The Factors Influencing Tourist’s Choice to Select Various Transportation Modes in Oman

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Abstract

Purpose: The improved networks of transportation infrastructure have benefited Oman as a tourist destination. Moreover, it has made substantial changes in travelers’ concerns on distance and time, hence it promotes the destination itself and provides the ability for tourist to travel. The existing modes of transportation available for tourists to reach various destinations in Oman is assessed and the factors that influence tourist’s choice to select various modes are identified in the study.

Design/methodology/approach: The researcher relies on quantitative and exploratory research questions asking the tourists or respondents to fit their perspectives into the limited response options given by the researcher in the survey.

Findings: Findings revealed that a high number of respondents concerned on ‘safety’ when choosing types of modes. The researcher layouts a pyramid displaying the dimensions from most to the least dimensions that influence the choice of tourism transportation.

Research limitations/implications: Due to the pandemic Covid-19, the gathering of detailed, current and specific data through interviews and focus groups would have provided more than adequate insights for the analysis. Additionally, the field research did not consider a number of social and human factors such as contradictory conduct and emotional experiences.

Practical implications: The research contributes to Travel consultants, Aviation and the Destination Management Organizations to understand the how the tourist’s transport choices are influenced by the transportation system in a destination.

Originality/value: This is the first study that will discuss and review the dimensions of the nation’s transportation system through primary research and transport and tourism literature studies.

Keywords: Tourism, Transportation, Business, Modes, Oman, Destination.
Category: Applied Paper

1. Introduction

Tourism is an industry that involves tourist with the motive to travel from their own place to new destination for various purposes. To generate tourism, there must be a movement where a person has to travel, through any mode of transportation, therefore it is possible to access a country or a destination (Zajac, 2016). According to Borodako and Rudnicki (2012), A tourism product is chosen by deciding on the accessibility. Tourism is developed through various infrastructural,
economic and social factors. Any form of tourism is highly segregated by the condition and the standard, the service is being provided. Tourism and Transportation has observed to have a close relationship, whereas the growth of the transportation network and introductory of new modes to reach various destinations in Oman, will subsequently improve in tourist footprints. The study is essential because Oman is a destination that a tourist has to travel to many different tourist attractions across the country to explore and experience as they are quite apart from each other. It is important to recognize and discuss different dimensions that impact satisfaction in transportation for improving the service for tourists (Virkar and Mallya, 2018).

Buckley and Rynhart (2011) reported that Oman was ranked 21st for the overall quality of the infrastructure, 10th for the quality of the roads and 33rd for the port infrastructure quality out of 139 countries. Although the Government is highly focused on investing and committing to a comprehensive road network, sea and air ports. The authors also revealed that country’s problems in the transportation system such as frequent flooding due to poor road infrastructure in remote areas and the steady growth of traffic. This research revealed which attributes of the transport service are most considered by tourists in Oman through examining the existing transportation modes and relevant factors that influence a tourist being the central objectives of this research with Oman’s transportation network and service for tourist as a case.

2. Literature Review
This definition covered two classes of visitor: Tourists were classified as temporary visitors staying at least 24 hours in a destination. If they are travelling for recreation, health, sport, holiday, study or religious purposes, their visit could be categorised as leisure. Alternatively, excursionists, including cruise travellers may be considered as temporary visitors, if they stay in a destination for less than 24 hours.

2.1 Transportation in the context of developing Tourism.
Transport enables movement and mobility for people to travel from the one destination to another or anywhere they aspire to be, neither can tourism and transport happen as they are both co-dependent. According to Alkheder (2015), transport is considered as a highly significant factor that contribute to develop tourism. As stated by Palhares and Duval (2011), in a broader tourism structure the relationship between tourism and transport remains as the most important. The transport system in a destination is responsible for providing comfortable, safe, fast and price competitive transport services (Virkar and Mallya, 2018).

