

## IDENTIFICATION AND MAPPING OF TOURISM ATTRACTIONS IN OMAN

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### Abstract

Tourism sector become one of most important sector in Oman. There are many types of tourism, each type depends on its purpose. Each type has specific facilities which can help to achieve the aim of doing the tourism. Oman has destination that need some supportive plans and strategies to attract more tourists. One of the strategic is to focus on the Tourism sector. If we take an overview of the tourism in Oman, we will find the possibility of developing many different types of tourism ventures such as natural tourism, sports tourism, entertainment tourism, culture and historical tourism, business tourism, MICE, and medical tourism. The development in this sector will lead to increase the GDP on the country and enhance the economy as well.

### Introduction

Tourism is the activity of travel, discovery, and many other things. Many countries in the world survive on tourism where tourists from different countries visit and pay for the product and services that they consume. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), a tourist is a person who moves from one place to another for the purpose of tourism for a distance of at least eighty miles from his/her home. The government of Oman is also keen on promoting tourism. In 2010, Ministry of Tourism in Sultanate of Oman celebrated Tourism and Biodiversity Day with UN and WTO to improve the tourism in Oman and to showcase the genetic diversity of plants and animals to attract people from different countries to visit Oman (Anon., 2010).

Oman has variety of attractive location which attract a huge number of tourists. The location of Oman helps to involve many types of tourism which are Cultural and Historical tourism, Nature tourism, Sports tourism, Religious tourism, Medical tourism, Adventure tourism, Education tourism and Entertainment tourism. There are many types of tourism which related to entertainment tourism that include the activity's which can attract the tourist, such as festival, children games, theatre, opera, sport and much more. In our research paper we aim to make a profile of types of tourism which are cultural tourism, nature tourism, sport tourism, religious tourism, medical or health tourism, adventure tourism ,education tourism and entertainment tourism ,too .(Tourism, 2016). The aim of this research is to Identify the different types of tourism that fits within the socio-cultural conditions of Oman and Identify destinations and potential tourism activities, which Oman can capitalize and find the possibility of developing many different types of tourism and should put its stake in the tourism sector to develop other sources of income, with comparatively lower investments and develop this green industry.

### Literature Review

#### Tourism Definitions

Oman is famous for it is popular tourist attraction. Desert, beaches, wadis and mountains are areas that make Oman unique and different from other GCC countries. The diversity in terrain of Oman and the location of Oman lead to have many type of tourism which can attract a huge number of tourists(Tourism, 2016). The tourist can have in each region different kinds of tourism so he/she can enjoy and find many types of tourism in one country. Salalah located in the southern area of the Sultanate of Oman the region which attract thousands of demotic and international tourist annually. Salalah has many attractive things but we are looking for develop the city through new plan which can make much more development. During (June, July, August) all the mountains cover by green plant and the weather become very nice(Tourism, 2016). The high number of tourist in this area forcing as to think of more attractive ways which can increase the number of tourists, because of that government plan to make teleferik to move from one area to another highest area to enjoy watching views there and make improvement in infrastructure (K, 2017). Government plan to establish medical city in Barka which can treat the different type of diseases with high technology equipment and expertise staff. The location of Barka is near the capital of Oman and it is easily connected with other regions this thing will lead to make reaching this area much easier. Musandam has many activities which can attract the tourists through building water city and doing beach activities such as Boating trip, banana boat, Dolphin Watching and Turtle Watching(Tourism, 2016).

#### Types of Tourism

The availability of tourism depends on elements which can make the tourism sector more facilitated. There are many types of tourism which are Cultural and Historical tourism, Nature tourism, Sports tourism, Religious tourism, Medical tourism, Adventure tourism, Education tourism and Entertainment tourism(Maria).

#### Cultural and Historical Tourism

Mean that Tourists who visit different places of a particular country. They also attend festivals and ceremonies in order to gain a better understanding of the people and the culture of the country (their beliefs and their practices). For example, in Oman, visit old buildings such as caves and forts. In Qatar there are traditional Suq (SuqWaqif ) which reflect the tradition of the country (khaleejtimes, 2016)Nizwa has been designated as the Capital of Islamic culture in 2015 (Groves, 2015)

#### Nature Tourism

This type of tourism related to tourists who are interesting to visit wildlife or being in the midst of nature, such as in the local area Salalah and AlJabal Al Akhdhar. Theirmany tourists prefer to spend their time to get relax and comfort. If we are talking about this type globally, Malaysia is one the best destination which attract many tourists because it is known for it is variety of island and big farms.

### Sports Tourism

Sport tourism is related to travel to view and practice sport-related activities. The best example in the gulf countries is UAE. The variety of sport in UAE attract many people to attend this kind of sports. This types of sport like (football, golf, Formula 1, tennis and rugby circuits). Dubai and Abu Dhabi brands this sport to the international sporting community. (R, 2010)Qatar's vision 2022 aim to host world cup which will attract more number of tourist from the globe. Formula 1 in Bahrain is very famous car racing sport that gives an opportunity to contribute to the development of the Bahrain economy(bizbahrain, 2017).In Oman there are doing some sport activities like Camel and horse racing and hosting Oman Sailing and Tour of Oman. (Tourism, 2016)

