the UAE and RAK, the Departments need to support and promote personal and professional growth. The CEO of Abu Dhabi Authority gave an example: they have been trained to develop a master plan to restore and integrate the village of Aljazeera– Alhamra within the surroundings.

Asked about how to support the personal and professional growth of heritage tourism, the CEO of RAK Authority answered that they have to work hand in hand with other government entities. For instance, they can promote the cultural heritage places by advertising the sites on websites, video shootings, photography, catalogues, and brochures. From this point onwards they need to make sure the message is always visible and is promoted as part of the catalogue describing the destinations in the region. Moreover, there is an educational process in which hotels pass the information on to guests who are staying in the hotel advising them about what they can see and expect in the museums or other cultural heritage places.

In answering the same question in separate interviews, the RAK Authority and the CEO of Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority, replied that support for tourism is also provided through promotion using all the mediums, such as newspapers, televisions, and radios. Furthermore the media will extend their promotion of heritage places to other countries where they will promote the city of Sharjah and the extra value of heritage tourism places in Sharjah.

With regard to the question about heritage tourism in RAK, the CEO of Sharjah Authority admitted that he was not fully aware of the heritage sites there. Nonetheless, he believed RAK had grown exponentially in the last five to ten years in terms of providing the structure and infrastructure to support increased tourism activities in the region. Similarly, the CEO of Dubai Authority said that RAK has its own experts and specialists. The Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing only specialized in Dubai. This is surprising considering the cooperation between Abu Dhabi

and the RAK Tourism Department with regard to the Aljazeera Alhamra heritage village.

#### ***6.1.6 The plan for the next five years***

For the next five years, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development will approach new markets. To this end, Spain has been identified as a key country for the region as it represents a gateway to Latin America. *“We try to continue developing what we have done in the last few years in terms of events creation and in terms of different style of promotions and open new markets that can keep our destination in different times of the year,”* declared the CEO of Sharjah Authority.

Even more ambitious plans were explained in detail by the CEO of RAK Authority. In the coming five years, their investment will touch 600 million (US Dollar) and is currently approaching a target of at least 1.2 million by 2013. By 2016, the Department plans to open 10,000 hotel rooms and to target a wider base of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets as well as focus on other major markets like Germany, Russia, UK, Italy, and Scandinavia, which the CEO believed are the key markets in RAK today. The CEO proposed that opening 10,000 rooms will be the most significant growth that occurs in the Department over the next five years. It is expected that the tourists will always visit museums and other heritage sites. The role of the Department is to make sure that the other areas of Arabic culture in RAK, for example, Alhamra and Shamal heritage sites, are financed, upgraded and put in shape to prepare for these 10,000 people.

To translate the vision of Abu Dhabi, as well as the vision of the UAE, the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority plans to deliver cultural institutions, museums, and art in the next five years. They propose that these institutions should be autonomous and owned by the UAE with a permanent collection for Abu Dhabi. *“The permanent collection will give possibility of Abu Dhabi and the UAE to really present at the world cultural arena and at the same time to be able to prepare the right audience and the right cultural leaders to own this project,”* said the CEO of Abu Dhabi. He added that this would be the most significant growth in the Department if they were able to present the museums with an image that would support promotion of the Abu Dhabi and the UAE visions.

### **6.1.7 Formal strategic planning**

In order to increase the number of visitors to heritage sites, in 1997 the Dubai Department of Tourism undertook a strategy to provide extra activities in special seasons, especially during Dubai's festive season from September to April. The emirate of Dubai includes a range of initiatives, for instance holding workshops and hosting exhibitions.

Another strategy from the Sharjah Tourism Development Authority focused on infrastructure and promotion. Based on the current infrastructure, UAE has some of the best tour operators in the region and the world; all that is needed from the government is to facilitate their work. *"I think it's all to do with infrastructure and how to promote it in the best fashion,"* said the CEO of the Sharjah Authority.

For the Abu Dhabi Authority, strategic planning is done by the government. The CEO of Abu Dhabi noted that different entities in the UAE are working on different parts of the strategic plan. The aim is to increase the number of visitors and to attract them to the heritage sites and to create the link between the different sites. As for the strategic planning, he clarified that the Abu Dhabi Department tried as much as possible to work on public awareness, through the use of communication tools, marketing, and public program tools.

### **6.1.8 Principle values and characteristic of the Departments**

The CEO of Dubai Authority commented that the things that characterise the Department and the values that the Department upholds reflect the fact that the employees enjoy a spirit of teamwork. The department and its divisions are all enthusiastic about participation in and through exhibitions. *"They commonly have a strong passion towards the heritage and identity of the UAE. ....What distinguishes this Department is the availability of expertise with their enthusiasm to take part in research,"* the CEO of the Dubai Department commented.

In the same way, the CEO of the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority commented that the team members share the same goal and the same aim: to be able to open the museum in the future. In addition, the diversity and the melting pot of expertise within the Department is its strength. *"We have like thirty-five nationalities... I think this is a*

*value in itself, it's diversity of culture, its plurality of thinking and its possibility of being able to really endorse. Our daily life is a dialogue of culture and the respect of the difference,"* the CEO of Abu Dhabi remarked.

The Sharjah and RAK Tourism Developments, however, characterize their Departments more as a vision. The CEO of Sharjah Authority said that they are trying to promote Sharjah and the UAE as a safe Arab Islamic cultural family destination, because the UAE respects all cultures and all religions. The CEO of RAK mentioned that their vision was to achieve global brand recognition as a high quality destination where visitors enjoy the ultimate travel experience through a wide variety of activities within a diverse landscape.

#### **6.1.9 The greatest challenges to the Departments**

There are challenges facing the Tourism Departments in UAE and RAK. Indeed the CEO of the Abu Dhabi Authority remarked that these challenges characterize the Department. There are a lot of professionals who work as a museum team, they have to work on objects that are still virtual, as the museum is not yet built. *"We have everything, we have a collection, we have everything but we don't have a building,"* The biggest challenge, the CEO of Abu Dhabi admitted, is adapting the UAE characteristics. As most of the team members come from Western countries, with a certain level of experience and with international procedures and policies, they sometimes need to change the way they work.

As for the Sharjah Tourism Department, their challenges are internal and external to the Department. Internally, the Sharjah CEO claims that the challenge is to reinvent the Department time after time. He offered the example that to maintain a high occupancy rate of hotels was consistently challenging. Externally the challenge is from the government sector, for there is still a certain level of bureaucracy that hampers effective tourism operations.

However, the CEO of Abu Dhabi Authority pointed out that as the most metropolitan city in the world, Dubai has inherent challenges in promoting heritage in UAE. Because this city is recognized as a modern fast-paced global society, the perceptions of many are influenced by this image and hence it is difficult to promote the idea of heritage as it

conflicts with the perceived modern view of the UAE. He did not elaborate further on the impact this globalisation of Dubai has on the region.

#### ***6.1.10 Short term performance versus long-term success***

Every tourism department in the UAE has a precise goal that they want to achieve. They have their long-term objectives and targets defined. The CEOs of RAK and Sharjah Authorities both believe that their long-term success will be determined by short-term performances.

In detail, the CEO of RAK explained that they often needed to split their efforts between the urgent items required to attract tourists and the long-term plans. The demand of rooms, for example, is a short-term target that they have to accomplish immediately. The long-term plans would be the airport expansion building, the infrastructure within the region and main roads to access certain locations.

The CEOs of Abu Dhabi and Sharjah Authorities both considered that balancing the short-term performance with the long-term success is their single biggest challenge. *“That’s how you need to perform now and wait for a long time to reap the successes,”* said the CEO of Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development.

The CEO of Abu Dhabi Authority admitted that they continually juggled between the short and long-term successes. They need to plan for important long-term outcomes, through initiatives such as training, preparing cultural leaders, preparing for research, and sharing this with other researchers. Every program that they do, whether it is an exhibition, a catalogue, or a research project related to an exhibition, must be preserved or documented so it can be used to nurture and to help other researchers. Consistency is imperative in the strategy that they follow. To this end, they always try to make sure that any projects, or any initiatives or events, portray a consistent message.

#### ***6.1.11 How the government perceives the Department***

The UAE Government has given the Tourism Departments in the UAE full support to implement all the planning and big projects. All the CEOs agreed that the government had embraced, endorsed, and supported them one hundred percent. *“The government gives this Department its full support because they understand the influence or the*

*contribution of the hospitality industry within other industries and the effect of it into the gross economy,”* the CEO of RAK commented. He stated that, since the government realized that they had to achieve the 15% GDP contribution to income, they have put more effort into securing more investment to reach the target of 10,000 rooms in 2016.

The same reason was also given by the CEO of the Sharjah Authority, where tourism accounted for 5–7 percent of the GDP of Sharjah. *“I believe that today tourism is a very important factor and has grown in Sharjah exponentially,”* he said.

Likewise, the CEO of Abu Dhabi has the same experience and claims that the government is continuing to request projects from their department. *“There is a sort of trust and confidence in what we have achieved so far,”* he said proudly. The CEO of Abu Dhabi guessed that if his Department was able to exist for the last six years and be successful, it was because the government was always accepting, embracing, and supporting what those in his Department did.

When asked how the government perceived the Department of Tourism, the CEO of Abu Dhabi Authority preferred to direct that question to the General Director. However, most respondents expressed the view that the government has supported the tourism sector because of its importance to the economy.

#### ***6.1.12 Adaptation to the latest technology***

With regards to the uptake of the latest technology, the CEOs were asked to choose whether their departments were early adopters of technology, first movers, or they were content to let other departments work the bugs out of the system first before implementing a more mature version of technology.

The CEO of Abu Dhabi explained that his Department was working on its technology but endeavoured to be very technologically oriented. He believed they were obliged to follow the trend, particularly as they were creating museums for the twenty-first century. He thought that there should be a balanced approach. Since they were creating museums, the artefacts were important, but technology would enhance them. He acknowledged that the Department was not yet a first mover, he preferred using that

technology more as a tool and a vehicle to enhance the cultural message. Rather than forgetting the cultural message and moving only with technology, the Department should adopt a balanced approach.

On the contrary, the CEOs of Sharjah and RAK Authorities mentioned that they embraced the latest technology. *“We are creative on how to use the latest technology and adapt it to what we want to deliver. So we use the highest technology of course,”* the CEO of RAK Authority commented. He gave some examples of how they had used the latest technology to put forward their message into movies and the online environment. They had used one of the top photographers to do the best photography; consequently which meant they had to use the latest technology. They elaborated how that by using a Search Engine with RAK as a search word, people could easily access all the required information. Moreover, they were appearing on a lot of German TV programs. They had built a large database with good consolidated information from their website and kept a huge area for the guests to input their feedback. The RAK CEO also believed that they use the advanced technology because technology was continually changing and the current equipment would quickly date and require changing.

Unfortunately, the CEO of Dubai Authority refused to answer this question; he directed the question to the general director.

#### **6.1.13 Privacy policy**

Travel agencies are expecting tourism departments to protect travel agents data. The CEOs were asked whether the department had a privacy policy for its Web initiatives, and how the department balanced the momentum for ever-increasing personalization with rising concerns for privacy.

All the CEOs agreed that privacy was very important whether internal or external. *“We take this very seriously. It is not negotiable,”* remarked the CEO of Sharjah Authority. To be more specific, the CEO of RAK answered that they had their own server with their own rules and regulations. Everybody in the department has his or her own password and needs to change the password at least every month. Therefore, the privacy or the confidentiality of the information is being well protected.

Similarly, the Abu Dhabi Tourism Department has been trying to work a lot on protective tools. However, they are not yet fully equipped with the right technology. In Saadiyat Island there will be levels of documents and data that should be confidential and “*we are planning to give certain people access so they can get into it*”.

#### ***6.1.14 Major problems in the Departments of Tourism***

Each tourism department has its own individual problems. For instance, the CEO of RAK did not consider problems as worrying. Instead, he saw it as an opportunity for the department to develop the tourism industry. He took the example of the lack of hotel rooms in RAK as their major problem at the moment, which was being regarded as an opportunity to develop Ras Al Khaimah to become a better leisure destination. Also, the CEO of Sharjah prefers to call the problem ‘a challenge’. He felt that they could do more to create events as long as they had enough in the budget. Ideally, the Department would prefer to have an open cheque book from the government.

The CEO of Abu Dhabi commented that the biggest problem the Department is facing was to convince the people from the region that Abu Dhabi was doing something not only for the region of Abu Dhabi. The CEO of Abu Dhabi expected the people to know that the UAE Tourism Departments cannot be isolated from Abu Dhabi, “*It was very difficult to promote the image and identity of the Department to be able to exist realistically and pragmatically. So I think this is a major problem,*” he said.

At the end of the interview with the CEO of Dubai Tourism Department revealed that the segregation of the sites meant they did not fall under a single centralized umbrella. He reflected that this was a major problem in the Dubai Tourism Department. The next section will explore the outcomes of interviews with travel agencies in the same four emirates.

### **6.2 Interviews with travel agencies**

Thirteen interviews were held: four travel agents from Sharjah, three travel agents from Dubai, three travel agents from Abu Dhabi, and three travel agents from RAK. The questions directed to the travel agents were designed to elicit their experience with heritage tourism, with a particular focus on RAK. More specifically, they were asked what support they received for heritage tourism from the government, private sector,



and airline companies, and their predictions for heritage tourism for the next few years in the UAE. The interview also sought to reveal information on the nature and extent of proposed strategic planning to boost visitors to heritage sites in the UAE and in RAK, and what future assistance was required from the government to support this increase.

#### **6.2.1 Heritage tourism in the UAE**

Not all the interviewees agreed that there was good potential for heritage tourism in the UAE. Of the 13 travel agents, seven gave positive feedback when they were asked about heritage tourism in the UAE. One travel agent from RAK, commented that every Emirate has its own philosophy about how to manage and to take care of the heritage sites. Another travel agent from Dubai claimed that importance to heritage issues was given by museums, and that most tourists who visit specifically to experience UAE heritage travel to RAK and Fujairah (a separate Emirate near RAK).

There were however four respondents who felt that their experience about heritage tourism was very limited because there was not much exposure given from the Arab Emirates communication channels, especially the media. *“We have not seen many foreign tourists going to heritage sites because the majority of [foreign] tourists who come to the UAE land at Dubai, and Dubai has been promoting only the beach and the shopping,”* said, the representative from Sharjah Airport Travel Agency. He added that Sharjah has 23 wonderful museums, but sadly not many foreign tourists go there.

One travel agent from Sharjah had another opinion. He believed the heritage of the UAE was interesting; however he personally was worried that the new infrastructure and modern facilities would supplant some heritage places. As a result, he expected the heritage sites would somehow be neglected. Nevertheless, he felt that governments were trying hard to maintain heritage sites as much as possible. The other two travel agents from Abu Dhabi and Sharjah did not elaborate on their experiences relating to heritage tourism in the UAE. Overall, most respondents had a clear view that heritage tourism in the UAE enjoyed good support.

#### **6.2.2 Heritage tourism in RAK**

However, overall the responses to questions about heritage tourism in RAK were quite negative. Seventy percent of the travel agents recognised that RAK has a lot of heritage,

and has improved slightly over the last couple of years; however they believed further development was needed. There was only one positive response coming from a travel agent from RAK, saying that recently RAK has improved a lot in the tourism industry.

The RAK agents conveyed comments about why heritage in RAK was not properly organized for tourism purposes. Most agents believed that RAK was not promoted properly, meaning that the advertising for RAK was much less than what should be. Similar comment came from an agency from Sharjah, that RAK is not a popular destination. *“Ras Al Khaimah has got something very specific when it comes to the nature, the weather, the people and the infrastructure. They have got a lot to do with the heritage, but it’s unknown, it’s still unknown,”*. Even agencies from within RAK who have been keen to market the heritage sites in RAK claim there is a lack of knowledge of the heritage sites. *“We don’t have proper brochures to market that yet,”* stated a RAK Agency spokesperson.

### **6.2.3 The prevailing view of heritage tourism in the UAE and in RAK**

All travel agents had confidence about the future of heritage tourism in the UAE. They thought this aspect of tourism was improving because there were more cultural visits, mosque tours, and old resort houses open to visitors. Nonetheless, they believed that heritage tourism still relies on how the heritage sites are promoted to the clients and more emphasis needs to be put on this aspect of tourism.

On the contrary, not all the respondents were one hundred per cent sure about the future of heritage tourism in RAK itself. They believed there was a lot of potential in RAK for heritage tourism, yet there was not much promotion by the media and travel agencies. The representative from the Abu Dhabi agency believed that the best concept for RAK heritage tourism would be for the designated authority that is responsible for RAK heritage and tourism to create a plan that shows where to visit. He added that the plan should include how to visit and when to visit, and coordinate this with all the travel agencies in the UAE and publicize it on the website. *“I wouldn’t know when to go to RAK, on which date is the best time. My knowledge is limited in that sense,”* he noted.

However, one agent from Sharjah commented that, in general, the government in RAK had already started encouraging tourism. He gave some examples, such as the RAK

budget airline, that are using chartered flights to land in the RAK airport. Moreover, there are a lot more facilities at the airport than previously available. Other examples include help in the development of good infrastructure, new hotels, roads, fringe apartments and modern facilities for family entertainment that are to be built. Yet, it was still a question for him whether RAK could have a future for its heritage tourism, because he felt that tourists were mainly coming to the UAE for the sun, sea, and shopping, not for the heritage sites.

One agent from RAK thought the future of RAK heritage tourism depends on how the government can create a good heritage village. *“They should look into the heritage village more, where the location is, what the people would like to see, so that it could be really indeed a heritage village that belongs to RAK,”* the agency stated.

#### **6.2.4 Support from the government, private sector and airline companies**

All travel agents mentioned that the government was very proactive in giving all the support that they required. Specifically, the agent from Sharjah explained that the government did support them in terms of arranging different events under the banner of the government. Also, to increase awareness, the government showcased travel agencies’ services in different countries. *“Sharjah government, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority have been very kind and have been taking us to different countries to attend the Travel and Tourism Exhibitions and they organize also road shows where we go and meet different travel agents and promote UAE. So we are getting a lot of support from the government,”* he acknowledged. Similarly two travel agency representatives from Dubai confirmed that the government was very supportive.

Likewise, one travel agent (from Sharjah) complimented the government on how hard they worked to promote tourism in the UAE, believing this was evidenced through the many activities and promotions conducted by the Dubai Government, either in the UAE or overseas. According to him, the government no longer promotes only one Emirate on its own; instead they promote the whole UAE in one go. *“The governments of UAE are all trying their best to make things easy for tourists to come to UAE,”* he remarked. As a result, there are many countries, especially from Western Europe, that do not require any visa in order to enter the UAE. However, when visitors do need a visa to enter the UAE, the government has simplified the process by implementing an online application

method that is quick and easy to use. Additionally, one agent (Emirate of Sharjah) commented on the good standard of the airport coordination as a government initiative, where people were accommodated by a quick and easy check-in and check-out.

However, an agent from RAK sensed that the travel agents received no support from the private sector or the airline companies. Despite this, he believed that the government had RAK heading in the right direction as a tourism destination.