Yuksek et al. (2016), reports that the role of a transport system in tourism is the operation and the delivery of transport service, availability on modes of transportation and the connection of roads and terminals for tourists intending to reach a destination or a site within. Brida et al. (2014) highlights that a well-developed infrastructure of transport is a significant factor in up keeping the economic activities and also essential for regional development. Yuksek et al. (2016) states that public transportation is considered as a key element of “urban tourism”. At present, in the development of tourism the role of transportation is considered very important. Meanwhile Lohmann and Pearce (2012) also states that transport facilities are an important component in developing tourism. Typically, to the advancement of technology in transportation, tourism grows in parallel. Which have gradually increased the access to many destinations and markets globally with the spreading of railways, cars followed by the introduction of air travel.
Some destinations have witnessed significant effect through the changes, structure and marketing of transportation services on the growth of the destinations tourism sector particularly. Not many tourists in capital areas with sound public transport networks have the necessity to hire private transport, nevertheless in capital areas with weak public transportation there’s a greater demand for engaging a private transport and for good public transportation system. Therefore, the strategy of “urban mass transportation supply” is an influence for the tourist arrival numbers at cities (Kantawateera et al., 2014). According to Rodrigue, (2013) the demand for national and international transportation infrastructure suggests on efficient, inexpensive, fast and in a manner of transporting large numbers of people. Ever since the tourism industry is experiencing increasing growth rate, effective transportation facilities and terminals for tourists require substantial investments, high organization, well-planned schedules and promotion.

Borodako and Rudnicki (2012) confirms that the accessibility of transport, technological adoption and development related to contemporary transport are significant features needed for a destination to become a competitive tourism market leader. Studies reveal that the tourist volume recorded and the accessibility in certain sites has a constant relationship. An appeal of a destination’s mobility in terms of the infrastructure communicated by road, rail, marine and air transport and the availability of car rentals. Ladki et al. (2014) argues that, accessibility to a destination is a key factor that forms a destination and one of the factors that attracts tourist to a destination is its local transportation systems. Since transportation is a general factor that influences and effects the satisfaction level of the tourists in a destination.

2.2 Factors influencing the choice of Transportation in a destination.

According to the study of Bajada and Titheridge (2017), many visitors visiting the host destination depending on public transportation, hence there is a tendency to effect the host destination if the transportation system is not effective and accessible as destinations able to fulfill tourist such expectations attract more tourists. If a transport service is operated only restricted times a day and network, tourists depending on such transport system shall not meet their desired time of arrival to their site. Such conditions restrict tourists from visiting more destinations and contribute to local economies. As the needs of a tourist need and expectation in a country is far different from a residents need. Meanwhile Gutiérrez et. al (2019), also sheds light on a similar perspective on the transport system of a destination. The accessibility and availability of non-stop transport services from one stop or destination to another is a vital factor to tourists rather than the duration and cost of the journey.

Bajada and Titheridge (2017) highlights that, traveling for leisure could be quite stressful when tourist travel with the locals in the same modes of transport in the host country. Moreover, due to the unfamiliarity of the destination and tourists try to comprehend the operation of a transport system, the tourists may face many drawbacks. Dileep (2019) points out that, the type of tour the group or independent tourist choose could also a factor to choose the mode of transport service. A tourist is habitually influenced to choose with the possibility of getting an opportunity for an experiences that is unique. Therefore, destinations must consider this aspect relevant to their transportation system. However, with the relevance to many academic literatures there are many other influential factors affecting the choice of the mode of transport in a host destination.

2.2.1 Speed of Transport

Bajada and Titheridge (2017) supports that time is considered to be a factor that influences the tourist in determining the mode of transport in a destination. It is further evident that tourist
withhold destinations that involve long rides preventing the traveler to reach the destination by the time they anticipated. Dileep (2019) also argues that the vehicle speed is a very important concern for the tourist, although contemporary transport facilities comes with comfort and speed. The tourists are bound to choose the fastest of them all, hence why many tourists choose air transportation mode for international or domestic travel.