### Religious Tourism

This type of tourism where people go to a religious location or to attend a religious ceremony. For example, Muslim peoples go every year to Makkah in KSA to do Hajj and Omra. There are many well-known graves in Oman especially in Salalah and in Ibri there are some tombs. (Sylvia, 2016)Nizwa has two famous historical mosques which are the Shawadhna Grand Mosque in Al Aqrquarter(Groves, 2015), and the Grand Mosque of Sa'al .Mazin bin Ghadouba Mosque in Samail is the first Omani mosque(Groves, 2015)

### Medical Tourism

This type of tourism is focusing on the travel for improving one's health. There are many countries which have highly educated professional's doctors and surgeons who can make complicated operations. The best example of this type of tourism is the cosmetic surgery in Iran because it known for it is good operation for the foreigners who want to make an operation in their liposuction, facelift, and nose lift and other forms. Thailand, Germany and India are very famous for their good treatment in the incurable disease. In Oman there are some medical colleges such as (Oman medical college and Oman dental college) which can provide a high medical educated people. (Hasan, 2016)

### Adventure Tourism

This type of tourism is catered for people who want to do more than just visit in the regular tourist sites. The special things in this kind of tourism is involving challenging activities such as rock climbing, mountain climbing, wild water rafting and sand crossing. The demotic destinations for this type of tourism are Jabel Shams, Al Wahiba sandsin Bidya,Musandam. The best example globally is Everest mount. (2013)

### Education Tourism

Education tourism is the process of traveling for facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. The main country which is famous for their high level of education IS United Kingdom. Many parents send their children there to get English courses which can improve their language and confidence. The higher ministry of education in Oman send many of students to Malaysia, America and Canada to complete their higher education and get more experience.(Rawya, 2011)

### MICE Tourism

MICE Tourism (Meeting, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) is a type of tourism that aim to plan well in advance (wikipedia, 2016). MICE tourism includes business events and activities and it is need team working on different function (c, 2013 ). It leads to enhance the development of local science and knowledge in the hosting country (Szabó, 2011)

### Entertainment Tourism

Entertainment is a form of activity that holds the attention and interest of people. It can be an idea or a task, but is more likely to be one of the activities for the purpose of keeping an audience's attention(2017). The big new opera in Oman is an example of entertainment tourism. The well facilitated cinema and theaters attract many people to spend their time and get enjoy. MutrahSouq is oldest traditional souq in Oman which located in Mutrah Cornish and attract many visitors because of its antiques products and traditional textile.(lonelyplanet)

### Methodology

We used secondary data that collected, using desk research approach, from the tourism reports for the GCC and relevant countries (tourism ministry websites), research papers, tourism magazines, and other relevant sources such as The Internet will enable us to build constructively an information base and design for the second phase of the research project.

### Result

**Table 1: Types of Tourism prevalent in Oman**

Types	Present	Potential
<b>Culturaland Historical Tourism</b>	SutanQaboos Mosque, Muscat. SutanQaboosMosque,Nizwa Museums ( FORTS AND CASTLES (Al hazmCastle, Al rustaq, Al blid, Salalah Nakhal Fort	Grand Mosque, Sohar Historical suq , Sohar Oman Abar AL Zaman, Manah
<b>Nature Tourism</b>	WadiBani Khalid , A' Sharqia, AL Magsail AlKasfah Spring, Jabal Shams (Sun Mountain) Wadi Al Hawqayn, Majlis Al Jinn Cave Bawshar Sands Ras Al Hadd Beach Masirah Island	Bandar Khayran Reserve KhawrTaqah

<b>Sports Tourism</b>	Football clups, muscat,sohar,dhofar Golf,Muscat	Football Club, Alburami Golf,Dhofar
<b>Religious Tourism</b>	Tomb of A'NabiUmran ,Salalah Bebe Maryam : Qalhat	Bin Ali's Tomb Islamic Institutes
<b>Medical Tourism</b>	Sultan qabooshospital , Salalah Sur hospital,Sur Soharhospital,Sohar	Medical city, Barka
<b>Adventure Tourism</b>	Claim mountain, al jable al akdhar scuba diving, Muscat	Whale watching, Musandam Turtle watching, Musandam
<b>Education Tourism</b>	SutanQaboos university,Al kodh Sohar university, Sohar Nizwa university, Nizwa	Conferencing, Muscat Germany Collage : Muscat
<b>Entertainment Tourism</b>	Cinema and Theaters, Muscat Grand mall, Muscat Al MurujAmphitheather Oman International Exhibition Center	Royal Opera House Muscat, Muscat Cinema and Theaters, Sohar Dragon market, Barka Dofhar Bowling center ,Salalah

As we know, there are many types of tourism in the countries that depend with topographical state, location and facility of the country. As a result, there are many reasons for their vacation such as to engage in different types of physical activities, and enjoy interacting with nature. Oman is characterized by different types of tourism that help Oman to attract many number of tourists. In Oman, tourists can join or attend many activities because of different types of tourism. Moreover, the various types of tourism help to increase the economy of the country.

### Conclusion

Tourism is a practice of moving from one place to another to do some activity. Tourism is important source in many countries. There are some countries depend in tourism to increase the income. Oman seeks to improve tourism sector through developments in technology and transport infrastructure. Saltant of Oman should focus in the ways that might improve the level of different types of tourism which has. Continues improvement can attract more tourists which will lead to enhance the tourism sector as well as the GDP of the country.

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