In terms of support from the private sector, almost all the travel agents could not provide a definitive answer. Five mentioned the role of hotels. One interviewee referred to the many shopping festivals provided by the private sector. They felt that the private sector had identified shopping as what tourists desired, and promoted shopping festivals as a means to welcome and encourage tourists. To this end most travel agents believed that the private sector had mainly focused on the more commercial activities in their support to attract tourism to the UAE.

Apparently numerous hotels in the UAE have been providing support for travel agencies in several ways. One agent claims *“Hotels support you by sending a concierge, by allowing us to put our fliers there, our advertisements and of course the communication we have with them.”* Despite the fact that the government was late with delivering on the building of new hotels, the agent from Sharjah stated that there were many rooms now available and rates were becoming very competitive. Tourists now have a variety of offers from hotels, either resorts, city hotels, or furnished apartments that could satisfy all their needs regardless of whether they are visiting as tourists or for business purposes.

Regarding the tours, prices, and special packages, 69% of the 13 travel agents agreed that they have received support from the airline companies. One agent from Dubai had the same opinion about some deals given in order for the airline companies to maintain their customers, as stated by the interviewee from Abu Dhabi agency, *“If there is no seating, if there is a waiting list, there are complimentary upgrades – sometimes airlines support like this.”*

Cheap airlines have been increasing in number and have led to a rise in tourism business in the UAE. The examples are Fly Dubai from Dubai, Air Arabia from Sharjah, RAK

Airlines from RAK, and Abu Dhabi is in the process of preparing a new economy airline. On the other hand, one agency from Abu Dhabi noted that airlines have not played an important role in the tourist industry in RAK. The interviewee felt that the airlines still have a long way to go in RAK because the current destinations to where RAK airlines fly are still limited.

Whereas most participants' responses agreed with the support to tourism provided by the government, they did feel that this support should not be limited to the government. They thought the private sector (airlines and hotels) should play a greater role in the support for heritage tourism. The responses provided by these interviews supported the priori proposed in this study, and as such assisted to guide the development of the measurement instrument used in the second phase of the study.

#### **6.2.5 *Support for heritage tourism from the government, private sector and airline companies***

The majority of agents did not find much exposure on heritage tourism in the UAE. *"Heritage issue is there, but it is dormant,"* an agent observed. There are no initiatives by any government in particular. *"It requires an initiative from our side to excavate the information and information that we look for, it's available,"* the agent added. Accordingly, the nation's heritage is there but it requires encouragement and promotion from both sides, the government and the travel agencies.

Meanwhile, three travel agencies could testify on how far the government had supported them in heritage tourism. A travel agent from Sharjah stated that they had received good support from Dubai Authorities. Travel agents always brought tourists to most of Dubai heritage places and they always received good feedback from the visitors. Another agent in Dubai had also experienced government support with regard to the museums. The government made it flexible for travel agencies to choose the time when they wanted to visit; in this way the travel agencies always had the privilege to take their groups to the museums at any time.

One agent from Sharjah, who has been operating for eleven years gave an example of Sharjah government support by making the heritage sites available and open for tourists to visit. Alternatively, another agent thought the travel agencies need to provide more

effort in promoting cultural and heritage tourism. *“Support is always there. It is only us, the tourism industry, that have to support more of the heritage areas because government has been promoting these areas and government has been giving us maximum support,”*. In contrast, answering the question about support from the private sector, an agent from Sharjah considered that there was no real effort from the private sector; it was just between the travel industry and the government to promote heritage tourism.

The existence of a huge number of hotels in the UAE is expected to give some support for heritage tourism from the private sector. An agent from Sharjah gave an example that it is necessary for all the rooms of hotels in Sharjah to provide a TV channel for promoting tourism, heritage museums, and the important areas in Sharjah. Additionally, in each and every hotel, Sharjah tourist markets have stands with brochures about museums, attractions, and other entertainment.

None of the travel agents addressed the specific role of airline companies in supporting heritage tourism in the UAE. One opinion from an agent from Sharjah was that people can come to the UAE without any difficulty because there is a range of good quality airlines from which to choose. These airlines offer competitive fares with many facilities. *“The choices are a lot now. You see if a person wants to travel on a premier airline, we have Emirates Airline; if a person wants to travel on low cost airline we have Air Asia; and for a very youthful airline, we have Fly Dubai,”* suggested one agent.

#### **6.2.6 The most popular tourist destination**

There are many tourist destinations for those who are coming to the UAE. Eight of the 13 travel agents declared the Emirate of Dubai as the number one tourist attraction in the UAE. They said everybody would like to go to Dubai. The Dubai Government has been very successful in promoting Dubai as a tourist destination. *“People are less aware of UAE and the other Emirates, but everyone knows Dubai”*. This is because the airlines and the facilities in Dubai airport are much more developed, and it is well connected with all the international airlines and countries. From Dubai, tourists travel to all the other Emirates and internationally. The city has become a hub for international travel throughout the world.

Fifty-four per cent of the 13 travel agents put Abu Dhabi as destination number two. Abu Dhabi, with its recent growth in the last five years is now coming into the market very aggressively. In the interview, one agent suggested why Abu Dhabi has been developing as a destination. First of all, what drives tourists to Abu Dhabi is the Formula One and Ferrari World. Secondly, Abu Dhabi has been very successful in duplicating much of what has been offered in Dubai. Finally, besides the Formula One racing, Abu Dhabi has fascinating theme park, such as the new Yas Water Park, located beside Ferrari World.

Without nominating which Emirate has become the most popular tourist destination, two travel agencies had their own opinion. A travel agent of 14 years from Dubai said that the most preferred destinations are the desert safari, beaches, and resorts, whereas an agent who has been operating since 1976 by the decree of RAK, pointed out that the main purpose people come to the UAE is for shopping, for the sun, and for the sand. As a result, the most popular destinations are malls or shopping centers and beaches.

#### **6.2.7 What visitors are looking for in heritage sites**

Presumably, when people visit heritage sites, they are looking to experience the history of the place. Sixty-two per cent of travel agents agreed that tourists are looking for something historical. People see the UAE as a developed country, so they want to know how it was many years ago. *“They are coming to discover, so everybody is going directly to the history of the country,”* said a participant from RAK. The history includes the knowledge that the tourists want to discover about how the Arabic people used to live and what they used to eat. *“They would like to know about the people, they would like to know about the foreigners who live here, not only the local—what are their traditions, and then if there is a public holiday that is not available in other countries, what does it mean?”* stated the agent from Sharjah.

Two travel agents noted that not all the people who are interested in heritage sites are leisure tourists. Indeed some were researchers who came to study the heritage places in an academic context.

Twenty–three per cent of travel agents mentioned that the culture was another thing the tourists were looking for. The cultural experiences tourists were willing to try included a local house visit, traditional food, local traditions, art, music, and folklore. In addition, tourists were interested to experience the deserts. *“They like to see the falcon show, they try the camel ride and of course, they get amazed with the coffee and the dates...why we have dates with our coffee, how each one has its own benefits and of course they like the way we set it up,”* commented the representative from Abu Dhabi. It would seem that most of the respondents had a view that there is some relationship between place attachment and the visitors and this fits with the assumption of this study.

#### **6.2.8 *The most significant growth in heritage tourism in the next few years***

The interview responses suggested that RAK and Abu Dhabi are predicted to become the top places among all seven Emirates that will have the most significant growth in heritage tourism in the next five years. Rich with history and real heritage, plus the impeccable scenery makes RAK a forerunner.

Whereas five travel agents predicted RAK would be the next heritage tourism centre, four travel agents believed that Abu Dhabi will be the prime destination for tourists. At the moment, Abu Dhabi has castles, museums, an old market, and the Grand Mosque as places of heritage tourism. Saadiyat Island is also quickly developing, with its museums and heritage institutions, and will make Abu Dhabi a centre of heritage in the future. A travel agent from Dubai who has been operating more than 10 years thought in the next few years Sharjah would achieve the most significant growth in heritage tourism in the UAE. Contradictorily, the proprietor remarked that Sharjah had already developed and been set–up as a heritage place.

#### **6.2.9 *How travel agencies increase the number of visitors to heritage sites***

As mentioned above, heritage sites have not yet become the main destinations for tourists coming to the UAE. Even the people in the tourism industry have not visited many sites in the UAE. Along with the government, travel agencies have an important role to play in increasing the number of visitors to heritage places. In these interviews, travel agents shared ideas for boosting the number of tourists. Firstly, they recommended providing a large advertising campaign. Six travel agencies mentioned that heritage sites need more publicity, more brochures, and more information about the



sites. This marketing collateral would then be sent to prospective customers, for instance to all agents in Europe and to other key countries all over the world.

Three travel agents favoured participating in the international travel exhibitions. There are many of these exhibitions around the world, and the agents believed that by taking part in the exhibitions and meeting tour operators from other parts of the world, they can promote holidays in the UAE and attract more customers.

Another emirates travel agent emphasized the need in publicising heritage sites as well as connecting the element of leisure and or entertainment to the sites. *“If you look at people just going to the heritage sites, you will only find archaeologists and researchers, but the remaining people are coming just to have fun. They have to have fun over there.”*

Two other travel agents believed that they need cooperation and support from the government and Tourism Development Authorities. Without the support of the government, they were not sure that all the promotions would be effective. According to an agent from Sharjah, heritage is an area where the government has to put in a lot of effort to promote cultural tourism because people have been neglecting this area. *“This aspect of UAE has never been marketed to the knowledge of the tourist, nor to the people from the tourism industry worldwide,”* the agent stated. That is why the tourism authorities are responsible for providing information to the agencies in a manner that will be attractive for the people to act upon. For example, a book needs to be compiled for the whole of the UAE, not just one particular emirate, and workshops given to enhance the travel agencies’ knowledge about the sites that can be promoted. Therefore, travel agencies need support from the different Tourism Development Authorities of the UAE.

One agent said that his agency depended on the facilities that the Emirate was offering. He used an example of what an agency from Sharjah has done recently: it started operating in areas and destinations in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). As a result, the agency encouraged the customers from CIS to use the Sharjah airport and successfully increased the number of tourists coming to Sharjah (normally the CIS market and CIS tourists are usually only interested in visiting Dubai). The agent

suggested RAK do the same with the airline rates, so that people would come straight to RAK. *“If RAK one day will do something like that it will be a great start and this is why I’m saying everything is linked together,”*. Moreover, the agent explained this would not leave the tourists to choose a destination from a limited agenda. His agency had an envelope to give to tourists where they have all the information, destinations and all the sightseeing tours in the UAE. He claimed the agency never leaves any emirate out of their agenda. Consequently, since they are offering all the possible facilities and attractions in the UAE, they believe they will increase the number of visitors coming to heritage sites.

The idea of establishing a separate tourism board for only heritage tourism was conveyed by a respondent from Dubai. The interviewee mentioned the lack of information and training for travel agencies about heritage sites in the UAE. *“People go to RAK and to Fujairah, but maybe they don’t visit the heritage sites because they don’t know; even as a tourist company we also don’t guide them to go and see this because maybe we are not aware of these things.”* The agent suggested there should be training for the staff in travel agencies from the government once every six months. Thus, it would become easier to sell and to promote the sites to customers. *“If the tourist company doesn’t know, then you cannot expect tourists to come along,”* the agent concluded. The same idea came from an agent from Sharjah—suggesting the need to conduct awareness programs for tour operators. With such polarised opinions from travel agents it is evident that there is a lack of communication between travel agencies in the UAE.

#### ***6.2.10 The strategic plan to increase the number of visitors to heritage sites***

Confirming their intention to raise the number of visitors to heritage sites, 77% of agents had prepared strategic plans, and only two agencies mentioned that they did not have such a plan. One of the plans was to implement systems so as to expand the inbound visitors and the number of projects. Two travel agents from Abu Dhabi have the same strategy to increase inbound tourism. *“Inbound has increased because a lot of corporate clients are coming from the US and Europe to the UAE but to Abu Dhabi also,”* stated one agent.

The other travel agent from Abu Dhabi has focused only on Abu Dhabi as a venue to promote cultural heritage. They have linked up with Abu Dhabi Cultural and Heritage Club; they have their own investments, with their own desert camp and boats in Abu Dhabi. Another strategy is having regular meetings with the Tourism Authority and the Council of Tourism and Antiquities.

Some agencies have a special department where they record feedback from clients. They like to evaluate whether the clients enjoyed the tour and liked the packages. The feedback is very important for the agencies to know whether they are on the right track. Therefore, they can look after their target to boost the number of visitors every year to the heritage sites by adjusting their offerings accordingly. Opening a branch in another emirate is a strategic plan for two agencies, in order to promote the heritage areas of the different Emirates. Both agencies have planned to open a new branch in Dubai.

One agent would like to increase the number of tourists every year, not only from one market, but also from different markets and to really concentrate and to focus only on heritage tourism. After the CIS market, his agency is now working on the Chinese market because the Chinese are becoming interested in the history of the UAE.

An agent from Dubai was confident his company had the capacity to send a large number of people to heritage sites. Still, their problem is the visitor's short travel time. One agent from Dubai expected to be provided with information about a site that was very influential and famous heritage that could attract tourists to visit during their four or five day of stay in the UAE.

Overall most respondents believed that the UAE strategic plan was a very important component to increase the number of visitor to the UAE and RAK.

#### ***6.2.11 Government assistance for travel agencies***

Travel agencies have developed some strategies to increase the number of visitors. Yet, they cannot work by themselves—they need some cooperation with the government. Each travel agent shared his/her own idea and suggested ways for the government to support them. First of all, four travel agents recommended the government participate more actively in the world exhibitions and travel shows. *“If you're going to any*

*exhibitions and its being sponsored by the government of the Emirate, it will give you some really strong positions in these exhibitions. So this is one of the things that really will be valuable,”* said the respondent from RAK. Similarly, a travel agency from Sharjah remarked that sponsorship will be important—the government needs to assemble all tourism authorities under one umbrella to help the agents to extend out of the country and participate in world exhibitions.

The second support is the visa facilities. Two travel agents agreed that the government can ease the process of bringing tourists into the country by making the visa application process easier. Next, it was recommended that UAE open its own Tourist Development offices in various countries initially targeting key emerging markets for UAE tourism, such as London and Germany.

With regard to RAK, the proprietor from one agency suggested the government should create more affordable accommodation in RAK. He observed that hotels in RAK are more expensive than hotels in Dubai. Tourists are more likely to stay in Dubai since they have more hotel options to choose from with cheaper rates. The same suggestion with regard to improving hotel accommodation came from an agent from Sharjah.

An agency from Dubai insisted on the need to instigate special training for travel agencies. The training could be delivered in small meetings and the agencies educated by a government team about heritage sites in the UAE. Following on from this training, the representatives from the agencies would give feedback to their team and implement what they have learned.

Another scenario was given by an agent from Abu Dhabi. The government has to figure out what is so special about the national heritage sites in the UAE. Then, people from all over the world would come to the UAE for this specific purpose. He used the example of the Pyramids in Egypt. Those who want to see the pyramids will travel to Egypt as opposed to going to any other place.

#### ***6.2.12 The impact on the tourists’ perceptions of the country***

If tourists are not interested in seeing the heritage sites, then more information needs to be provided to make the visitors more aware of the benefits of these places. Ninety-two

per cent of the agents agreed with this approach whilst one respondent believed it would decrease the number of visitors. An agent from Sharjah claimed that if tourists were not interested in the heritage of the UAE, they will continue to come, because he believes it is not only the heritage that is attracting tourists. *“It’s the sun, the sea, the safety, the infrastructure, the different possibilities and rates and facilities available to them according to their budget and requirements,”* the agent commented. Tourists will continue coming as long as there is sun and sand, and even more importantly safety and stability.

Obviously there are different kinds of personal choice and categories of tourists who come to the UAE. The respondent from Abu Dhabi believed that not visiting heritage sites in the UAE would not impact on tourist’s perception of the country. Some tourists are looking for low budget holidays, and others are looking for the “all frills” holidays. Also, there is a younger and older generation, each with a different preference on what they desire from a holiday destination. A representative from an agency from Sharjah categorized the people within the age bracket of thirty five and above as the right target to experience heritage sites in the UAE. They presumed people in this age group have travelled to other countries and, that they are more likely to compare the cultural side of one country to another.

#### **6.2.13 Tourists expectation after visiting the heritage sites in RAK**

In general, tourists are interested to know the history and the culture of the UAE. The UAE is young and people want to know about the transition – what was it before and how did people live before? *“Tourists coming from outbound to the UAE, they want to know the culture, the old house, they want to know how the UAE was sixty and seventy years ago, and what was the traditional way,”* said the respondent. Fishing and pearl diving are one example of the tourist’s favourite attachments, as they show the olden time of the culture. The hospitality of the people is also another aspect tourists love to see when they come to the UAE. It is not something they will get anywhere else. As stated by the agent from Sharjah, the UAE is one of the most hospitable countries where people get to see the actual locals who are willing and very happy to mix with the foreigners, and they are very hospitable. The locals would like to take the expatriates to their homes and let them experience the actual hospitality of the culture.

RAK as the oldest city in the UAE has some of the very unique sites that are intact in a natural environment. Rather than creating an artificial environment, RAK has a lot to offer tourist because of the large number of heritage areas remaining in a natural environment.

### **6.3 Overall feedback**

Not all the interviewees agreed there was good potential for heritage tourism in the UAE. Of the 13 travel agents, seven gave positive feedback that there was an increasing demand from people, mostly from Europe, who were now extremely interested in the heritage and history of the UAE. This result provides support for the original assumption in this study, and indicates that there is a relationship between the visitors and the heritage sites in the UAE, even if they visited only once. However, there were four respondents who felt that their experience with heritage tourism was very limited due to the small exposure provided to the Arab Emirates, especially from the media.

Overall, the responses to the questions about heritage tourism in RAK were more negative. Seventy per cent of the travel agencies were aware that RAK has a lot of heritage, and had improved slightly in infrastructure over the last couple of years. However, they thought RAK needed much more development. They implied that RAK was not promoted properly and that advertising about RAK was much less than any of the other Emirates. Even though respondents interviewed viewed visiting heritage sites in the RAK as negative, responses indicate this is mainly due to the low promotion given by the government and media.

All travel agents had confidence about the future of heritage tourism in the UAE; although not all the respondents were one hundred per cent sure about the future of heritage tourism in RAK. They know there is a lot of potential and advantages for heritage tourism in RAK, yet there is little promotion to the media and travel agencies to support and develop this.

All travel agents agreed that the government has been very proactive in providing the support that they required from a business perspective. In terms of the support from the private sector, almost all the travel agents could not give a significant answer. Only 5 of

them mentioned about the role of hotels. Regarding the tours, prices, and special packages, 9 of the 13 agents agreed that they had good support from the airline companies.

However, the majority believed there was not much support for heritage tourism in the UAE. The heritage was there but required encouragement and promotion from both the government and the travel agencies. The existence of a huge number of hotels in the UAE may assist promoting heritage tourism from the private sector; however, none of the travel agents mentioned the role of airline companies in supporting heritage tourism.