2.2.2 Regularity of Service and Quality of service
Suda et al. (2014) states that, tourists appreciate much improved service, frequency and well distributed information in the transport system. Furthermore, Bajada and Titheridge (2017) reveals that poor regularity reflects the unreliability of the transport service, although high regularity and frequencies of transport permit travelers with travel flexibility. Services chosen should also be reliable; punctuality of service is something that passengers consider. Delays and cancellations of service can lead to disquiet and frustration. As in any other service sector, the transport sector has to provide quality service to its clients. From coaches to flights, this is certainly relevant (Dileep, 2019). In order to maintain the quality of service for tourist in a transport, areas such as; space, cleanliness, seat availability and staff service needs further attention (Le-Klähn and Hall, 2014).

2.2.3 Safety and Cost of service
According to Dileep (2019), Undoubtedly, one of the major concern of a tourists is safety and security while they travel, as tourists prefer much safe and secure mode of transport. A tourist determines safety and security of a transportation service while deciding to buying it. Meanwhile Madhuwanthi et al. (2015) also highlights that Safety is a key significant factor that persuades to determine the chosen travel mode. Dileep (2019), reveals that the Transport sector is price sensitive, as the transport services have elasticity of demand. The price of the transport has the ability to affect the tourist demand. The mode used for transportation by the tourists are often influenced by the price factor. Whereas the study of Suda, Roosen and Gerike (2014) found that price has a significant influence on a tourist’s choice of the transport mode. Additionally, the study reveals that the price conscious, overnight visitors who are also well educated often tend to choose public transportation at destinations.

2.2.5 Comfort and Accessibility
Suda et al. (2014) states that a smart system of transport needs to be comfortable and stress free. Meanwhile Dileep (2019) describes that the comfort found in a transport service is an additional factor that influence the choice of mode of transport. The author further highlights that the although the identical transport modes or services may have a different level of comfort experience, provided by various operators. This factor also may vary for the price the traveler pays, since the requirement for comfort and the length of the journey frequently correlate. According to Alkheder (2015) it is important to consider several transportation factors when it comes to the development of the tourism sector. Amongst them, is the factor of “accessibility” which is embodied with sound road network with access to the touristic sites in a destination. The study further highlights that accessibility to should be backed with suitably planned journey schedule and travel terminals that certify efficient and comfortable accessible journeys to the particular sites and by a reputable transporting system of busses, taxis and many others for instance. Moreover, Dileep (2019) also states that a traveler’s choice of transport mode is
influenced by several comfort associated factors as; traveller boarding location or place, time taken to reach and the location of arrival or terminal stop.

2.3 Tourist satisfaction with transportation modes
Among the reasons emphasized on tourist dissatisfaction by Ghaderi et al. (2018), the absence of types of different transportation modes is highlighted as one of them. As reported by the European Environment Agency (2020) Tourism is a key driver in the sector of transportation whereas 61% of tourism transport is by car, given the circumstance it is considered to be popular mode of tourism transportation with air transport counting to 21%, 15% by rail and 3% by ship. The use of public transport is a commonly researched subject in tourism studies. Based on the study of Le-Klähn, Hall and Gerike, (2014), Public transportation is recognized to be the frequently used mean of transportation, yet the available other modes of transportation have an influence on the tourist satisfaction, thus the en route services have an influence on the level of satisfaction with the choice of the mode of transport made by the tourist.

Tourists and Corporate travelers are not committed to a specific transportation mode and often travel without a car. Additionally, they are enforced to reflect on their transportation options. Hence the tourists heavily rely on the information available when choosing their mobility means as they are new to the destination, therefore it is essential to have adequate information on the right mode of mobility to attractions and cities to avoid dissatisfaction (OECD, 2016). Attributes like Punctuality and speed are high important performance attributes compared to the attributes cleanliness of vehicles, on the key significant factors of transport satisfaction (Kinsella and Caulfield, 2011).

2.4 The transportation facilities in Oman
The study of Belwal (2017) points out that, Oman’s public transportation system is not quite efficient, developed or elaborated. Since the poor mobility of services, improper and infrequent schedules, the residents in cities and urban areas depend on hiring private taxis for transport. Therefore, residents face a huge problem in travelling within the country due to the shortcoming of connections from one city to another. However, due to the growth of vehicle congestions, tight traffic, carbon emissions, stress and expenses the residents in Oman are in demand for an affordable, innovative, efficient and well connected public mobility that enables travelling between and within a city such as well integrated trains, metros, ferries, buses and taxis.