There are many tourist destinations for those who are coming to the UAE. Eight of the 13 travel agencies declared the Emirate of Dubai as the number one tourist attraction in the UAE. The main reason is because the Dubai Government has been very successful in promoting Dubai as a tourist destination. Fifty-four per cent (54%) of the 13 travel agents chose Abu Dhabi as destination number two.

When people visit heritage sites, they are looking to experience the historical significance of the place. Sixty-two per cent of the agents agreed that tourists were looking for something to remind them of the past. People see the UAE as a developed country, so they are interested to know how it was many years ago.

The results from these interviews suggest that RAK and Abu Dhabi are predicted to be the top places among the seven Emirates that will have the most significant growth in heritage tourism over the next five years.

Travel agents shared some good ideas for increasing the number of tourists. The most achievable would be to develop a large advertising campaign and participate in the international travel exhibitions. Moreover, the agents need cooperation and support from the government and Tourism Development Authorities in these activities. Confirming the intention to raise the number of visitors to heritage sites, 77% of the agencies have prepared some form of strategic plan. Some of the plans include implementing systems to expand inbound visitors numbers, opening branches in other emirates, and undertaking heritage promotion in many different markets.

Four travel agents recommended the government should participate more actively in the world exhibitions and make the visa application process easier. With regard to RAK, it was suggested the government create more affordable accommodation in RAK, which is still considered very expensive.

If the tourists are not interested in seeing the heritage sites, there is a perception that this will not impact the number of tourists coming into the UAE. It can be seen from the results that the UAE and RAK have a positive future in heritage tourism and the number of visitors will increase in the future.

#### **6.4 Summary**

Qualitative data is considered a significant method of data capture and has been used to provide insights and understanding for certain problems in many social research disciplines (Lapan, Quartaroli, & Riemer, 2012). In this instance in-depth interviews were used to explore the research objectives of the study further and to provide guidance in understanding the overall research problem. The data collected was extremely rich and proved useful in understanding the current perceptions of key stakeholders in the UAE to heritage tourism, as well as, guiding the development of the measurement instrument for the second phase of the study. The results from this phase of the study provide insights into heritage tourism in the UAE and RAK and information on tourists' requirements during their visits.

The chapter outlines the findings of interviews with CEOs and a range of travel agents across the UAE and provided insights pertaining to the view of the CEOs and travel agents with regards to heritage tourism in the UAE and RAK. The RAK government has a strategic plan to increase the number of visitors through the use of technology, media and cooperation with other emirates or agencies. The findings show that whereas some travel agents have a positive point of view about heritage tourism in RAK, they note the lack of promotion, connection and consistency between the emirates travel agencies. Travel agents believed that most visitors who do not know about RAK prefer to visit the emirate of Dubai. Issues regarding the availability of affordable accommodation in RAK, making visa processes more efficient and actively promoting UAE (and RAK) on the world stage have been discussed. The results from these



interviews suggest that RAK and Abu Dhabi are predicted to be the top places among the seven Emirates that will have the most significant growth in heritage tourism over the next five years. If this is the case, it can be viewed that the UAE and RAK have a potentially positive future in heritage tourism.

The following chapter will present the results of the quantitative data gathered from a questionnaire distributed in the Emirate of RAK.

## CHAPTER 7: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

### 7 Quantitative results

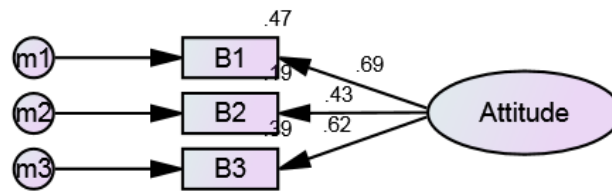
This chapter presents the results from the data analysis using analysis of moment structures (AMOS) and structural equation modelling (SEM) (Arbuckle & Wothke, 1999) as described in the methodology section in Chapter Four. In this research, SEM–AMOS (Byrne, 2009) was used to examine the constructs and to estimate the relationships between the variables. Before testing the overall measurement model, the researcher analysed each construct in the model separately (Hair, Sarsted, Ringle, & Mena, 2012). The fit of the indicators to the construct and construct reliability and validity were tested. The confirmatory factor analysis model shows the relations of the observed variables to the constructs, and it allows one to freely intercorrelate the constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

The sample size of the survey was 392 participants who were recruited from several places in RAK: RAK airport, shopping centres, hotels, and heritage sites. The purpose of the survey was to gather information about the places tourists had visited when they came to RAK and to check whether they had previously visited heritage sites in RAK. Additionally, the aim of the questionnaire was to determine how many times the visitors had visited RAK, their motivations, perceptions and overall satisfaction. Testing the constructs

As a first step, the properties of the six research variables in the proposed model were tested (Blunch2008). Each construct was tested separately, starting with the constructs from the original theory, the theory of planned behaviour. This model initially consisted of three factors: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived control; then, two factors were added according to the Shen et al. (2009) model: past experience, and cultural tour involvement; and finally, the place attachment construct was added by the researcher, resulting in three more factors being added to the initial TPB constructs. In the following paragraphs the researcher discusses the one–factor congeneric models and the analysis of each of these constructs.

### 7.1.1 Theory of planned behaviour-

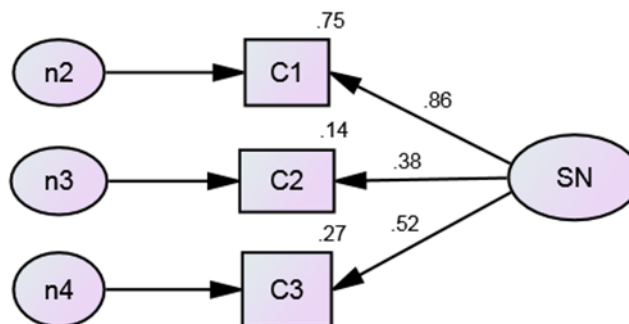
#### 7.1.1.1 Attitude



**Figure 7.1:** Attitude one factor congeneric model

Figure 7.1 shows the initial items used to measure the construct of attitude within the TPB. It can be seen that two of the standardised coefficients were 0.69 and 0.62 for the items, B1 *Visiting heritage sites in RAK is extremely valuable to me*, and B3 *Visiting heritage sites in RAK is meaningful to me*, respectively, whereas the third item, B2 *Visiting heritage sites in RAK is extremely interesting*, resulted in a coefficient of a low 0.43. In addition the goodness of fit indicators indicated a poor fit, with a chi-square statistic of 17.613(df= 1 P-value =0.000), GFI of 0.971, AGFI of 0.829, CFI of 0.883, NFI of 0.879, RMR of 0.125 and RMSEA of 0.206. The construct's reliability was 0.594 and variance extracted 0.62. It seems that this construct did not fit with the data and therefore, it cannot stand alone. Further analysis may have to treat the items separately, if used within the larger TPB model. Some question as to why these items did not fit well could be due to translation factors or not understanding the (B2) statement.

#### 7.1.1.2 Subjective norm

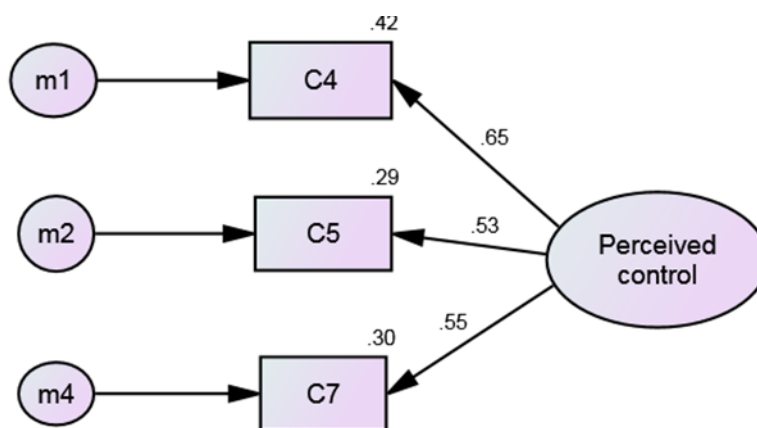


**Figure 7.2:** Subjective norm one factor congeneric model

Figure 7.2 shows the initial items used to measure the construct of subjective norm within the TPB. C1 *How important to you is it to visit a heritage site that has been recommended by your family or friends,* and C3 *How important to you is it to visit*

heritage sites that have been advertised in different media provided standardised coefficients of 0.86 and 0.52 respectively. However, the third item, C2 *How important to you is it to visit a heritage site that was recommended by a professional tour operator? (tour operator, travel agent, airline representative)*, resulted in a coefficient of a low 0.38. Despite this, the goodness of fit indicators indicated an overall good fit of the data, with a chi-square statistic of 2.430 (df= 1, P-value =.119), GFI of 0.996, AGFI of 0.975, CFI of 0.990, NFI of 0.983, RMR of 0.064 and RMSEA of 0.060. The construct's reliability is 0.597 and variance extracted is 0.60. As there were only three items for this construct and the model was a good fit, it was deemed acceptable to retain the three items for further analysis.

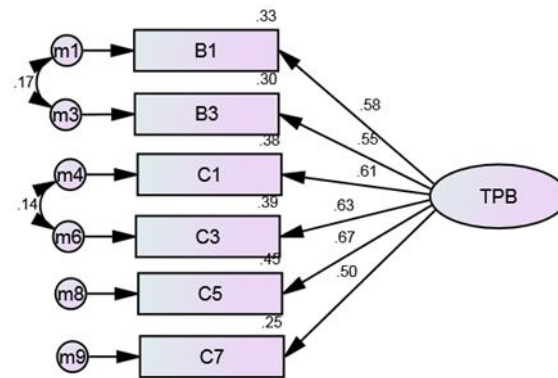
### 7.1.1.3 Perceived control



**Figure 7.3:** Perceived control one factor congeneric model

Figure 7.3 shows the third set of initial items used to measure the construct of perceived control within the TPB. It can be seen from the figure that the standardised coefficients were 0.65, 0.53 and 0.55 for the items, C4 *Information about heritage sites in RAK makes it easy to visit them*, C5 *Visiting heritage sites in RAK is good value for money*, and C7 *Travelling to the heritage sties at RAK is time consuming*, respectively. However, the standardised coefficients for all items were above 0.50. The goodness of fit indicator was a good fit of the data, with a chi-square statistic of 0.157 (df= 1, P-value =.692), GFI of 1.000, AGFI of 0.998, CFI of 1.000, NFI of 0.999, RMR of 0.014 and RMSEA of 0.000. The construct's reliability is 0.595 and variance extracted is 0.63. The results indicate that the perceived control construct can be used as a single factor in further analysis.

#### 7.1.1.4 Theory of planned behaviour



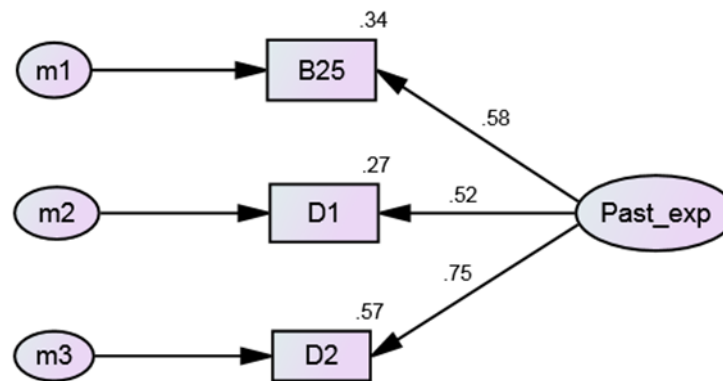
**Figure 7.4:** Theory of planned behaviour one factor congeneric model

The researcher tested the three constructs of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived control in a larger TPB model as referred to in Appendix 10 (Figure 10.4). However, there were issues with discriminant validity, with high correlations between 3 constructs (0.84, 0.99, and 90). Therefore, constructs were tested as a single construct called TPB. A number of items were deleted and a final model shown in Figure 7.4 was tested (Blunch, 2008). The goodness of fit indices indicated that there was a good fit, with a chi-square statistic of 9.140 (df= 7, P-value =0.243), GFI of 0.992, AGFI of 0.977, CFI of 996, NFI of 0.982, RMR of 0.046 and RMSEA of 0.028. The construct's reliability is 0.771 and variance extracted is 0.62. Based on these results the constructs of the TPB can be used in further research (Blunch, 2012).

#### 7.1.2 The constructs added by Shen et al. (2009) to the theory of planned behaviour

As previously indicated, an addition to the TPB model was incorporated in this research by following the work of Shen, et al. (2009). The past experience and cultural tour involvement constructs are now presented.

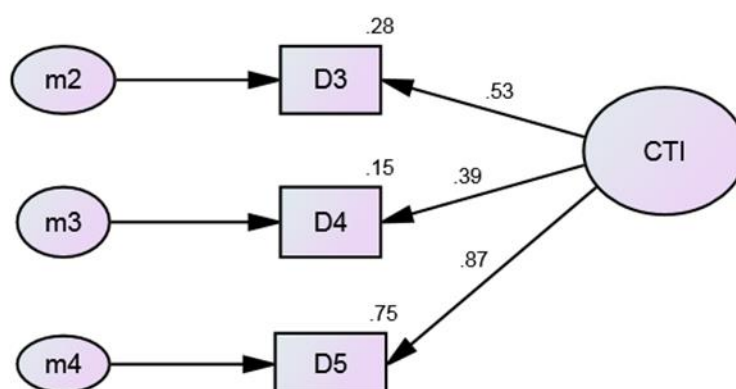
### 7.1.2.1 Past experience



**Figure 7.5:** Past experience one factor congeneric model

Figure 7.5 shows the items that were used to measure the past experience construct. It can be seen from the figure that the standardised coefficients were 0.58, 0.52, and 0.75 for the items, B25 *I am considering visiting more heritage sites in the future*, D1 *In my experience heritage sites in RAK are worth visiting*, and D2 *I like visiting heritage sites in RAK*, respectively. The standardised coefficients were all above 0.50. The goodness of fit indicators reflected a good fit of the data, with a chi-square statistic of 0.457 (df= 1, P-value =0.499), GFI of .999, AGFI of 0.995, CFI of 1.000, NFI of 0.997, RMR of 0.026 and RMSEA of 0.000. The construct's reliability is 0.644 and variance extracted is 0.56. This construct has a good fit and can be used as a single construct in further analysis.

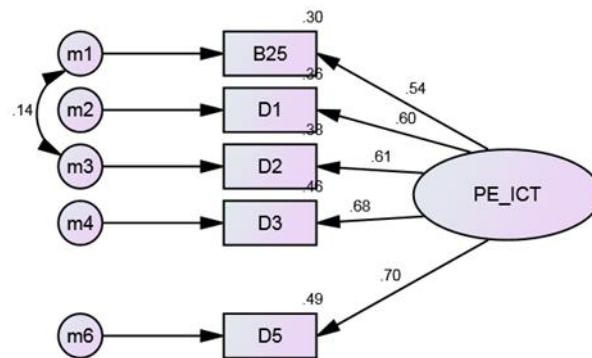
### 7.1.2.2 Cultural tour involvement



**Figure 7.6:** Cultural tour involvement one factor congeneric model

Figure 7.6 shows the initial items used to measure the construct of cultural tour involvement within the TPB. It can be seen that two constructs of the standardised coefficients were 0.53,

and 0.87 for the items, D3 *My general impression of RAK heritage sites is poor/good*, and D5 *I think heritage sites of RAK are not interesting at all/ interesting* respectively. The third item, D4 *When I visit heritage sites in RAK it is usually for a general visit/ part of a concentrated*, resulted in a, perhaps not surprisingly low coefficient of 0.39. The goodness of fit indicators indicated a good fit of the data, with a chi-square statistic of 3.651 (df= 1, P-value =.056), GFI of 0.994, AGFI of 0.963, CFI of 0.982, NFI of 0.975, RMR of 0.086 and RMSEA of 0.082. The construct's reliability is 0.607 and variance extracted is 0.60. Although, one of the standardised coefficients was below 0.50, this construct has a good fit and can be used as a single construct in further analysis.



**Figure 7.7:** The constructs added by Shen et al. (2009) to the theory of planned behaviour

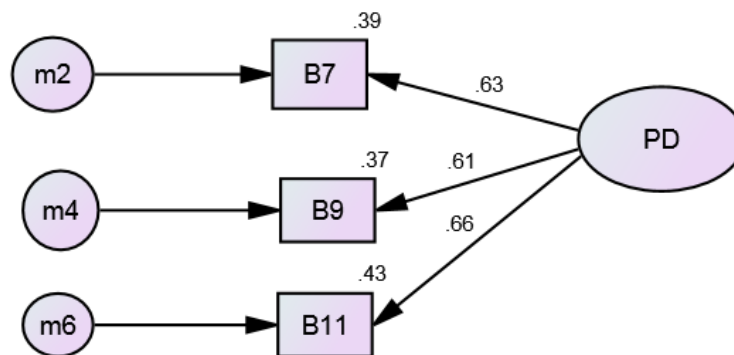
The researcher tested the two constructs of past experience (PE), and cultural tour involvements (CTI) in a larger PE\_CTI model referred to in Appendix 10, (Figure 10.8). However, there were issues with discriminant validity with high correlations between two constructs (0.99). Therefore, these were tested as a single construct called ‘Shen’s constructs additions’ (PC- CTI). A number of items were deleted and the final model seen in Figure 7.7, was tested (Blunch, 2008). The researcher used the following three items of the PE construct B25 *I am considering visiting more heritage sites in the future*, D1 *In my experience heritage sites in RAK are worth visiting*, and D2 *I like visiting heritage sites in RAK*. The other two items, which included the CIT construct D3 *My general impression of RAK heritage sites is poor/ good*, and D5 *I think the heritage sites of RAK are not interesting at all/ interesting* were used in larger modelling. However, there were issues with discriminant validity, which caused the researcher to present the model with individual items as in Figure 7.7, measuring PE and CTI. The final model as presented in Figure 7.7, provided a good fit with the data,

with a chi-square statistic of 8.725 (df= 4, P-value =.068), GFI of 0.991, AGFI of 0.967, CFI of 0.989, NFI of 0.981, RMR of 0.047 and RMSEA of 0.055. The construct's reliability is 0.769 and variance extracted is 0.61. In order, to determine which items should be retained in the analysis, the procedure suggested by Verbeke and Bagozzi (2003) was followed. Items were retained if they had communalities that were greater than 0.30, dominant factor loadings that were greater than 0.50 and cross-loadings that were lower than 0.25. It seems from this figure that the constructs of Shen et al.'s (2009) addition can be combined with other models (Blunch2012).

### 7.1.3 Place attachment

As previously discussed, this research included the researcher's place attachment construct, consisting of three dimensions: place dependence, place identity, and emotional bonding. This factor was added to assist in understanding the motivation to make repeat visits to heritage sites at RAK. The three dimensions of place attachment have been well documented in the literature (see the literature review section 2.5). The analysis of place attachment in this research is now presented.