In the meantime, Jiménez et al. (2016) confirms that, Oman has countless municipal and national transport concerned bodies and entities. The main organization in transport competencies is the Ministry of Transport and Communications in parallel with the Muscat Municipality for transport infrastructure in the urban areas; followed by the ROP (Royal Police Oman) concerned on traffic regulations and road safety; among others are the Oman National Transport Company and the National Ferry Company.

2.4.1 Buses and Coaches
Oman National Transport Company has been experiencing limited growth and development for while mainly because of the deficiency in passenger numbers. Therefore many of the ONTC buses did not operate to its capacity or mostly empty. Nevertheless, after the rebranding of ONTC the transport company is now known as ‘Mwasalat’ the company launched a fleet of 40 low floor brand new buses onto diverse routes to restore the appearance (Belwal, 2017). Meanwhile Al-Maqbalia and Refeque (2017) states that, public transport modes are an area where Muscat has
invested in order to improve their transportation network. Mwasalat smart buses were introduced in Muscat, with the project of aiming to improve an efficient and smart transport system in the capital. The technologically advanced buses with built-in gadgets for real-time tracking, tourist-info services, Wi-Fi and e-ticketing application. As mentioned by Lonely Planet, (2020) There are limited number of private bus services operated by companies such as Gulf Transport Company. The private transport companies usually provide competitive routes to Dubai, Salalah and Duqm. Moreover, according to Big Bus Tours, (2020) the company provides private charter tours and group tours with live guides accompanied tours. The company also offers drop off and pick up points that suits the guest’s tour itinerary and provides prerecorded commentary in a variety of languages choices. Pursuant to Omanuna, (2019), most private buses travel within the destinations Dubai and Muscat and bus rental companies mainly for travel and tourism companies. Besides, the Oman national transport company offer steady bus services within the Sultanate to Sohar, Nizwa, Salalah and to other municipalities.

### 2.4.2 Taxis and Rental Cars

cabs and taxi services are reachable at various regions in Oman. These services can be used by visitors or residents to travel to anywhere in the country. According to the study of Belwal et al. (2013), Taxis mostly attend the role of public transportation in Oman as on the streets, public transportation has a quite low appearance. Hence the Taxis in Oman is identified as a ‘pseudo monopoly’. The study further reveals that Oman has better taxi availability compared to UAE, Qatar, Hong Kong and Singapore as the ratio for the population of Oman to taxi is 70:1, this indicates that there is ‘one taxi for 70 individuals’. Omanuna, (2019) states that, taxis in Oman are normally well-maintained and sharing taxis can be a cheap option. Instead, another shared transportation service for short distance hauls are the small vans and these vans charge quite similar to the city buses. Jiménez et al. (2016) confirms that, Microbus and taxis are the important elements in the Muscat transportation system. There are 13,400 microbuses and taxis operating in the city of Muscat, conferring to the ROP. There is an absence of professionalism in the transport system is identified as the taxi service sector is large in Oman. The research further reveals that with a huge number of taxi license holders, in Oman taxi is typically a complementary activity rather than a professional activity hence this could highly affect the quality of service. The Rough Guide, (2018) reveals that, there are two types of taxis which are regular and airport taxis in Oman. However, the white and orange taxis in Oman are unmetered, therefore its typical for travelers and drivers to frustration as you have to first bargain over the predicted fare for the ride. The drivers speak a little of English and very entertaining nevertheless when they meet a foreigner they try to make extra money from them. Additionally, it is also said that its mostly frustrating and difficult to agree to a reasonable taxi fare particularly in and around the capital’s most exclusive hotels. The author also reveals that being a foreigner given such conditions it is distinctive that they end up spending thrice or twice than the usual, this also depends on the travelers bargaining power and the length of their trip. The ‘Mwasalat Airport Taxi’ remain as the only licensed Airport Pickup Taxi Service offered at Muscat International Airport. The Mwasalat company has a service desk at the arrival terminal assisting taxi requirements to the visitors and ensure to provide a licensed Taxi for the visitor’s journey. The Mwasalat Airport taxi fleet includes Cars up to four passengers and Vans up to 7 passengers can hire. Additionally, the Mwasalat application also allows guests to pre book their services (Mwasalat taxi, 2020). “OTaxi” is Oman's fast growing on request taxi service receiving organization, The organization launched in the year
2014 and offers a platform for drivers and city transportation users to connect through a mobile application. OTaxi is among the leading personal transport businesses in the Sultanate (OTaxi, 2020).

Ministry of Tourism Oman (2016), states that the car rental companies that operate in Oman, are international franchises and local companies. Omanuna (2019) discloses that there are many agencies providing car rental services and its comfortable to travel to destinations in Oman in rented cars. It is also advisable for business visitors also to get a rent a car service for a day or few days. Meanwhile Rough Guide (2018), expresses that, given the public transport condition in Oman, going for a car rental service is an easier and in-expensive option than Taxis. However, the traveler need to qualify to Omani conditions and standard of driving and most importantly the understanding the complex road system in the city. As it is quite considerable to get lost and spend a lot of time understanding the roads without being well equipped with road maps and GPS. Car rentals chains and desks are offered at the airport and city hotels.

2.4.3 Ferry and Airplanes
According to Belwal (2017), the National Ferries Company founded in the year 2008, offers few ferry services with thin Oman. Connecting the coastal cities Muscat, Shannah and Shinas to two islanded Masirah and Khasab. The National Ferries Company (2019) highlights that the project of National Ferries Company is one of the outstanding investments made on developing the maritime transport infrastructure of the Sultanate with the aim of facilitating and connecting major ports and regions in the country for the movement of the visitors in the destination. The National Ferries Company (2019) confirms that, in the year 2018 the National Ferries Company carried 243,069 guests and 61,244 vehicles.

According to Ministry of transport and communications (2014) they are Implementing strategies concerning the requirements to improve airports in Oman to meet the necessary requirements of passengers and tourists even domestic airports like Sohar, Khasab, Salalah, Ras al Hadd and Duqm. As domestic airports added value to aviation and tourism sectors as well as support to meet the needs of transportation for travelers. The CAPA - Centre for Aviation (2018) stated that the opening of Muscat International Airport’s extension which successfully turned into a first-hand airport, pitches competition along with the neighbouring and associate airports as a facilitator to grow tourism because Oman has a more diverse tourist offering compared to Qatar and UAE. Standing out as a hub for air networks will be a huge challenge to Oman since the national airline and the airport authorities are two different entities. As pointed out by the ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu (2017 cited in Icao.int, 2019) the wide Air transport networks are a key element to a development of successful tourism. Furthermore, the findings by Graham et al. (2016) also states that air transport is a fundamental element in tourism, it is the linkage of access between the tourist promoting areas and tourist destinations. Air transportation is an increasingly significant mode of transport for travel market hence it is considered as a dominant mode for long and global tourism travel.

3. Methodology
3.1. Sample of the study and data collection
In order to meet the objectives of study, the study population for the Survey was restrained to tourists who has visited Oman. The online survey was distributed through few travel agents and Tour guides. The researcher used the online survey platform Google Forms to distribute and collect
the respective responses. The sample size was a total of one hundred respondents and the questionnaire was distributed to diverse nationalities. For the purpose of gathering diverse, relevant and dependable data from the population, the researcher chose the Purposive sampling method to center the right participants for the study.

3.2. Questionnaire Design
The findings of this research is based on a statistical analysis of a 100 Surveys. The survey was developed by referring to the objectives of the research study, previous and tourist transportation related studies conducted on international tourist destinations. Furthermore, the survey was subdivided into four sections and questions asked are of descriptive in nature. Section one casing demographic factors and section two on travel Information. Section three on factors that influence tourist’s choice to select various transportation modes in Oman

3.3. Respondents profile
46% of the respondents were from the age group ‘18 – 29’ and 23% were from the age group ‘40-49’. This survey research was mostly participated by female respondents which is by 64%, meanwhile 76% of the respondents have previously visited Oman.