#### 7.1.3.1 Place dependence



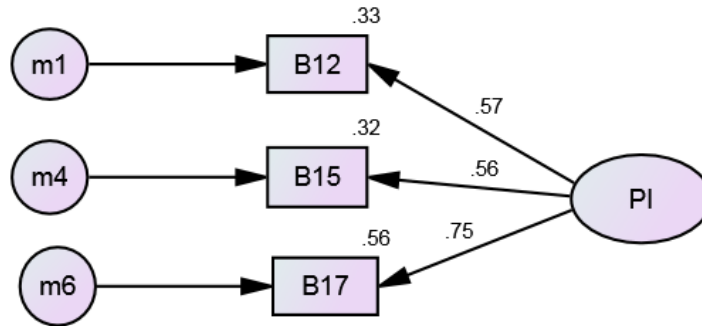
**Figure 7.8:** Place dependence one factor congeneric model

Figure 7.8 shows the initial items used to measure the construct of place dependence within place attachment. It can be seen that the standardised coefficients were 0.63, 0.61, and 0.66, for the items, B7 *I get more satisfaction from visiting RAK heritage sites than other sites in RAK*, B9 *No other place can compare to RAK in terms of heritage sites*, and B11 *I wouldn't substitute RAK with any other place when considering visiting heritage sites*. All the standardised coefficients were above 0.60. The goodness of fit indicators indicated the model was a good fit to the data, with a chi-square statistic



of .525 (df= 1, P-value =.469), GFI of, 0.999, AGFI of 0.995, CFI of1.000, NFI of 0.997, RMR of 0.023 and RMSEA of 0.000. The construct's reliability was 0.667 and variance extracted was 0.61. This construct was well fitted and can be used as a single construct in further analysis.

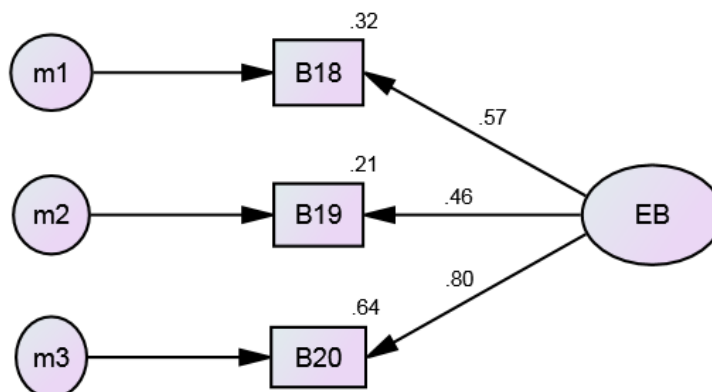
### 7.1.3.2 Place identity



**Figure 7.9:** Place Identity one factor congeneric model

Figure 7.9 shows the analysis for the second dimension of place attachment – place identity. It can be seen that the standardised coefficients were 0.57, 0.56, and 0.75 for the items, *B12 The heritage sites at RAK mean a lot to me*, *B15 Visiting heritage sites in RAK says a lot about who I am*, and *B17 I am very attached to heritage sites in RAK*. Additionally, the goodness of fit indicators were a good fit of the data, with a chi-square statistic of .024 (df= 1, P-value =.877), GFI of 1.000, AGFI of 1.000, CFI of1.000, NFI of 1.000, RMR of 0.006 and RMSEA of 0.000. The construct's reliability is 0.658 and variance extracted is 0.60.

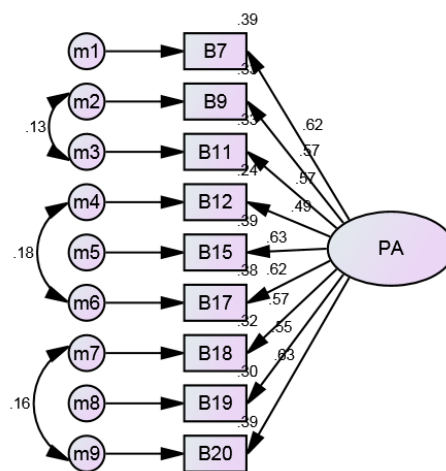
### 7.1.3.3 Emotional bonding



**Figure 7.10:** Emotional bonding one factor congeneric model

Figure 7.10 shows the initial items used to measure the construct of emotional bonding within the construct of place attachment (PA). It can be seen that two of the

standardised coefficients were 0.57, and 0.80, for the items, B18 *Visiting heritage sites increases the feeling of my family*, and B20 *When visiting heritage sties in RAK, I feel a strong sense of spirituality* respectively. While the third item, B19 *When visiting heritage sites in RAK; I feel a sense of peace*, resulted in a standardised coefficient of a relatively low 0.47. Furthermore, the goodness of fit indicators were a good fit of the data, with a chi-square statistic of .300 (df= 1, P-value =.584), GFI of 0.999, AGFI of 0.997, CFI of 1.000, NFI of 0.998, RMR of 0.022 and RMSEA of.000. The construct's reliability was 0.629 and variance extracted was 0.60. Even though a low regression weight for B19 was evident, the model was a good fit, and was therefore retained.



**Figure 7.11:** Final place attachment construct

The researcher tested the three constructs of place dependence, place identity, and emotional bonding in a larger PA model referred to in Appendix 10 (Figure 10.12). However, again there were issues with discriminant validity and high correlations between three constructs (0.82, 0.88, and 0.89). Therefore, these were tested as a single construct called 'place attachment'. A number of items were deleted and a final model as in Figure 7.11, was tested.

The researcher tested the three items of the place dependence construct B7 *I get more satisfaction from visiting RAK heritage sites than other sites in RAK*, B9 *No other place can compare to RAK in terms of heritage sites*, and B11 *I would not substitute visiting any other place than RAK when considering visiting heritage sites*. Additionally, three items of place identity construct were tested, explored and tested, respectively - B12 *The heritage sites at RAK mean a lot to me*, B15 *Visiting heritage sites in RAK says a*

*lot about who I am*, and B17 *I am very attached to heritage sites in RAK*. Finally three items of the emotional bonding construct B18 were tested *Visiting heritage sites increases the feeling of my family's past*, B19 were explored *When visiting heritage sites in RAK; I feel a sense of peace*, and B20 were tested *Visiting heritage sites increases the feeling of my family's* in larger place attachment modelling. The goodness of fit indicators were a good fit of the data, with a chi-square statistic of 34.948 (df= 24, P-value =.069, GFI of 0.981, AGFI of 0.964, CFI of 0.987, NFI of 0.961, RMR of 0.063 and RMSEA of 0.034. The construct's reliability is 0.828 and variance extracted is 0.63. This model, which was added by the researcher seems to be a good fit with the data and can be used in further analysis.

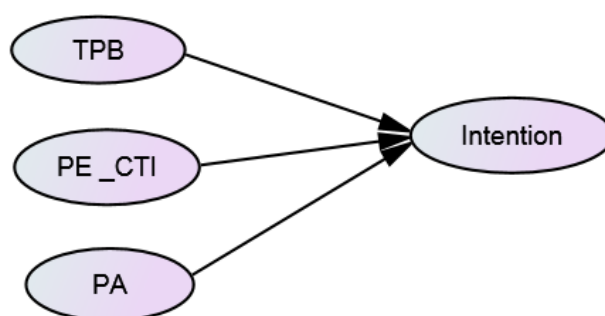
## **7.2 Testing the constructs with repeat visitors**

Data analysis to date has included the entire sample and tested the data with the theory of planned behaviour, the addition of Shen et al. (2009) constructs and the researcher's addition of place attachment in order to demonstrate discriminant validity and to assess the fit of the models. As it was considered that first time visitors may have different motivators and attachment than repeat visitors, it was decided to remove the first time visitors from the data analysis, resulting in a new sample size of 210 participants. This data set of 210 participants was tested with all conceptual models to assess the fitness of the model.

Results from the 210 participants' data were similar to the entire data set. The conceptual models of theory of planned behaviour and place attachment again did not show discriminant validity between the dimensions in each of the models. High correlations were again obtained for the theory of planned behaviour (subjective norm – attitude – perceived control) and place attachment (place identity-place dependence-emotional bonding). Therefore the removal of the first time visitor made no impact on the model fit or the outcomes as presented with the full data set. The following paragraphs describe the analysis carried out on the full data sample.

### 7.3 Theory of planned behaviour, past experience, cultural tour involvement, and place attachment with intention to revisit

Once confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) had created a model for each construct, the researcher then combined the constructs into a larger measurement model with the intentions items. However, after combining into a larger model for each intention item, there was a poor fit. Therefore, each construct was examined individually for its effects on the intention items.



**Figure 7.12:** Conceptualised measurement model comprised of theory of planned behaviour (TPB), past experience (PE)\_ cultural tour involvement (CTI) and place attachment (PA) with intention to revisit heritage sites in RAK

#### 7.3.1 Theory of planned behaviour and intention to revisit

Table 7.1 Fit statistics and significance of relationship between theory of planned behaviour and intentions to revisit

Intention to revisit	Chi square (df)	P-value	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA	Regression weight	Variance explained
1 year	20.524 (12)	0.058	0.986	0.966	0.983	0.101	0.043	0.782	Positive 5.3%
3 years	10.239 (12)	0.595	0.993	0.983	1.000	0.049	0.000	0.307	Positive 0.9%
5 years	15.871 (12)	0.197	0.989	0.974	0.992	0.076	0.029	0.067	Positive 0%



**Figure 7.13:** Generalised model of relationship between theory of planned behaviour and intention to revisit

Table 7.1 shows the resultant fit indices when the TPB was used to influence intentions to revisit, within 1year, 3year, and 5 year periods. It can be seen from Table 7.1 that the fit statistics between the significance of relationship theory of planned behaviour and intention to revisit and all measurement models of the relationship between the theory of planned behaviour and the three intentions to revisit items had a good model fit Table 7.1. Additionally, the only significant relationship identified was between the theory of planned behaviour and intention to return over one year period, (regression weight = 0.782, p-value = 0.000). Even though significant, the theory of planned behaviour only explained 5.3% of the variance in intention to revisit over one year. The following section addresses Shen's model using three time periods (1year, 3 years and 5 years). The constructs added by Shen et al. (2009) to the theory of planned behaviour

**Table 7.2:** Fit statistics and significance of relationship between Shen et al. (2009) model and intention to revisit

Intention to revisit	Chi square (df)	p-value	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RM R	RMSEA	Regression weight	Variance explained %
1 year	11.673(8)	0.166	0.990	0.974	0.992	0.065	0.034	0.742	Positive 9.3
3 years	11.229 (7)	0.129	0.991	0.972	0.991	0.089	0.089	0.089	Positive 8.9
5 years	12.629 (8)	0.125	0.990	0.973	0.989	0.072	0.038	.270	Positive 1.1



**Figure 7.14:** Generalised model of relationship between theory of planned behaviour and intention to revisit

Table 7.2 shows the resultant fit indices when Shen et al.'s (2009) (constructs of past experience and cultural tour involvement) was used to influence intention to revisit. The constructs were added by Shen et al. (2009) to the theory of planned behaviour with intention to revisit over 1year, 3year, and 5-year periods. It can be seen from Table 7.2 that the fit statistics between the significance of relationship of Shen et al. (2009) model and intention to revisit were that all measurement models of the relationship between PE-ICT and the three intentions to revisit items had a good fit. Additionally, the only significant positive relationship identified was between PE-ICT and intention to return

over a one-a year period. Regression weight= 0.742, p-value = 0.166 and 3 year period = regression weight = 0.089, p-value =0.129. Furthermore, the relationship was stronger for intention to return over one-year period than intention to return over a three-year period, indicating that PE-ICT has a greater effect on one year than three years. Additionally, the variance within the one-year time frame (9.3%) explained by PE-ICT was slightly greater than the variance explained for intention to return over a three-year period (8.9%) and a 5-year period.

### 7.3.2 Researcher's addition to the theory of planned behaviour (place attachment)

**Table 7.3:** Fit statistics and significance of relationship between place attachment and intentions to revisit

Intention to revisit	Chi square (df)	p-value	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA	Regression weight	Variance explained
1 year	36.991 (18)	0.005	0.978	0.956	0.970	0.126	0.052	0.477	Positive 3.2%
3 years	54.702 (26)	0.001	0.971	0.949	0.961	0.115	.053	-.070	Positive 0.1%
5 years	38.336 (26)	0.056	0.979	0.964	0.983	0.085	0.035	0.391	Positive 1.8%



**Figure 7.15:** Generalised model of relationship between theory of planned behaviour and intentions to revisit

Table 7.3 illustrates items that were used to measure the factors that were added by the researcher to the theory of planned behaviour (place attachment) with intention to revisit within 1 year, 3 years, and 5 years. It can be seen from the table that the statistics and significance of relationship between place attachment and intention to revisit were as follows: the measurement model for the relationship between place attachment and revisiting over a five year period was the only model to show a good fit to the data. Furthermore, this also produced a significant positive relationship between place attachment and intention to revisit over a five-year period. However, the amount of variance explained by place attachment over a five-year period was minimal at 1.8%.

## 7.4 Summary

**Table 7.4:** The relationship between the intention variables and the three concepts

Intention to revisit	Theory of planned behaviour	PE-ITC	Place attachment
1 year (E1)	√	√	X
3 years (E2)	X	√	X
5 years (E3)	X	X	√

In this chapter the researcher has provided the results of the quantitative data using a structural equation model. The data were first analysed individually and then the model expanded to include the intention to revisit heritage sites within RAK. As Table 7.4 above illustrates, this research found a positive and significant relationship between the intention variable and theory of planned behaviour, including the additional factors from the Shen et al. (2009) model (past experience and cultural tour involvement) and the researcher (place attachment). Furthermore, the factors of positiveness and significance were different in this relationship across the timeframes examined in this study of one, three and five year periods. The research indicates that different drivers were evident at each time period, a significant contribution from this research. The analysis in this chapter shows that the decision to revisit heritage sites is impacted by different drivers over time. When the decision is being considered within a short (one year) timeframe, factors such as word-of-mouth and media coverage have significant impact. When considering over a three year timeframe, the factors such as past experience, memory, and cultural involvement are considered. The longer term decision is made with considerations of attachment to the place. The results are expanded in the discussion section of Chapter Eight.

## **CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION**

### **8 Discussion**

The overall purpose of this study is to explore visitor's intentions to return to heritage sites and the factors that influence these decisions. This chapter will review the initial research questions proposed in chapter 1 and present a discussion based on the findings of this study and the background literature.

The chapter is divided into five sections. Section 8.1 to 8.4 answer the study's research questions and review the key findings of the research. The findings are discussed in terms of their influence on: the theory of planned behaviour; Shen et al. (2009) addition to the TPB, and place attachment. It outlines the link between heritage tourism and place attachment and provides suggestions as to why tourists visit or revisit heritage places. Furthermore, it explores the impact heritage sites may have on the economy and the implications for regions with and without them. Section 8.5 will discuss the study's contribution to the literature, leading into the final chapter on the conclusion of the study.

#### **8.1 Research Question 1**

The initial qualitative research undertaken in this study to gain an understanding of the heritage tourism sector of the UAE was useful in providing an overview of the industry and the current perceptions of key stakeholders. The qualitative data collected from the interviews with CEO's and travel agencies was extremely rich and delivered information to aid in answering research question 1: How do tourism stakeholders in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) currently perceive heritage tourism?

The interviews reveal that the RAK Tourism Department recognises the importance of developing tourism in RAK and to this end has established a specialised Department known as the "Business Development Area". This section is responsible for promoting, advertising, and handling exhibitions in the other emirates that are used to develop RAK for the future. It is also in charge of e-commerce for the UAE and manages the online activities and website updates that reach the rest of the country. Moreover of note, is



the significant investment that is planned over the next 5 years in this online marketing investment that will reach 600 million tourists and is projected to reach 1.2 million visitors by the end of 2013 (see table 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5).

The findings from this study would support that there is a link between heritage tourism and economic development in the UAE and RAK. The CEOs' interviews indicate that they had embraced, endorsed and supported the government goals to expand heritage tourism one hundred per cent, or so they claimed. The link between heritage tourism and the economic benefits it brings to the country increase each year. For example, the CEO from RAK tourism department states "since the government realised that they had to achieve the target of 15% GDP contribution to income they have put a lot more effort into securing more investments to reach the target of ten thousand rooms by 2016". Such government support sends a strong message of the government's commitment to heritage tourism in the UAE and RAK. However whilst the CEO's realise the economic advantages from this form of tourism and support it where they can, there is still some way to go to reach the proposed goals of the future. Some Emirates still tend to work in isolation with a focus on their own region with a limited coordinated effort across emirates.

The analysis of the in-depth interviews with CEO's highlighted one of the most noteworthy issues and that is the difference that exists between emirate tourism departments and the manner in which they take care of their respective heritage sites. Whilst the CEO's of the departments in RAK were adept at working together to enhance and promote professional growth in the heritage tourism sector, other CEO's outside RAK were not. Indeed these CEO's had limited knowledge and awareness of RAK heritage sites and predominantly focused on only one emirate. This insular approach demonstrates the lack of cooperation between emirates and this has a major impact on limiting any centralised initiatives.

Whilst there are ambitious five year strategic plans for most tourism departments they are centrally focused on each specific locale, despite there being an overarching plan by the government to increase tourist numbers to the UAE and RAK heritage sites. The Government is keen to support this plan because of the importance of tourism to the economy. It is therefore imperative that the tourism departments work in a cohesive

manner in order to achieve this goal. Findings from this study would imply that many CEO's believe the use of technology would be an effective method to achieve this goal and hence there is a need to adapt to the latest technology so all tourism departments are working in unison rather than on individual localised strategies.

The interviews with travel agencies explored the concept of increasing tourist numbers through the network of travel agencies around the UAE. Findings from the study imply that many tourists are visiting some emirates and not others due to a lack of knowledge of what these emirates offer. Whilst RAK has many heritage sites, further development is needed to turn them into attractive tourist destinations. This coupled with a serious lack of promotion has considerably impeded the general public's awareness of heritage sites in RAK. Despite this, the agencies who are aware of the historical and cultural significant sites in RAK do believe there is a good future in heritage tourism for this emirate, and it is perceived that RAK and Abu Dhabi are clearly the heritage tourist destinations of the future.

The findings from this study comprehensively illustrate the need for the government to develop a large scale advertising campaign and participate in international travel exhibitions to increase the awareness of these historical locations if they truly seek to increase tourist numbers. In addition, the researcher also believes that the quality of the services provided to tourist is integral in harnessing the word of mouth marketing of friends and family networks. This is still a powerful method to disperse a strong message to consumers and particularly when linked with social media options, this offers an important avenue through which the Government can increase awareness and the reputation of these sites (Miguéns, Baggio, & Costa, 2008). Past studies have discussed the importance of significant others in influencing tourists travel destinations so it is important that any future government strategic plan for tourism incorporates a means to enhance this mode of increasing consumers awareness (Bigne, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2001).

Currently travel agencies are still divided in what sites tourist would be interested to visit whilst in UAE, and Dubai remains the main draw card attracting visitors to the fast paced commercial hub this city symbolises. Agencies still believe that sand, sea and shopping are major draw cards for tourism and many have yet to be convinced that

heritage tourism can be as successful as these activities. Both Sharjah and RAK agencies perceive it will be more difficult to develop heritage tourism in RAK as it does not offer the infrastructure and advantages of Dubai. Accommodation choices, tour options and travel options for example, are much more limited in RAK and this poses a problem for a tourist who may only visit for a short stay of up to 3-5 days. The results of this study would indicate there is potential for heritage tourism alongside these other attractions but a major advertising campaign needs to sell their benefits to increase visitors' awareness and create desire to visit, along with an increased focus on infrastructure and service quality.

Past studies (Kozak, 2001; Seddighi, Nuttall & Theocharous, 2001) in the have indicated that there are cultural differences between tourists so a clear understanding of who is likely to visit these areas and a targeted and tailored campaign should be part of the government's unified strategic plan. At present the travel agencies are focusing on selling the commercial benefits of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The commercial allure of these cities is an easy sell as opposed to Heritage sites in RAK. Therefore the Government also needs to undertake a major awareness campaign for local stakeholders, including travel agencies, educating them on the highlights and benefits of these heritage sites. It is only through a cohesive and collaborative approach from Government, agencies and Industry stakeholders such as hotels and airlines, that heritage sites in RAK will have the opportunity to flourish.

## **8.2 Research Question 2**

The quantitative research phase of this thesis was used to understand the contribution of a number of constructs in determining the drivers for visitors to revisit heritage sites in RAK. Quantitative data collected from respondents leaving RAK resulted in a sample of 392 outbound visitors. The analysis of the sample's responses to the questionnaire as outlined in Chapter 4, provided the needed information to answer research question 2: What is the relationship between the theory of planned behaviour, past experience/cultural tour involvement, place attachment and people's intention to revisit heritage sites in RAK?

Results showed that more than half the respondents have visited RAK more than once. This is a strong indicator of a preference for revisiting RAK and demonstrates that there is something that holds visitor interest and draws them back for the return visit. It is interesting to note that most visitors who visited RAK were looking to gain more knowledge of historical places and learn more of the history of RAK. They had a keen desire to see something new and some were part of a larger group (see table 5.8) forming a collective of travellers sharing the same goal.

Table 8.1 illustrates the findings from the quantitative data showing there is a relationship between the framework models (Theory of planned behaviour; Shen et al.'s (2009) model; Place attachment) and the one, three and five year revisit intention. Furthermore, these relationships represent and explain varying degrees of intentions to revisit; of particular interest is the fact that over the longer term intention period, place attachment is the only framework that fits the data in this study.

**Table 8.1:** The relationship between the intention to revisit RAK over time and the three concepts

Intention to revisit	Theory of planned behaviour	PE-ITC	Place attachment
1 year (E1)	√	√	X
3 years (E2)	X	√	X
5 years (E3)	X	X	√

The literature shows that people who respond more positively to their visit experience tend to have a greater intention to return to the place (Andriotis et al., 2007; Chen & Gursoy, 2001; Kozak, 2001; Ouellette & Wood, 1998). Visitors to these locations are more likely to become attached to them and identify with the site, while a degree of nostalgia can act as the conduit to draw people back Williams Patterson et al. (1992). As Table 8.1 demonstrates, tourists are keen to return to heritage sites in RAK but their drivers change over time.

As previous studies have identified (Huang & Hsu, 2009) visitors are motivated in their intentions to revisit by word of mouth or influenced by their reference group. Adding to this past experience and ensuring that the tourist has a good impression of their visit is a key determinant to ensuring repeat visitation to a location (Shen et al., 2009). Based on the findings from this study, it appears that the development of a bond, leading to place attachment, does not occur immediately. Rather, this attachment forms over time and

becomes more evident and influential as the years pass. This would support the concept of place attachment measuring relatively higher order needs and fulfilment which may take time to develop and be relevant to the tourism marketing strategy of a country.

While the role of media in influencing recommendations is understood and more readily managed, the influence of word of mouth through friends and family is more cumbersome. Having this as the major influence on visitors' intentions to visit is unpredictable and more difficult to manage and highlights the importance of managing the visitor experience to ensure it is a positive one. Similarly social media plays an important role in leveraging this word of mouth marketing and tour operators of government heritage sites would be advised to harness these mediums in their promotions.

These findings are congruent with those of Light (1995) who discusses the importance of media in heritage tourism. Implications from this study would concur and in addition indicate that more attention needs to be placed on training tour operators to increase their awareness of heritage tourism and teach them how to successfully promote these regions.

The results of the study indicate a strong relationship between the information provided about heritage sites and the influence this has on the time visitors spend at these places, however further information and research is required to establish a true causal link here. Of the travel agencies interviewed, the majority were aware of the significant number of heritage sites in RAK and whilst they recognised they were improving, considered that RAK needed more development in this area. They attributed the lack of development to the limited government support and media promotion offered to this area. Nevertheless they all believed there was a lot of potential and benefits that could be derived from the heritage tourism sites in RAK, even with this limited media and government support. The variation in the findings between the qualitative and quantitative data demonstrates that there is a knowledge gap between the travel agencies, the government and tourists. With limited information provided to tourists and little government support for the sites, RAK heritage sites are not reaching their potential as tourist destinations. As this study demonstrates the more information

provided to tourists, the more likely they are to visit these destinations and the longer they may stay.

This study has shown that the visitor's experience is one of the most important contributors to influencing tourists' intention to visit heritage sites. Of course the actual desire of the tourist to visit these places plays an important part in shaping their intentions, but interestingly, the worthiness of the site as a heritage destination was considered less important. It is significant to note that those visitors who enjoyed their experience at heritage sites in RAK were more likely to consider visiting additional sites. In this way RAK heritage sites play an important role in drawing tourists to explore the countries heritage, not only of RAK but also for other Emirate historic places.

Furthermore the results demonstrate that the tourists were sharing their experiences of these sites with others, spreading the word of RAK heritage sites and encouraging others to come and visit. It is noteworthy that the relationship between the tourists experience and visiting heritage sites in RAK is significant and should be utilised to encourage the development of these places. This is consistent with previous studies that have found that visitors have different predilections (Chhabra et al., 2003; Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000).

### **8.3 Research Question 3**

Further analysis of the sample's responses to the questionnaire as outlined in Chapter 4, delivered information to aid in answering research question 3: Does place attachment contribute to Shen et al.'s (2009) adapted model of the theory of planned behaviour within the tourism context of repeat visits to heritage sites in RAK?

Shen et al.'s (2009) 'cultural involvement' construct that was used in this study demonstrated that whether the visitor had a positive or negative perception of heritage sites contributed significantly in the decision to visit these destinations. In addition, if they had a good versus a poor impression of heritage sites, along with the way they would like to visit these sites, either as a dedicated tour or more general visit, all impacted their intentions. The outcome being that tourists who do not find the desired

travel option that suits their needs, will not travel to visit these sites. Consequently, the responsibility falls to the Government Departments in charge of these heritage sites and the travel agencies from RAK and other Emirates to offer these services.

As a preliminary result, it appeared that most visitors were not feeling a sense of peace when they visited heritage sites in RAK. It stands to reason that there is a relationship between this feeling and the perception of safety that tourists hold when travelling in the Middle East (Andriotis et al., 2007). The result of this study is consistent with what was found from Al-Hamarneh (2004) that European and American respondents believed that Middle East countries were a very dangerous place to visit. Chen and Gursoy (2001) found that safety was a key consideration in visitor's intention to revisit. However, as Al-Hamarneh noted there are some countries such as the UAE which remain popular destinations for tourist to visit, despite the safety reputation held by other countries in the Middle East. It is significant to note, that when evaluating the concept of emotion, there was strong evidence that the tourists had a strong sense of spirituality when they were visiting RAK heritage sites. Poria et al. (2004) provided support for this finding by noting "the reasons to visit could be linked to the heart and the emotional experience or may be linked to the brain and the intention to learn but might not be linked to the core of the site".

**Table 8.2:** Fit statistics and significance of relationship between place attachment and intention to revisit.

Intention to revisit	Chi squared (df)	p-value	Regression weight	Variance explained %
1 year	36.991(18)	0.005	0.477	Positive 3.2
3 years	54.702 (26)	0.001	-0.070	Positive 0.1
5 years	38.336 (26)	0.056	0.391	Positive 1.8

From the table above, there is a relationship between place attachment and intention to return visit. This relationship is significant thereby providing support for these findings. It should be noted that period of five years has good probability (p-value) than other years even if variance explained 1.8% only. However, in order to grow the tourism industry, it is important to find ways to decrease the time between visits. While the

longer term may be deemed as more feasible due to distance to travel, and cost, adding and updating new services may serve to attract more revisits.

Qualitative findings also support this with many travel agencies reporting that tourists seeking these destinations were looking for something to remind them of the past, a snapshot of the Arabia of old. In addition, the CEO of Abu Dhabi Authority believes that the unique architecture, distinguished cuisine, and cultural folklore really grab the attention of many tourists. Another CEO noted that the main thing that will interest them is the ability of the heritage site to provide a connection to their own story or their own past and at the same time experience a connection that is very much linked to the future. These findings also indicate that Abu Dhabi and RAK are predicted to be top placed among the seven emirates for the most significant growth in heritage tourism over the next five years. It stands to reason that with the evidence found from this research most tourists returning to RAK, are returning to visit heritage sites and re-establish the special connection they may have felt with the place. This could be spiritual, through a sense of belonging, or just to experience something new and unknown.

#### **8.4 Research Question 4**

It is interesting to note that if tourists can feel intimacy towards heritage places they can build better relationships with them afterwards. Clear guidance can help visitors to achieve positive feelings and intensify upon this relationship subsequently. Providing information about heritage sites enhances the relationship between the tourists as well as the tourists and the place, thus the result will increase the number of tourist who visits these places because of the link between them through the emotional relationship (Nuryanti, 1996). Nuryanti (1996) has found in research that heritage tourism helped visitors to imagine their past lives.

In order to test an emotional relationship between heritage sites and return visits the initial items in Figure 7.10 (Chapter Seven) shows an emotional relationship exists in different ways. One of the most significant issues to consider was that tourists who visited RAK heritage sites experienced a strong sense of spirituality connected to these



places. In addition, the emotional relationship as can be seen from the results in Figure 7.10 linked to tourists feeling of a sense of peace when they visited RAK heritage sites.

This study focused on the feeling that visitors had when they visited RAK heritage sites. The findings in this research support the idea of spirituality through the item (When visiting heritage sites in RAK; I feel a strong sense of spirituality), which was the highest contributor to the construct. Therefore, this finding should encourage the tourism departments in the UAE and RAK to focus more on the reasons that lead some visitors to feel less at peace when they visited heritage sites in RAK. The reasons for travelling to heritage sites vary from one person to another. However, it is accepted that some tourists travelling to heritage sites to search for information related to their parents. This reason is rooted in the emotions (McCain & Ray, 2003).

The expression of feelings among tourists can be clearly distinguished between tourists at different places and time, according to Howes and Obregon (2009). Another researcher noted, “the reasons to visit could be linked to the heart and the emotional experience or may be linked to the brain and the intention to learn but might not be linked to the core of the site” (Poria et al., 2004).

Emotional relationships, which became apparent through some of the findings and previous research, between the tourist and the heritage sites should be invested in properly by the government to increase the number of tourists to the RAK emirate. This idea has been supported from the phase one (qualitative data) finding in which one of the CEO’s believed there should be more value added to tourists’ experiences whereby they could gain additional information and understanding about the history of the site rather than merely being shown replicated old building styles. “We try to continue developing what we have done in the last few years in terms of events creation and in terms of different style of promotions and open new markets that can keep our destination in different times of the year,” he added.

Flexible, communicative and informative administrations are needed for heritage tourism to increase the number of visitors to RAK. The lack of information about RAK as the qualitative findings show, meant that many tourists, especially those who have emotional feelings about heritage sites would like to know more about these sites in

RAK. The influence of communication between the Emirates tourism department as well as the travel agents has impacted the number of tourists who visit RAK heritage sites.

The research findings indicate that there is an emotional relationship between visitors and the heritage sites in RAK. Therefore, the government in RAK should benefit from this relationship by providing information about tourism in general and heritage tourism in particular in RAK to encourage visitors to repeat their visits and advise others to visit. The researcher believes from the findings (whether from quantitative or qualitative data) that there is a very strong emotional relationship between visitors and heritage sites in RAK, even with the lack of information about heritage sites in RAK. Increasing the number of visitors is very significant to the RAK government and it should improve the services in heritage sites to make visitors more comfortable, especially with their emotional glimpses into these sites.

Furthermore, whenever the government or RAK Tourism Department provides distinguished services, the visitors increase their attachment to the place and heritage sites. Nuryanti (1996) claims that heritage tourism has helped visitors to imagine how people lived in the past; they reconstruct the past in their minds through interpretation.



## **CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION**

### **9 Conclusion**

As previously mentioned this study sought to explore visitor's intentions to return to heritage sites and the factors that influence these decisions using a mixed method approach. This section highlights the key findings drawn from this study and presents the conclusion. It discusses the significance of the research in terms of its contribution to the tourism literature and recommends suggestions for further research that may advance the field of heritage tourism. It concludes with a discussion of the implications of this research.

This study illustrates the importance of heritage places and the value derived from the strong relationship people who visit these places experience. In addition to the relationship between the historical sites and the tourist's intention to revisit, the study also clarifies the relationship between heritage tourism and how it contributes to the economic development of the UAE in general and RAK in particular.

The study sought to answer four research questions:

- How do tourism stakeholders in the UAE United Arab Emirates currently perceive heritage tourism?
- What is the relationship between the theory of planned behaviour, past experience/ cultural tour involvement, place attachment and people's intention to revisit heritage sites in RAK?
- Does place attachment contribute to Shen et al. (2009) adapted model of the theory of planned behaviour within the tourism context of repeat visits to heritage sites in RAK?
- Is there an emotional relationship between heritage sites and return visits?

The theory of planned behaviour with the addition of three constructs was used as the framework for the research with structural equation modelling applied for the best fit (Ajzen, 1991) and (Shen et al., 2009).

The findings from this research have several implications for the relationship between tourists and heritage tourism. Firstly, the results attest to the importance of the heritage sites. RAK heritage places obtained significant word of mouth referral and were recommended by visitors' to their friends and families as places to visit in the future. The study also revealed that there is a relationship between the tourists' experience and RAK heritage sites. For example, visiting RAK heritage sites encouraged the tourists to visit other heritage places in the UAE and other countries. Furthermore, the results of the regression analysis indicated that the respondent's intentions to repeat visit to heritage sites was significantly predicted by intrinsic satisfaction. To this end, the visitors put the RAK heritage sites as their preferred first choice to visit.

Secondly, it is interesting to note that tourists in their planning propose to revisit RAK heritage sites. Moreover, the study demonstrates different degrees of intention to return visit, with the tourists who experienced the most place attachment suggesting 5 years, whilst those who only experienced some indicating 1-3 years. The time differential is important and highlights the impact that place attachment can have on building a long term bond and drawing more tourists to RAK. As expected place attachment is enhanced when the tourists experience to these places is a positive one. Importantly in this study visitors indicated their experience as positive, leaving a lasting good impression for them to communicate verbally within their sphere of influence. It would appear that in the initial stages word-of-mouth is a strong motivator for intention to visit and this highlights the need for the government to harness a strategic and integrated marketing campaign in the first instance. Once tourists have visited with a positive experience they were much more likely to revisit, similar to any service encounter that builds loyalty. Therefore the government needs to develop a long term strategy for all the Emirates to not only reap the benefits of one time visits, but also develop the attribute of place attachment as part a long term approach to tourism in the country.

As to why visitors revisit heritage sites in the UAE, findings of this study indicate that more than half the respondents involved have visited RAK more than once. More commonly tourists visited for the purpose of understanding the historical context of RAK in more detail. Indeed, most tourists had a keen interest to understand the past and experience something that would remind them of this era and the cultural and societal practices of the day.

In regard to the link between heritage tourism and the economic development of the UAE and RAK, many participants are aware of the potential this offers the country. CEO's, government departments and travel agencies all believe heritage tourism needs to be made a goal in developing future tourism destinations for the country. To achieve this aim the tourism department have created a special section called the 'Business Development Area'. They are responsible for the coordination of all the marketing activities including advertising and promotion around the UAE. This is significant as it demonstrates the government's commitment to increase GDP through tourism and in particular through heritage tourism.

There is a strong emotional relationship between heritage sites and return visits. This study concludes that place attachment plays an important role in the emotional bond the tourist develops with the site, and impacts their intention to revisit. Consequently, the economic value that the government can derive from harnessing place attachment and its associated behaviours offers the UAE government a good opportunity to leverage in future marketing campaigns.

### **9.1 Contributions to tourism literature**

The findings of the study make a significant theoretical contribution to the existing literature on place attachment and heritage tourism. The study enhances our understanding of heritage tourism and how it is effective in changing the economy of any country. Whilst past studies have focused on the effectiveness of heritage tourism in the economy (Cros, 2001), (Caffyn & Lutz, 1999), (Chandler & Costello, 2002), (Alzua et al., 1998, p. 2) they did not solely focus on heritage sites.

The findings of this study also support the significance of the relationship between place attachment and intention to return visit to heritage sites. It shows how tourists feel and experience the place and the bond they make the longer they stay. This pattern is consistent with studies by Williams and Vaske (2003, p. 831), and (Bosque & Martin, 2008), however these studies do not include the resulting behaviour of return visits.

There is considerable support from this study and others e.g. (Howes & Obregon, 2009; Park, 2010; Pretty et al., 2003; Scannell & Gifford, 2010) that an emotional feeling

occurs when tourists visit these heritage places. However, previous research does not explore in depth the emotional dynamic of this feeling, nor consider the significant economic impact behaviours borne from this emotional interaction with a heritage site may have on a country's future prosperity.

## **9.2 Implications**

The preliminary investigation for this research identified that a mixed method approach with quantitative and qualitative data was the most appropriate to use. The data captured revealed a number of key implications specific to heritage tourism development in RAK.

The research identifies the importance of a number of planning issues that need to be considered by the Government in order to develop and increase the number of visitors.

Firstly, the government needs to develop much more cooperation between government departments and travel agents, both inside and outside the UAE in order to attract more tourists to the region. A cohesive strategic plan that incorporates all relevant parties is essential for the effective development of heritage sites in RAK as a desirable tourism destination. In addition, the government needs to increase support of the RAK travel agencies by offering exemptions from fees for commercial extraction licenses which is issued by RAK Tourism Department.

The Government also needs to increase the publicity on the tourist sector in RAK, in particular a focus on heritage sites using all media vehicles available, with both print and audio visual marketing collateral highlighting the uniqueness of these sites. Travel agents need to have a clear purpose and share the vision for tourism development of these areas that is promoted by the UAE Government.

With a concerted and united message from the Government and travel agents, tourist will be more inclined to develop a positive impression of the value of these places. Tourists' perceptions will be that the Government is providing distinctive services catered for tourists to experience a special and historical place. Through creating value in visiting these sites, it follows that tourist numbers are more likely to increase.

Finally the various Government agencies that presently have influence over the tourism sector must incorporate into their tourism policy and planning, the clearly identified benefits and values of visiting heritage sites that have been identified by travel agents.