4. Findings and Discussion
4.1 The factors that influence tourist’s choice to select various transportation modes in Oman.
The analysis of the Survey revealed that highest and most frequently used transportation mode is ‘Private cars’ by 33.5 % followed by ‘Rental cars’ by 26.2% followed by the Taxi service by 15.9% and 12.2% of the participants used public transportation leaving the rest of the participants choosing Tour coaches and the Ferry service. However, referring to the theoretical frame work represent that, Public transport modes are an area where Muscat has invested in order to improve their transportation network, the Mwasalat smart buses were introduced in Muscat, with the project of aiming to improve an efficient and smart transport system in the capital. The technologically advanced buses with built-in gadgets for real-time tracking, tourist-info services, Wi-Fi and e-ticketing application (Al-Maqbalia and Refeque,2017). Meanwhile Kantawateera et al. (2014), shares that the visitors in cities with weak public transportation often hire private vehicles. This shows that the choice for a tourist on their transportation mode does not depend highly on how improved the mobility or the amount of investment that has made. As discussed and identified earlier in the literature review the several dimensions of tourist transportation services. Apart from the dimensions identified, the researcher included eight more dimensions in the study as follows; Reliability of service, Distance, Number of passengers (family, single, couple), Local experience, Recommended by someone, Foreign language and location, Sustainability and Accessibility to the transportation mode.

Table 1: Transportation Service Dimensions

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<th>Author</th>
<th>Transportation service dimension</th>
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<td>Suda et al. (2014) &amp; Bajada and Titheridge (2017)</td>
<td>Regularity of Service</td>
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‘Quality of service’ is one of the significant factors most researchers’ discuss on the previous studies. With regard to the studies of Madhuwanthi et al. (2015) and Dileep (2019), this study identified that ‘Safety’ is the most important and relevant dimension among all other dimensions. The findings of the survey emphasised that ‘Safety’ was countered as a totally relevant factor by 55% of the respondents, meanwhile 48% of the respondents mentioned the ‘Accessibility to the transportation mode’ as a very relevant factor. According to Alkheder (2015) it is important to consider the factor of “accessibility” which is embodied with sound road network with access to the touristic sites in a destination. Meanwhile this research also discussed that, a traveler’s choice of transport mode is influenced by location or place, time taken to reach and the location of arrival or terminal stop (Dileep, 2019). The study further highlighted that accessibility to should be backed with suitably planned journey schedule and travel terminals that certify efficient and comfortable accessible journeys to the particular sites and by a reputable transporting system of busses, taxis and many others for instance. In order to further determine this dimension or influencing factors. The researcher has included; Reliability, Sustainability and Foreign language and location. Le-Klähn and Hall (2014) reported that these dimensions certainly reflect the transportation performance. In the transportation case of Oman, the literature discussed that, the drivers speak a little of English and very entertaining nevertheless when they meet a foreigner they try to make extra money from them. Additionally, it is also said that its mostly frustrating and difficult to agree to a reasonable taxi fare particularly in and around the capital’s most exclusive hotels. The author also reveals that being a foreigner given such conditions it is distinctive that they end up spending thrice or twice than the usual, this also depends on the travelers bargaining power and the length of their trip (Rough Guide, 2018).

Concerning the above problem statement, the research findings revealed that 26% of the tourists chose 'Foreign language and location' as somewhat relevant factor and 6% of the tourists’ chose ‘Local experience’ is not at all a relevant factor when it comes to choosing a different mode transport in Oman. Hence, the results may seem that language barriers or the taxi culture in Oman is not reflected through the findings and much of a relevant factor compared to safety, Accessibility to the transportation and the rest of the dimensions. However, this is still an area that seeks for an improvement. Summing up, this study is the first study to highlight the dimension on the accessibility to the transportation mode, researchers’ insights on ‘Accessibility to the transportation mode’. Le-Klähn and Hall (2014) shares that stations that has stress-free accessibility have more chances on improving tourist footprints. The discussion on this objective reveal that the dimensions of transportation service and the factors that influence the choice of transportation mode are the unchanged.
4.2 To measure tourist satisfaction with various transportation modes in Oman.

The identified types of transportation modes Oman have to offer is as follows; Public bus transportation (Mwasalat), Private Taxi, Mwasalat Taxi, Orange Taxi, Ferry, Tour bus (coaches), Rental cars and Plane. The results show that 45% of the respondents were extremely satisfied with the transportation mode by ‘Plane’. Closely 44% of the respondents were very satisfied with the ‘Private Taxi’. 51% of the respondents had a neutral level of satisfaction with the ‘Orange Taxi’ meanwhile, 12% of the respondents were somewhat satisfied with travelling by ‘Public transportation’ and lastly 14% of the respondents were not at all satisfied by the ferry service provided. Furthermore, most research studies highlight the fact that passengers who travel by plane are happier compared to other modes of transportation. According to Aviation Business (2020), The Collinson’s research highlights that airport satisfaction is highly significant. Nine over ten passengers which is 88% revealed that the airport experience is most amusing part of the trip and the passengers spend over $200 trip. The findings of the research also correlate to the transportation mode compared to other transportation modes available, as majority of the respondents were extremely satisfied with travelling by Plane and the ferry service provided in the sultanate was the most, least satisfied transportation service revealed in this study. This study further confirms the statement of European Environment Agency (2020), That 61% of tourism transport is done by car. Through the survey findings the researcher found out that 33.5% (55) of the respondents frequently used ‘Private cars’ and 26.2% (43) of the respondents used rental cars frequently to travel around Oman. Despite, according to this study the respondents were very satisfied with the private cars which is 44% and Rental cars which is by 35% of the

**Figure 1**: Dimension that influence the choice of transportation mode

This pyramid displays the dimensions from its most relevant to least relevant dimension that influence the choice of tourism transportation identified by the author.
respondents. Additionally, the researcher identified that 37% of the respondents are extremely satisfied with the ‘Cleanliness of the vehicle’, 44% of the respondents are very satisfied with the ‘Convenience of the time schedule’, 48% of the respondents find the ‘Price’ neutral, 14% responded that they are somewhat satisfied with the ‘Service Frequency’ and lastly 9% of the respondents are not at all satisfied with the ‘Comfort while waiting at the terminal or stations’. Comparing both results from satisfaction and most used transportation mode, the researcher identified that the overall transport satisfaction with the frequently used modes available in Oman are nearly affirmative. However, attributes like ‘Service Frequency’ and ‘Comfort while waiting at the terminal or stations’ stand at very low scale of satisfaction. The literature review highlighted that transport needs to be comfortable and stress free and tourists appreciate much improved service, frequency and well distributed information in the transport system (Suda et al., 2014). Dileep (2019) also highlights the fact that the comfort found in a transport service is an additional factor that influence the choice of the transport mode. The author further highlights that the although the identical transport modes or services may have a different level of comfort experience, provided by various operators. This factor also may vary for the price the traveler pays, since the requirement for comfort and the length of the journey frequently correlate. Furthermore, Bajada and Titheridge (2017) reveals that poor regularity reflects the unreliability of the transport service, although high regularity and frequencies of transport permit travelers with travel flexibility. The results study of Suda et al. (2014) discussed in the literate shows that price has a significant influence on a tourist’s choice of the transport mode.

5. Conclusion
Taking Oman as a case study, this research studied which attributes of the transport service are most considered by tourists. Through defining the two main objectives, this research presents the factors that influence a choice of a transportation mode and explored the factors that influence the satisfaction of the tourist with each transportation mode. The interpreted results indicate that the survey respondents are willing to use more of private transportation services compared to public or semi-public transportation modes available. Meanwhile, regardless of many factors given on measuring the relevance for each, it is evident that a high number of respondents are concerned on the safety when choosing different types of transportation modes. Lastly the research also identified that there is a gap between the necessary needing of transportation infrastructure with the built infrastructure and the overall funding for introducing new transportation projects. The quantitative survey/research approache has supported the researcher to draw conclusions and concepts with transport satisfaction. Henceforward further research be focused on investments on transportation mobility studying the relevance with definite needs of tourists. Findings from this study significantly contribute to stakeholders to identify their shortcomings and transform the current transportation infrastructure a potential dimension to attract and encourage more tourists.

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