### **9.3 Future Research**

In conclusion this study has uncovered the need for increased facilities at RAK heritage sites. Further research to understand the scope of these developments and the extent and quality of services that tourists would expect is needed so the Government can effectively develop these sites. It would be interesting to understand what level of service is considered appropriate for heritage sites, and, what level is required to leverage positive word of mouth from visitors.

Ideally, the study should be extended to include other emirates to investigate the cooperation/ non-cooperation that exists between emirates in heritage tourism. Is this dynamic unique to the UAE, and what drives the ‘disconnect’ that is occurring within the same country?

A future study investigating the differences or similarities in heritage sites in the UAE would also provide some understanding about what makes the RAK sites unique. This information would also prove useful in differentiating them in future marketing campaigns and in brand building exercises that would target future consumers.

It would also be interesting to know more about the nature of place attachment to non-heritage sites. For example, this study revealed the high awareness of Dubai as the face of the UAE. It’s shopping, modern infrastructure and fast paced lifestyle that is so in contrast to the heritage sites of old. It would be worthwhile to investigate if the modern face and consumer culture of this city is a stronger driver on place attachment than the historical context of heritage sites.

Further research to understand how a government can change consumers’ perceptions of the value of the experience of including heritage sites in their destination choice is also warranted. The future of heritage tourism is dependent not only on this and full commitment by local and national government departments, but also a commitment



from the private sector to be involved in promoting the importance of these places. Hotels, travel agents and airlines need to join with the government to develop the infrastructure and awareness of these sites if they are to be able to harness the economic wealth derived from offering them as tourist destinations. The dimensions of place attachment have a significant role to play here, and are a useful tool for all stakeholders to utilise to achieve this goal.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Chief Executive Officers Interviews

	CEO's Tourism Department	Emirate
1.	Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority	Abu Dhabi
2.	Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing	Dubai
3.	Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development	Sharjah
4.	Ras Alkhaimah Tourism Investment and Development	Ras Alkhaimah

### Appendix 2: Travel Agents Interviews

	Travel Agency	Emirate
1.	A1	Abu Dhabi
2.	A2	Abu Dhabi
3.	A3	Abu Dhabi
4.	D1	Dubai
5.	D2	Dubai
6.	D3	Dubai
7.	S1	Sharjah
8.	S2	Sharjah
9.	S3	Sharjah
10.	S4	Sharjah
11.	R1	Ras Alkhaimah
12.	R2	Ras Alkhaimah
13.	R3	Ras Alkhaimah

### **Appendix 3: Letter of information for Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) interview**

Dear respondent,

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled “The Relationship between Place Attachment and Return Visits to Heritage Sites: A Case Study of Ras Alkhaimah”. This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements of a PhD at Edith Cowan University (ECU), Western Australia and has been approved by the ECU Human Research Ethics Committee.

The main objectives of this study are to examine heritage places in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and specifically the emirate of Ras Alkhaimah (RAK) and to clarify the intrinsic reasons why tourists tend to associate themselves with a place and subsequently extend their stay and revisit that location.

The study will develop a model based on an adaptation of the Theory of Planned Behaviour to understand people’s intention to revisit heritage places in the (UAE) and specifically (RAK) emirate. Moreover, it will determine whether the addition of place attachment to Shen’s previously modified theory of planned behaviour adds significantly to the explanatory power of the model.

I would like to invite you to be interviewed for this research project. The interview will require approximately 20–30 minutes and it will be recorded. The sharing of your knowledge and experience will be valuable to me and as such will be treated with the strictest confidence. No reference will be made to any individual and the information will be reported in an aggregated form. A summary of my findings will be provided upon your request. If you are happy to be part of this research project, please sign the attached consent form and return it to the researcher.

If you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the principal supervisor, Doctor Madeleine Ogilvie (m.ogilvie@ecu.edu.au), the associate supervisor, Doctor Maria Ryan (mryan@ecu.edu.au), or the researcher Ahmed Alshemali (aalshema@our.ecu.edu.au), Tel: +61434032647 – +971506278276.

If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact:

Research Ethics Officer

Edith Cowan University

270 Joondalup Drive

Joondalup WA 6027

Phone: (08) 63042170

Email: [research.ethics@ecu.edu.au](mailto:research.ethics@ecu.edu.au)

Your contribution in completing this interview will be appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Ahmed Alshemali

#### **Appendix 4: Letter of information for Travel agencies interviews**

Dear respondent,

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled “The Relationship between Place Attachment and Return Visits to Heritage Sites: A Case Study of Ras Alkhaimah”. This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements of a PhD at Edith Cowan University (ECU), Western Australia and has been approved by the ECU Human Research Ethics Committee.

The main objectives of this study are to examine heritage places in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and specifically the emirate of Ras Alkhaimah (RAK) and to clarify the intrinsic reasons why tourists tend to associate themselves with a place and subsequently extend their stay and revisit that location.

The study will develop a model based on an adaptation of the Theory of Planned Behaviour to understand people’s intention to revisit heritage places in the (UAE) and specifically (RAK) emirate. Moreover, it will determine whether the addition of place attachment to Shen’s previously modified theory of planned behaviour adds significantly to the explanatory power of the model.

I would like to invite you to be interviewed for this research project. The interview will require approximately 20–30 minutes and it will be recorded. The sharing of your knowledge and experience will be valuable to me and as such will be treated with the strictest confidence. No reference will be made to any individual and the information will be reported in an aggregated form. A summary of my findings will be provided upon your request. If you are happy to be part of this research project, please sign the attached consent form and return it to the researcher.

If you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the principal supervisor, Doctor Madeleine Ogilvie (m.ogilvie@ecu.edu.au), the associate supervisor, Doctor Maria Ryan (mryan@ecu.edu.au), or the researcher Ahmed Alshemali (aalshema@our.ecu.edu.au). Tel: +61434032647– +971506278276.

If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact:

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Email: [research.ethics@ecu.edu.au](mailto:research.ethics@ecu.edu.au)

Your contribution in completing this interview will be appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Ahmed Alshemali

## **Appendix 5: Consent form for interviews**

### **Consent Form**

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time without prejudice. I also understand that all materials in this study are confidential. I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published, provided that neither my company nor myself are identified.

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher: Ahmed Alshemali

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 6: Interview questions for Chief Executive Officers of Tourism Departments**

Questions to Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Tourism Departments of the United Arab Emirates:

1. There are a number of major projects in the tourism: How will existing and future plans be affected by the current State government planned restructuring of the tourism department.
2. What is the service provided by this department?
3. How many employees are working in the department?–
4. Visitors have different preferences when they visit any country, what main do you think would make them interested in heritage sites?
5. What do you see as the most important opportunities for improvement in the area of heritage tourism?
6. Heritage tourism has become one of the most important parts of tourism, how does this department support and promote personal and professional growth to increase the number of visitors to heritage site in the UAE in general and RAK in particular?
7. What is the department plan for the next five years, and how does this department or division fit in?
8. Where will the most significant growth occur in the department in the next few years? How can it be involved in the heritage tourism area?
9. What kinds of formal strategic planning, if any, are in place to increase the number of visitors to heritage sites?
10. How would you characterize the department? What are its principle values? What are the greatest challenges?
11. How does the department balance short-term performance versus long-term success?
12. How does the government perceive this department?
13. Is this department more of an early adopter of technology, a first mover, or is it content to first let other departments work the bugs out and then implement a more mature version of the technology?
14. Travel agencies are expecting tourism departments to protect their data. Does the department have a privacy policy for its Web initiatives, and how does the department balance the momentum for ever-increasing personalization with rising concerns for privacy?
15. What major problems are you facing right now in this department?

## **Appendix 7: Interview questions for travel agencies**

Questions to the travel agencies:

Name of the agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Emirate: \_\_\_\_\_.

1. How long has the agency been operating?
2. What is your experience about heritage tourism in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)?
3. What is your experience about heritage tourism in Ras Alkhaimah (RAK)?
4. Can you please describe what you believe the prevailing view of heritage tourism is in the UAE?
5. Can you please describe what you believe the prevailing view of heritage tourism is in RAK?
6. What support do you generally get for your agency from:
  - a. The government.
  - b. The private sector.
  - c. Airline companies.
7. What support do you get for your agency for heritage tourism from:
  - a. The government.
  - b. The private sector.
  - c. Airline companies.
8. There are many tourist destinations for those who are coming to the United Arab Emirates; through the broad experience you have, what is the most popular destinations frequented by tourists? (Data if possible)
9. What are the visitors looking for during their visit to heritage sites?
  - a. Primary.
  - b. Secondary.
10. Where do you think the most significant growth in heritage tourism in the UAE will occur in the next few years?
11. Where do you think the most significant growth in heritage tourism in RAK will occur in the next few years?
12. How can travel agencies increase the number of visitors to heritage sites in the UAE?
13. How can travel agencies increase the number of visitors to heritage sites in RAK?
14. Does your agency have a strategic plan to increase the number of visitors to the UAE for heritage sites?
15. What assistance can the government give travel agencies to support this increase?
16. Do not visiting heritage sites in the UAE have an impact on tourist's perception of the country?



17. Do not visiting heritage sites in RAK have an impact on tourist's perception of the country?
18. What do tourists enjoy and obtain by visiting heritage sites in the UAE?
19. What do tourists enjoy and obtain by visiting heritage sites in the RAK?

## Appendix 8: Questionnaire for Heritage sites in RAK



<p>1. Are you a tourist or resident of Ras Alkhaimah (RAK)? (please answer one only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Tourist</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Resident</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other (Please specify) .....</li> </ul> <p>2. Is this the first time you have visited RAK?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Yes (please go to question 4)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> No (Please go to question 3)</li> </ul> <p>3. How many times have you visited RAK?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="radio"/> Once      <input type="radio"/> Twice      <input type="radio"/> Three      or  more times </p> <p>4. How did you first hear about RAK? (Please tick all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Newspapers</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Internet</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Friends</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Family</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Television</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Travel agencies advice</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Advertisement</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other please specify..... ..... .....</li> </ul>	<p>5. On this trip have you visited any heritage sites?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Yes (please go to question 6) Please specify .....</li> <li><input type="radio"/> No (please go to question 7)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Not sure (please specify the place) Go to question 6.....</li> </ul> <p>6. What encouraged you to visit these heritage sites?  (Tick as many as applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> To gain more knowledge about historical places</li> <li><input type="radio"/> To learn more of the history of RAK</li> <li><input type="radio"/> To see something new</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Went as part of group tour</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other reasons please specify: ..... .....</li> </ul> <p>7. In your opinion, what time of the year is normally best for you to visit the RAK and RAK heritage sites?  (Please answer one only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Winter time in RAK</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Spring time in RAK</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Autumn time in RAK</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Summer time in RAK</li> </ul>
---	---

8. The following questions relate to your visit

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements using a scale of 1–7, where 1 represents “strongly disagree” and 7 represents “Strongly agree”.

Please use the number between 1 to 7 to represent your strength of agreement or disagreement

	Strongly disagree ▼						Strongly agree ▼
Visiting heritage sites in RAK is extremely valuable to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting heritage sites in RAK is extremely interesting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting heritage sites in RAK is meaningful to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Most of the people I am acquainted with in this tour group have visited heritage sites at RAK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I prefer to choose a place with heritage sites to visit next time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting heritage sites in RAK is more important to me than visiting heritage sites in other places	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I get more satisfaction from visiting RAK heritage sites than other sites in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RAK is the best place for visiting Heritage sites in the UAE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No other place can compare to RAK in terms of heritage sites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting Heritage sites in RAK is just the same as visiting heritage sites anywhere else	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I wouldn't substitute visiting any other palace than RAK when considering visiting heritage sites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The heritage sites at RAK mean a lot to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The heritage sites in RAK are very special to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel that the heritage sites in RAK are a part of me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting heritage sites in RAK says a lot about who I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I identify strongly with the heritage sties in RAK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am very attached to heritage sites in RAK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting heritage sites increases the feeling of my family's past	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When visiting heritage sites in RAK; I feel a sense of peace	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When visiting heritage sties in RAK; I feel a strong sense of spirituality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting heritage sites in RAK would be useful to give me more knowledge about the history of this place	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The services provided during my visit to the heritage sites were satisfactory	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would recommend visiting heritage sites in RAK to my friends and family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The heritage sites in RAK met my expectation on what a heritage sites should be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am considering visiting more heritage sites in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. The following questions relate to your feelings about visiting RAK heritage sites

Please indicate the level of importance or unimportance with following statements using a scale of 1–7, where 1 represent “Extremely unimportant” and 7 represents “Extremely important”.

Please use the number between 1 to 7 to represent the importance or unimportance.

	Extremely unimportant ▼						Extremely important ▼
How important to you is it to visit a heritage site that has been recommended by your family or friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
How important to you is it to visit a heritage site that has been recommended by a professional tour operator /s (tour operator, travel agent, airline representative)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
How important to you is it to visit heritage sites that have been advertised in different media.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Information about heritage sites in RAK makes it easy to visit them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting heritage sites in RAK is good value for money	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Travelling to heritage sites in RAK is a reasonable cost	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Travelling to the heritage sties at RAK is time consuming	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. Please indicate your strength of feeling on each of the following statements  
(Please circle the number you feel is most appropriate)

	Definitely not ▼						Definitely ▼
In my experience heritage sites in RAK are worth visiting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. (Please circle the number you feel is most appropriate)

	Do not like it at all ▼						Like it very much ▼
I like visiting heritage sites in RAK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. (Please circle the number you feel is most appropriate)

	Poor ▼						Good ▼
My general impression on RAK heritage sites is	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13. (Please circle the number you feel is most appropriate)

	General visit ▼						Concentrat ed on tour ▼
When I visit heritage sites in RAK it is usually by	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

14. (Please circle the number you feel is most appropriate)

	Not interested at all ▼						Interested ▼
I think heritage sites of RAK are	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15. (Please circle the number you feel is most appropriate)

	Decreased ▼						Increased ▼
Overall would you consider that your interest in heritage sites has.....As a result of your visit to RAK?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16. (Please circle the number you feel is most appropriate)

	Completely dissatisfied ▼						Completely satisfied ▼
Overall, how satisfied are you with your visit to RAK heritage sites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

17. (Please circle the number you feel is most appropriate)

	Not at all ▼						Very much ▼
Generally speaking, how much do you care if you do not visit heritage sites in RAK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

18. Please indicate your future intention to visit RAK heritage sites

(Please circle one response for each period of time)

Taking everything into account, how likely are you to visit RAK heritage sites in the next.....

	No chance	Very slight chance	Slight chance	Some chance	Fair chance	Fairly good chance	Good chance	Proaba ble	Very probab le	Almost sure	Certain
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1 year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Do you have any comments on how to improve the experience of visiting the RAK heritage sites

☐ Yes

.....

.....

.....

☐ No

### Personal Information

20. Nationality

.....

21. Gender

- ☐ Male ☐ Female

22. What is your current age?

☐ 18 – 30

☐ 31 – 44

☐ 45 – 54

☐ 55 and over

23. Educational Level

☐ Primary

☐ Secondary/ High school

☐ Undergraduate

☐ Postgraduate

☐ Other (Please specify).....

.....

24. Occupation .....

.....

25. Please indicate your own total annual income from within the income brackets below

☐ Under \$20,000

☐ \$21,000 – \$30,000

☐ \$31,000 – \$40,000

☐ \$41,000 – \$50,000

☐ \$51,000 – \$60,000

☐ \$61,000 – \$70,000

☐ \$71,000 – \$80,000

☐ \$90,000 – \$99,000

☐ \$100,000 and over

## Appendix 9: Questionnaire for Heritage sites in RAK (German)



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### Fragebogen

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

Hiermit sind Sie recht herzlich eingeladen, an einem Forschungsprojekt "Die Verbindung zwischen Ortsverbundenheit und Rückkehr zum Kulturerbe: eine Studie von Ras Alkhaimah", teilzunehmen. Dieser Fragebogen trägt zu einem Promotionsforschungsprojekt der Universität Edith Cowan (ECU), Westaustralien bei.

Das hauptsächliche Ziel dieser Studie ist es, Kulturerben in den Vereinigten Arabischen Emirate (VAE), und besonders das Emirat Ras Al-Khaimah (RAK) genauer zu studieren und die wesentlichen Gründe zu klären, warum Touristen dazu neigen, sich mit einem Ort verbunden zu fühlen und aufgrund dessen ihren Aufenthalt verlängern und diesen Ort wieder besuchen.

Die Studie soll ein Modell darstellen, dessen Basis eine Adaptation der Theorie des Geplanten Verhaltens, die menschlichen Absichten zu verstehen, Kulturerben in den VAE, und besonders RAK immer wieder zu besuchen. Außerdem, soll daraus hervorkommen, ob die Ergänzungen bezüglich der Ortsverbundenheit, zu der zuvor modifizierten Theorie von Shen über das geplante Verhalten, bedeutsam zur Aussagekraft des Modells beiträgt.

Dies ist ein anonymer Fragebogen. Lesen Sie bitte sorgfältig den Informationsbrief, denn er gibt Ihnen weitere Auskünfte bezüglich des Zwecks dieses Forschungsprojektes. Stellen Sie bitte auch sicher, dass Sie auf diesen Fragebogen weder Ihren Namen, noch sonstige Vermerke, die Sie identifizieren könnten, schreiben.

Durch das Ergänzen des Fragebogens erklären Sie sich bereit, an dieser Studie teilzunehmen.

Für weitere Informationen oder Erklärungen, wenden Sie sich bitte an die Direktorin, Dr. Madeleine Ogilvie ( [m.ogilvie@ecu.edu.au](mailto:m.ogilvie@ecu.edu.au) ), ihre Partnerin, Dr. Maria Ryan ( [mryan@ecu.edu.au](mailto:mryan@ecu.edu.au) ), oder den Forscher Ahmed Alshemali ( [aalshema@our.ecu.edu.au](mailto:aalshema@our.ecu.edu.au) ). Sie stehen Ihnen gerne zur Verfügung.

Sollten Sie sonstige Fragen oder Klagen bezüglich des Forschungsprojekts haben, und mit einer unabhängigen Person darüber sprechen möchten, können Sie sich gerne in Verbindung setzen mit:

Research Ethics Officer

Edith Cowan University  
270 Joondalup Drive  
Joondalup WA 6027  
Tel. ::(08) 63042170

Email: [research.ethics@ecu.edu.au](mailto:research.ethics@ecu.edu.au)

Wir würden uns freuen, wenn Sie diesen Fragebogen ausfüllen würden, und danken Ihnen dafür recht herzlich.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Ahmed Alshemali



## Fragebogen bezüglich der Kulturerben in RAK

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Sind Sie Tourist, oder Einwohner von Ras Al-Khaimah (RAK)? (bitte, nur eine Antwort)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Tourist</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Einwohner</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Sonstiges (bitte erklären Sie)<br/>.....<br/>....</li> </ul> <p>2 Besuchen Sie RAK zum ersten Mal?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Ja (bitte weiter zu Frage 4)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Nein (bitte weiter zu Frage 3)</li> </ul> <p>3 Wie oft haben Sie RAK besucht?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/><br/>einmal</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/><br/>Zweimal</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/><br/>Dreimal<br/>und mehr</div> </div> <p>4 Wie haben Sie zum ersten Mal über RAK gehört?</p> <p style="margin-top: 20px;">(mehrere Antworten möglich)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Zeitungen / Zeitschriften</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Internet</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Freunde</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Familie</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Fernsehen</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Reisebüro</li> </ul> | <p>5 Haben Sie während Ihres Aufenthalts andere Kulturerben besichtigt?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Ja (bitte weiter zu Frage 6)<br/><br/>Bitte erklären Sie:<br/>.....<br/>.....</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Nein (bitte weiter zu Frage 7)</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Nicht sicher (bitte erklären Sie wo?), und weiter zu Frage 6.....</li> </ul> <p>6 Was hat Sie dazu bewegt, dieses Kulturerbe zu besichtigen?</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">(mehrere Antworten möglich)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Der Wunsch, meine Kenntnisse bezüglich historischer Stätten zu bereichern</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Der Wunsch, meine Kenntnisse bezüglich der Geschichte von RAK zu bereichern</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Der Wunsch, etwas Neues zu sehen</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Ich war dort im Rahmen einer Gesellschaftsreise</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Andere Gründe, bitte erklären Sie:<br/>.....<br/>.....<br/>.....</li> </ul> <p>7 Ihrer Meinung nach, welches ist normalerweise die beste Jahreszeit, um RAK und die RAK-Kulturerben zu besichtigen?</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">(bitte nur eine Antwort)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Winter in RAK</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

- Werbung
- Sonstiges, bitte erklären Sie  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

- Frühjahr in RAK
- Herbst in RAK
- Sommer

# 8. Folgende Fragen beziehen sich auf Ihren Besuch

Sagen Sie uns bitte, in wie weit Sie mit folgenden Behauptungen einverstanden, bzw. nicht einverstanden sind, indem Sie eine Skala von 1-7 benutzen, wobei 1 „absolut nicht einverstanden“, und 7 „absolut einverstanden“, bedeutet.

Bitte benutzen Sie die Nummern 1 bis 7, um Ihre Meinung auszudrücken:

	Absolut nicht einverstanden ▼						Absolut einverstanden ▼	
Kulturerben in RAK zu besichtigen, ist für mich äußerst wertvoll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Kulturerben in RAK besichtigen, ist extrem interessant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Kulturerben in RAK besichtigen, ist für mich von großer Bedeutung	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Die meisten Leute, die ich in dieser Gesellschaftsreise kennengelernt hatte, haben Kulturerben in RAK besichtigt	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Für meine nächste Reise werde ich wieder einen Ort mit Kulturerben wählen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Kulturerben in RAK besichtigen, ist mir wichtiger als Kulturerben anderer Orte	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Die Besichtigung der Kulturerben in RAK hat mir besser gefallen, als andere Orte	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
RAK ist der schönste Ort der VAE, um Kulturerben zu besichtigen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
In Bezug auf Kulturerben, ist RAK mit keinen anderen Ort vergleichbar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Kulturerben in RAK besichtigen, ist genau dasselbe wie Kulturerbenbesichtigungen in anderen Orten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Wenn ich Kulturerbenbesichtigungen plane, würde ich nie RAK mit einem anderen Ort tauschen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Die Kulturerben in RAK sind für mich von großer Bedeutung	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Die Kulturerben in RAK sind für mich etwas besonderen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Ich habe das Gefühl, die Kulturerben in RAK seien ein Teil von mir selbst sind	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Kulturerbenbesichtigungen in RAK erzählen mir viel über mich selbst	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ich identifiziere mich absolut mit den Kulturerben in RAK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ich bin sehr mit den Kulturerben in RAK verbunden	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Kulturerbenbesichtigungen steigern meine Gefühle in Bezug auf die Vergangenheit meiner Familie	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Bei der Besichtigung der Kulturerben in RAK, habe ich ein Gefühl des Friedens	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Bei der Besichtigung der Kulturerben in RAK, habe ich ein starkes Gefühl von Spiritualität	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dank der Kulturerbenbesichtigungen in RAK, lerne ich die Geschichte dieses Ortes kennen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ich war mit den Dienstleistungen, die während meiner Kulturerbenbesichtigungen geboten wurden, sehr zufrieden	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ich werde meinen Freunden und Familie empfehlen, die Kulturerben in RAK zu besichtigen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Die Kulturerben in RAK entsprachen meinen Erwartungen in Bezug auf Kulturerben	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ich denke, ich werde in der Zukunft mehr Kulturerben besichtigen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 9. Folgende Fragen beziehen sich auf Ihre Gefühle über Kulturerbenbesichtigungen in RAK

Sagen Sie uns bitte, in wie weit folgende Behauptungen für Sie wichtig, bzw. unwichtig sind, indem Sie eine Skala von 1- 7 benutzen, wobei 1 „äußerst wichtig“, und 7 „absolut unwichtig“ bedeutet.

Bitte benutzen Sie die Nummern 1 bis 7, um Ihre Meinung auszudrücken:

	absolut unwichtig ▼						äußerst wichtig ▼
Wie wichtig ist es für Sie, ein Kulturerben zu besuchen, das Ihnen von Ihrer Familie oder Freunden empfohlen wurde	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Wie wichtig ist es für Sie, ein Kulturerben zu besuchen, das Ihnen von einem Reiseveranstalter(n) (Reiseveranstalter, Reisebüro, Fluggesellschaftsvertretung) empfohlen wurde	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Wie wichtig ist es für Sie, ein Kulturerben zu besuchen, das Sie über die Medien kenngelernt haben	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dank der Informationen über Kulturerben in RAK, ist es sehr einfach diese zu besichtigen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Kulturerbenbesichtigung in RAK, ist das Geld wert	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reisen zu den Kulturerben in RAK, sind günstig	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Reisen zu den Kulturerben n RAK, nehmen Zeit in Anspruch	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Nun, sagen Sie uns bitte Ihre Meinung bezüglich folgender Behauptungen

10. (Bitte kreisen Sie die Nummer ein, die Ihren Gefühlen entspricht)

	absolut nicht ▼						absolut ▼
Meiner Erfahrung gemäß, werden die Kulturerben RAKs nicht gut besucht	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. (Bitte kreisen Sie die Nummer ein, die Ihren Gefühlen entspricht)

	Absolut nicht ▼						Sehr ▼
Ich liebe Kulturerbenbesuche in RAK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. (Bitte kreisen Sie die Nummer ein, die Ihren Gefühlen entspricht)

	Schlecht ▼						Gut ▼
Mein allgemeiner Eindruck bezüglich der Kulturerben RAK's, ist...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13. (Bitte kreisen Sie die Nummer ein, die Ihren Gefühlen entspricht)

	▼						▼
Wenn ich Kulturerben in RAK besuche, dann i.A. mit...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

14. (Bitte kreisen Sie die Nummer ein, die Ihren Gefühlen entspricht)

	Absolut nicht interessant ▼						Interessant ▼
Ich denke, Kulturerben von RAK sind...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15. (Bitte kreisen Sie die Nummer ein, die Ihren Gefühlen entspricht)

	abgenommen ▼						zugewonnen ▼
Insgesamt, denken Sie, dass Ihr Interesse an Kulturerben aufgrund Ihrer Reise nach RAK ..... hat?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16. (Bitte kreisen Sie die Nummer ein, die Ihren Gefühlen entspricht)

	Total unzufrieden ▼					Total zufrieden ▼	
Insgesamt, wie zufrieden sind Sie über Ihre Kulturerbenbesichtigung in RAK?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

17. (Bitte kreisen Sie die Nummer ein, die Ihren Gefühlen entspricht)

	Absolut nicht ▼					Sehr ▼	
Im Allgemeinen, wie sehr stört es Sie, keine Kulturerben in RAK zu besichtigen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

18. Bitten sagen Sie uns, wann Sie die Absicht haben RAK-Kulturerben zu besichtigen

Indem Sie alles in Betracht ziehen, wie hoch ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass Sie RAK Kulturerben in den nächsten Jahren wiederbesuchen?

Bitte kreisen Sie eine Antwort pro Zeitspanne ein

	keine Chance	Sehr geringe Chance	Geringe Chance	Kleine Chance	Ziemliche Chance	Ziemlich gute Chance	Gute Chance	Wahr- schein- lich	Sehr wahr- schein- lich	Fast sicher	Bestimmt
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1 Jahr	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Jahre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Jahre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Hätten Sie eventuelle Kommentare (Vorschläge), um die Kulturerbenbesichtigungen RAKs zu verbessern?

☐ Ja

.....  
 .....  
 .....

☐ Nein

## Persönliche Informationen

24. Berufliche Tätigkeit .....

**20. Nationalität**

.....

**21. Geschlecht**

- ☐ männlich      ☐ weiblich

**22. Alter**

- ☐ 18 – 30
- ☐ 31 – 44
- ☐ 45 – 54
- ☐ Über 55

**23. Ausbildung**

- ☐ Grundschule
- ☐ Gymnasium
- ☐ Studenti(in)
- ☐ Student(in) im Aufbaustudium
- ☐ Sonstiges (bitte nennen).....

.....

**25. Bitte nennen Sie uns Ihr gesamtes  
Jahreseinkommen, anhand der  
nachstehenden Einkommensstufen.**

- ☐ Weniger als 20.000 \$
- ☐ 21.000 \$ - 30.000 \$
- ☐ 31.000 \$ - 40.000 \$
- ☐ 41.000 \$ - 50.000 \$
- ☐ 51.000 \$ - 60.000 \$
- ☐ 61.000 \$ - 70.000 \$
- ☐ 71.000 \$ - 80.000 \$
- ☐ 90.000 \$ - 99.000 \$
- ☐ 100.000 \$ und mehr

Sonstige Bemerkungen, die Sie eventuell in Bezug auf die Kulturerben RAKs bekanntgeben möchten:

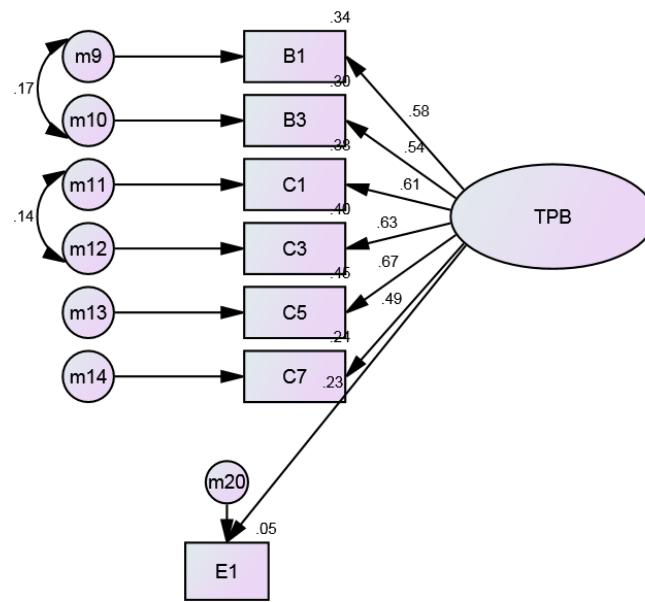
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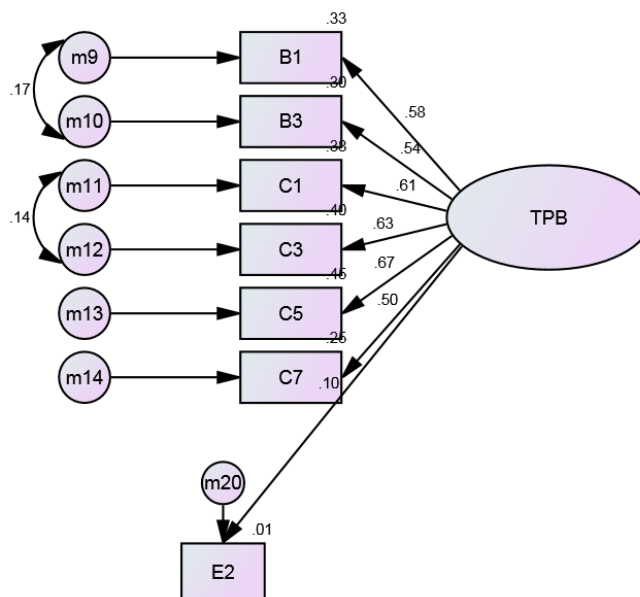
Wir danken Ihnen recht herzlich für Ihre Teilnahme.

## Appendix 10: Theory of planned behaviour testing of discriminant validity



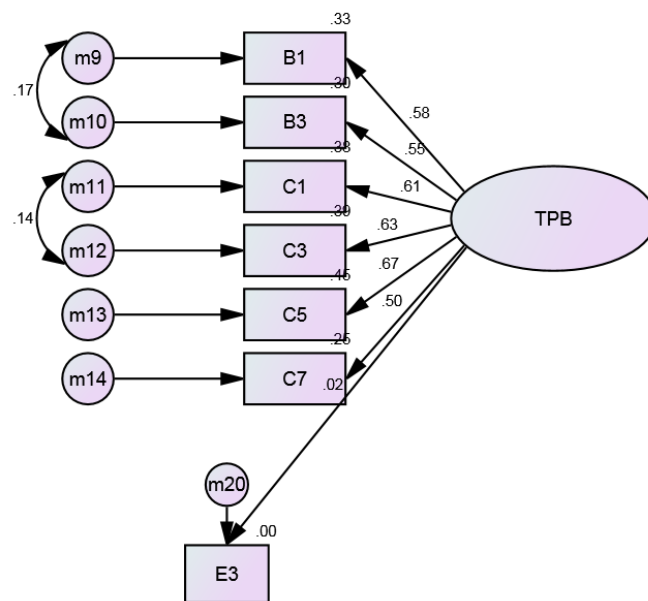
**Figure A1:** Theory of planned behaviour with intention one year

Figure A1 shows the items that were used to measure Theory of planned behaviour with intention one year. The goodness of fit indicators was a good fit of the data, with chi-square statistic of 20.524,  $df = 12$ ,  $P\text{-value} = .058$ , and GFI of 0.986, an AGFI of 0.966, a CFI of 0.983 and NFI of 0.962, an RMR of 0.101 and RMSEA of .043. The regression weight of intention one year is 0.782. There is appositive relationship between one year revisit intentions. However, this relationship only explains 5% of the variance of intention to revisit.



**Figure A2:** Theory of planned behaviour with intention three years

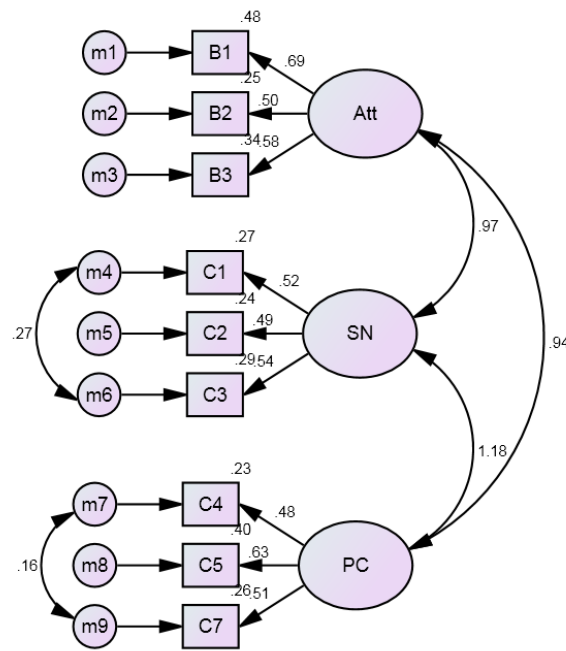
Figure A2 shows the items that were used to measure Theory of planned behaviour with intention three years. It can be seen from the figure that the standardised coefficients were above 0.50, the goodness of fit indicators was a good fit of the data, with chi-square statistic of 10.239 df= 12, P-value =0.595, and GFI of 0.993, an AGFI of 0.983, a CFI of 1.000 and NFI of 0.980, an RMR of 0.049 and RMSEA of 0.000). The regression weight of intention one year is 0.307. There is appositive relationship between one year revisit intentions. However, this relationship only explains 0.9% of the variance of intention to revisit.



**Figure A3:** Theory of planned behaviour with intention three years

Figure A3 shows the items that were used to measure Theory of planned behaviour with intention three years. It can be seen from the figure that the standardised coefficients were above 0.50, the goodness of fit indicators was a good fit of the data, with chi-square statistic of 15.871, df= 12, P-value =.197, and GFI of 0.989, an AGFI of 0.974, a CFI of 0.992 and NFI of 0.969, an RMR of 0.076 and RMSEA of 0.029. The regression weight of intention one year is 0.067. There is appositive relationship between one year revisit intentions. However, this relationship only explains 0% of the variance of intention to revisit.





**Figure A4:** Theory of planned behaviour

*Testing discriminant validity – Average variance extracted*

There is another way of testing for discriminant validity via average variance extracted. Therefore, if the average variance extracted for each of the factors is greater than the square of the correlations between the factors, then it is assumed that there is discriminant validity. The average variance of theory of planned behaviour for each of the constructs calculated (see Table A1 below). This was done by squaring the standardised regression weight for each of the items for a factor. These were then summed and then divided by the number of items in the factor to obtain an average.

**Table A1:** Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) testing discriminant validity using average variance extracted

Item	Standardised regression weight (From full model)	Square of the standardised regression weight	Sum of squared weights divided by N	Average variance extracted
Attitude				
B3	0.581	0.337	1.771/3	0.590
B2	0.499	0.249		
B1	0.691	0.477		
Subjective norms				
C3	0.536	0.287	1.55/3	0.518
C2	0.495	0.245		
C1	0.524	0.274		
Perceived control				
C7	0.509	0.259	1.623/3	0.541
C5	0.632	0.399		
C4	0.482	0.232		

The square of the correlations between each of the factors was then calculated. These were then compared with the average variance extracted (see table below).

**Table A2:** Theory of planned behaviour testing the square of the correlations

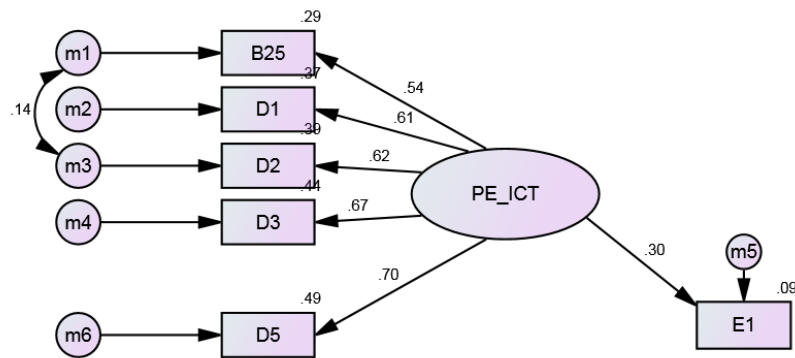
Factors	Correlation value	Square of correlation	Att (0.590)	SN (0.518)	PC (0.541)
Att-SN	0.971	0.942	X	X	NA
Att-PC	0.941	0.885	X	NA	X
SN-PC	1.183	1.399	NA	X	X

*A tick indicates that the average variance extracted is greater than the square of the correlation, X it is not*

The researcher tested the three items of the Attitude construct B1 Visiting heritage sites in RAK is extremely valuable to me, B2 Visiting heritage sites in RAK is extremely interesting , and B3 Visiting heritage sites in RAK is meaningful to me. Additionally, three items of subjective norm construct, C1 were tested How important to you is it to visit a heritage site that has been recommended by your family or friends, C2, were tested How important to you is it to visit a heritage site that has been recommended by a professional tour operator/s (tour operator, travel agent, airline representative, and C3 How important to you is it to visit heritage sites that have been advertised in different media. Finally three items of perceived control construct C4 Information about heritage sites in RAK makes it easy to visit them were tested , C5 were explored Visiting heritage sites in RAK is good value for money , and C7 Travelling to the heritage sties at RAK is time consuming were tested in larger theory of planned behaviour modelling.

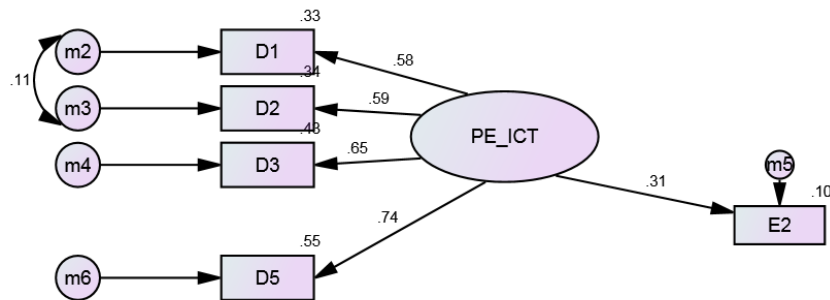
The model has no discriminant validity between the three constructs. From the table above, it would indicate that none of the constructs are discrete constructs.

## Appendix 11: Shen et al's (2009) model testing of discriminant validity



**Figure A1:** Shen et al.'s (2009) model added to the Theory of planned behaviour with intention one year

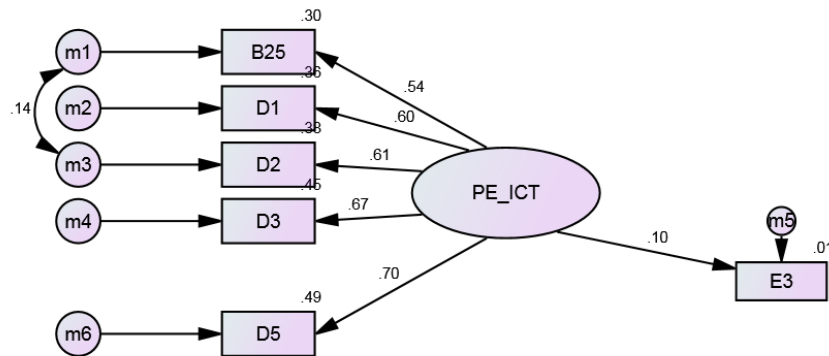
Figure A5 shows the items that were used to measure the factors which were added by Shen et al. (2009) to the theory of planned behaviour with intention one year. It can be seen from the figure that the standardised coefficients were above 0.50, the goodness of fit indicators was a good fit of the data, with chi-square statistic of 11.673 (df= 8, P-value =0.166, and GFI of 0.990, an AGFI of 0.974, a CFI of .992 and NFI of 0.976, an RMR of 0.065 and RMSEA of 0.034. The regression weight of intention one year is 0.742. There is appositive relationship between one year revisit intentions. However, this relationship only explains 9.3% of the variance of intention to revisit.



**Figure A6:** Shen et al.'s (2009) model added to the Theory of planned behaviour with intention three years

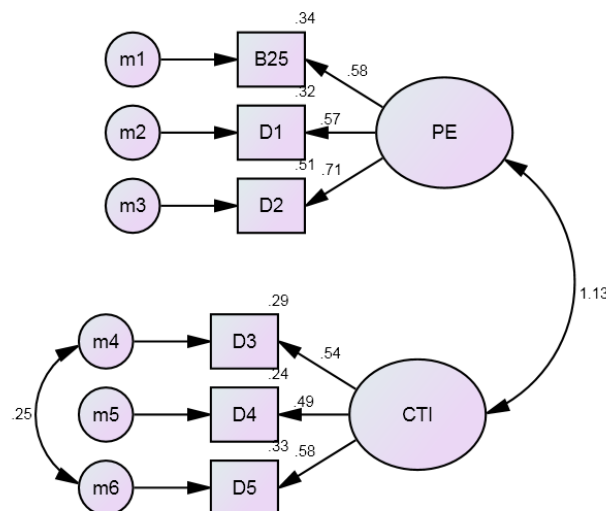
Figure A6 shows the items that were used to measure the factors which were added by Shen et al. (2009) to the theory of planned behaviour with intention three year. It can be seen from the figure that the standardised coefficients were above 0.50, the goodness of fit indicators was a good fit of the data, with chi-square statistic of 1.933, df= 4, P-value =0.748, and GFI of 0.998, an AGFI of 0.993, a CFI of 1.000 and NFI of 0.995, an

RMR of 0.030 and RMSEA of 0.000. The regression weight of intention three years is 0.681. There is appositve relationship between one year revisit intentions. However, this relationship only explains 8.9% of the variance of intention to revisit.



**Figure A2:** Shen et al.'s (2009) model added to the Theory of planned behaviour with intention five years

Figure A7 shows the items that were used to measure the factors which were added by Shen et al. (2009) to the theory of planned behaviour with intention five year. It can be seen from the figure that the standardised coefficients were above 0.50, the goodness of fit indicators was a good fit of the data, with chi-square statistic of 12.629,  $df=8$ ,  $P\text{-value}=.125$ , and GFI of 0.990, an AGFI of 0.973, a CFI of .989 and NFI of 0.972, an RMR of 0.072 and RMSEA of .038. The regression weight of intention one year is 0.270. There is appositve relationship between one year revisit intentions. However, this relationship only explains 1.1% of the variance of intention to revisit.



**Figure A8:** Shen et al.'s (2009) model

### *Testing discriminant validity – Average variance extracted*

There is another way of testing for discriminant validity via average variance extracted. Therefore, if the average variance extracted for each of the factors is greater than the square of the correlations between the factors, then it is assumed that there is discriminant validity. The average variance of Shen et al.'s (2009) model for each of the constructs calculated (see Table 10–3 below). This was done by squaring the standardised regression weight for each of the items for a factor. These were then summed and then divided by the number of items in the factor to obtain an average.

**Table A3:** Shen et al.'s (2009) model - Testing discriminant validity using average variance extracted

Item	Standardised regression weight (From full model)	Square of the standardised regression weight	Sum of squared weights divided by N	Average variance extracted
Past experience				
D2	0.714	0.510	1.165/3	0.388
D1	0.566	0.320		
B25	0.579	0.335		
Cultural tour involvement				
D5	0.576	0.332	0.863/3	0.288
D4	0.491	0.241		
D3	0.539	0.290		

The square of the correlations between each of the factors was then calculated. These were then compared with the average variance extracted (see table below)

**Table A4:** Shen et al.'s (2009) model testing the square of the correlations

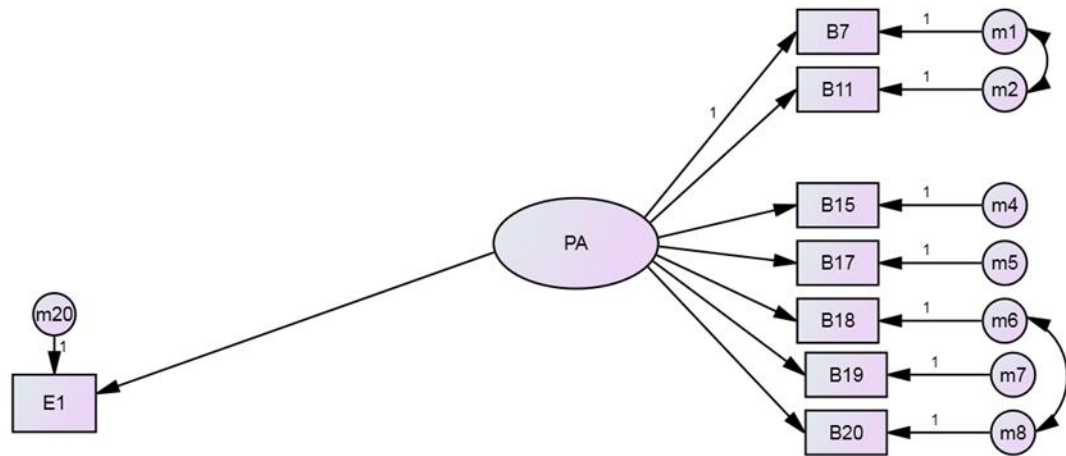
Factors	Correlation value	Square of correlation	PE (0.388)	CTI (0.288)
PE-CTI	0.971	0.942	X	X

*A tick indicates that the average variance extracted is greater than the square of the correlation, X it is not*

The researcher placed the three items of the past experience (PE) construct B25 *I am considering visiting more heritage sites in the future*, D1 *In my experience heritage sites in RAK are worth visiting*, and D2 *I like visiting heritage sites in RAK*. The other two items, which included the cultural tour involvement (CIT), construct D3 *My general impression of RAK heritage sites is poor/ good*, D4 *When I visit heritage sites in RAK it is usually by* and D5 *I think heritage sites of RAK are not interested at all/ interested*, in

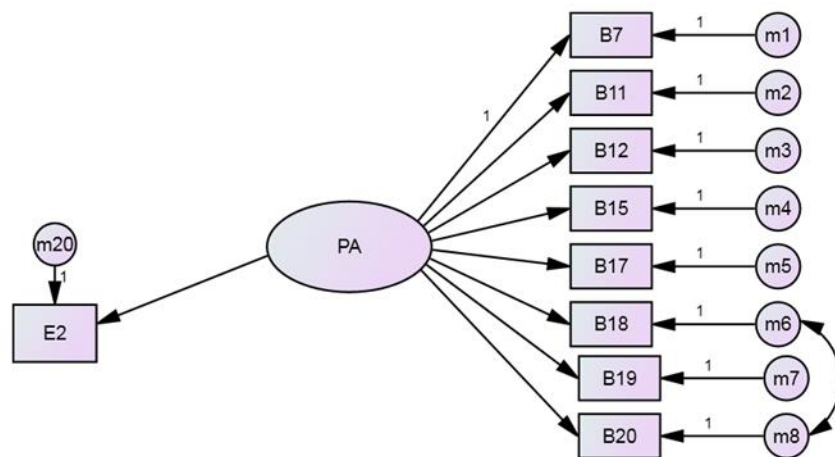
larger modelling. However, there were issues with discriminant validity, which caused researcher to present the model with individual items as in Figure 7.7 measuring PE and ICT. The final model as presented in Figure 7.7, provided a good fit with the data, with a chi-square statistic of 38.488 (df= 9, P-value =.000), and GFI of 0.967, an AGFI of 0.922, a CFI of 0.945 and NFI of 0.930, an RMR of 0.099 and RMSEA of 0.092. The construct's reliability is 0.0.777 and variance extracted 0.56. It seems from this figure that the constructs of Shen's addition can be combined with other models (N. Blunch, 2012). However, the p -value is very low and the correlation is very high, which is .better to combined the two contracts to get good fit From the table above, it would indicate that none of the constructs are discrete constructs.

## Appendix 12: Place attachment testing of discriminant validity



**Figure A3:** Place Attachment added by researcher with intention one year

Figure A9 illustrated items that were used to measure the factors which were added by researcher to the theory of planned behaviour with intention one year. It can be seen from the figure that the standardised coefficients were above 0.50 except one item whether asked, “The heritage sites at RAK mean a lot to me”, the goodness of fit indicators was a good fit of the data, with chi-square statistic of 23.369,  $df = 16$ ,  $P\text{-value} = 0.104$ , and GFI of 0.985, an AGFI of 0.966, a CFI of 0.988 and NFI of 0.962, an RMR of 0.101 and RMSEA of 0.034. The regression weight of intention one year is 0.689. There is apposite relationship between one year revisit intentions. However, this relationship only explains 3.2% of the variance of intention to revisit.

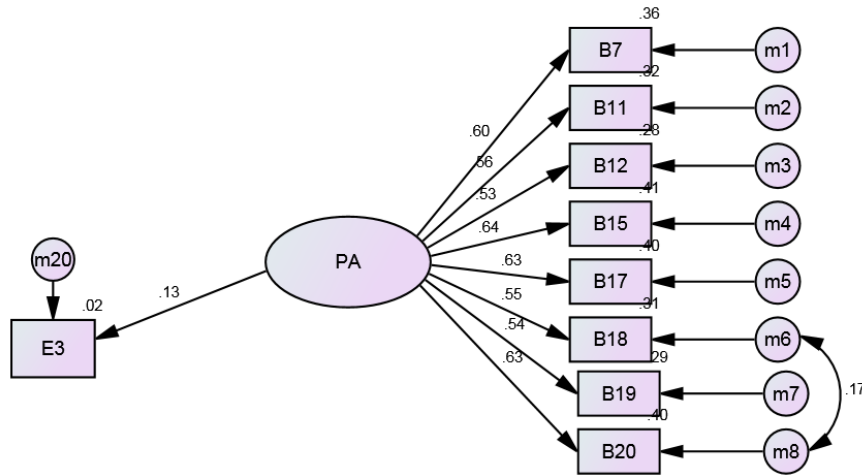


**Figure A4:** Place Attachment added by researcher with intention three years

Figure A10 shows items that were used to measure the factors which were added by researcher to the theory of planned behaviour with intention three years. It can be seen

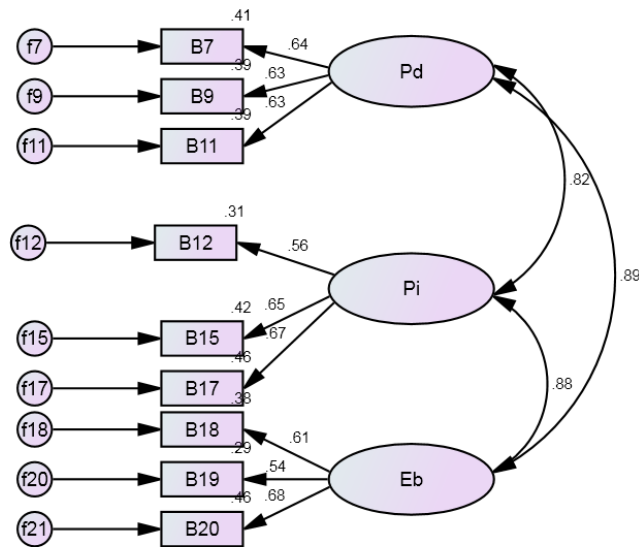


from the figure that the standardised coefficients were above 0.50 except one item whether asked, “The heritage sites at RAK mean a lot to me”, the goodness of fit indicators was a good fit of the data, with chi-square statistic of 26.411, df= 17, P-value =0.067, and GFI of 0.983, an AGFI of 0.964, a CFI of .983 and NFI of 0.956, an RMR of 0.092 and RMSEA of 0.038. The regression weight of intention three years is 0.689. There is appositive relationship between one year revisit intentions. However, this relationship only explains 0.1% of the variance of intention to revisit.



**Figure A5:** Place Attachment added by researcher with intention five years

Figure 7.23 illustrated items that were used to measure the factors which were added by researcher to the theory of planned behaviour with intention five years. It can be seen from the figure that the standardised coefficients were above 0.50, the goodness of fit indicators was a good fit of the data, with chi-square statistic of 38.336, df= 26, P-value =.056, and GFI of 0.979, an AGFI of 0.964, a CFI of .983 and NFI of 0.949, an RMR of 0.085 and RMSEA of 0.035. The regression weight of intention five years is 0.391. There is appositive relationship between one year revisit intentions. However, this relationship only explains 1.8% of the variance of intention to revisit. Five years is more emotional decision to be taken when return to the heritage places after five years rather than in year or 3years with place attachment.



**Figure A12:** Researcher addition (Place attachment)

*Testing discriminant validity – Average variance extracted*

There is another way of testing for discriminant validity via average variance extracted. Therefore, if the average variance extracted for each of the factors is greater than the square of the correlations between the factors, then it is assumed that there is discriminant validity. The average variance of Researcher addition (place attachment) for each of the constructs calculated (see Table A5 below). This was done by squaring the standardised regression weight for each of the items for a factor. These were then summed and then divided by the number of items in the factor to obtain an average.

**Table A5:** Place attachment - Testing discriminant validity

Item	Standardised regression weight (From full model)	Square of the standardised regression weight	Sum of squared weights divided by N	Average variance extracted
Place dependence				
B11	0.628	0.394	1.2/3	0.400
B9	0.628	0.394		
B7	0.642	0.412		
Place identity			1.182/3	0.394
B17	0.675	0.456		
B15	0.646	0.417		
B12	0.556	0.309		
Emotional bonding				
B20	0.677	0.458	1.129/3	0.376
B19	0.541	0.293		
B18	0.615	0.378		

The square of the correlations between each of the factors was then calculated. These were then compared with the average variance extracted (see table below).

**Table A6:** Shen's model testing the square of the correlations

Factors	Correlation value	Square of correlation	PD (0.400)	PI (0.394)	EB (0.376)
PD-PI	0.823	0.677	X	X	NA
PD-EB	0.886	0.785	X	NA	X
PI-EB	0.882	0.778	NA	X	X

*A tick indicates that the average variance extracted is greater than the square of the correlation, X it is not.*

From the table above, it would indicate none of the constructs are discrete factors. The researcher tested the three items of the place dependence construct B7 *I get more satisfaction from visiting RAK heritage sites than other sites in RAK*, B9 *No other place can compare to RAK in terms of heritage sites*, and B11 *I would not substitute visiting any other place than RAK when considering visiting heritage sites*. Additionally, three items of place identity construct, B12 were tested *The heritage sites at RAK mean a lot to me*, B14, were tested *I feel that the heritage sites in RAK are a part of me*, B15, were explored *Visiting heritage sites in RAK says a lot about who I am*, and B17 were tested *I am very attached to heritage sites in RAK*. Finally three items of emotional bonding construct B18 were tested *Visiting heritage sites increases the feeling of my family's past*, B19 were explored *When visiting heritage sites in RAK; I feel a sense of peace*, and B20 were tested *Visiting heritage sites increases the feeling of my family's* in larger place attachment modelling. The goodness of fit indicators were a good fit of the data, with a chi-square statistic of 77.100 (df= 35, P-value =.000, and GFI of 0.962, an AGFI of 0.940, a CFI of 0.958 and NFI of 0.926, an RMR of 0.087 and RMSEA of 0.055. The construct's reliability is 0.842 and variance extracted (0.62). This model which was added by the researcher seems to be a good fit with data, but cannot be combined in further analysis because the p-value is very low and the correlation is very high.