



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Section: *Digital Humanities*

The role of Jordanian universities in developing tourism culture among students from the perspective of faculty members – the university of Jordan as a case study

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ABSTRACT

Given the important role that Jordanian universities play in community engagement and local development, they are instrumental in enhancing students' awareness of tourism. Universities also contribute significantly to cultivating students' understanding of tourism's importance within Jordan. While Jordanian universities broadly participate in community-oriented initiatives, the University of Jordan, in particular, holds a key responsibility in fostering tourism culture among its students. Accordingly, this study aimed to explore the role of Jordanian universities in developing tourism culture among students, from the perspective of faculty members, using the University of Jordan as a case study. To accomplish this, a descriptive survey methodology was employed, and the research instrument was developed to include 21 items. The findings indicated that faculty members rated the role of Jordanian universities in promoting tourism culture among students as high. Furthermore, the results revealed no statistically significant differences in these assessments based on faculty members' gender or college type. Based on these results, the researcher proposed several recommendations to enhance the role of universities in promoting tourism awareness and culture among students.

KEYWORDS: role, Jordanian universities, tourism culture, faculty members

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1. Introduction

In recent decades, global interest across various fields has grown considerably, as the contemporary world has become characterized by rapid transformations in social, economic, technological, and educational domains. These accelerated developments have intensified competition among nations seeking progress and advancement in multiple sectors. Such competition is particularly pronounced in the economic sphere, given its ability to influence and support other areas when strategically and thoughtfully utilized. Within this context, tourism has emerged as a modern and dynamic economic activity that countries increasingly invest in and develop to meet the aspirations of their societies, while simultaneously safeguarding their cultural identity and distinctive characteristics (Hyasat, 2025).

Designing effective curricula and appropriate teaching methods for professional tourism studies at the higher education level remains a challenging task. It requires tourism students and academic staff to continuously stay informed about the latest developments in the tourism market and related social changes. Moreover, faculty members must acknowledge the growing importance of educational integration and institutional collaboration with other disciplines that contribute to tourism development. This need becomes even more evident given the fast-paced evolution of tourism as an economic sector, which continuously produces new forms and patterns that tourism scholars often address only after a considerable period of time (Ajana, 2019).

Accordingly, reforms in tourism higher education should take into account current learning outcomes, emerging areas of study, student learning experiences, and the integration of education with economic needs. In addition to theoretical foundations, tourism graduates are increasingly expected to possess specific practical and professional skills. Therefore, improving tourism higher education should aim at enhancing the flexibility and efficiency of the learning process. Since cultural heritage represents a fundamental component of cultural identity and has become an increasingly influential driver of tourism development, it is essential to regularly evaluate the level of knowledge provided and the effectiveness of the materials and resources incorporated into tourism curricula (Ray & Wakelin, 2019).

Developing awareness of cultural heritage requires an understanding that begins with local heritage and extends to the national level, enabling individuals to recognize its significance and value. In this regard, tourism study programs play a crucial role in equipping students with knowledge and expanding their interest in cultural and artistic heritage. At the national level, the tourism sector constitutes a key pillar of the Jordanian economy and a major source of national income. Jordan is distinguished by a wide range of tourist attractions, including natural, historical, cultural, and religious sites, in addition to its strategic geographic location, rich archaeological heritage, and diverse natural landscapes (Al-Tawalbeh & Al-Qaoud, 2014).

All these factors have contributed to positioning Jordan as an important destination for tourists from different parts of the world, particularly in the field of medical tourism. This has played a noticeable role in shaping how Jordanian society is perceived internationally through the experiences of visitors who travel to the Kingdom. As a result, tourism has gained greater significance due to its essential contribution to social, cultural, and economic development (Al-Ajlouni, 2017).

As a social phenomenon closely connected to human needs, motivations, and aspirations, tourism is widely regarded as one of the most productive sectors capable of supporting comprehensive development. This perspective has increased interest in tourism, leading to the establishment of its core foundations, the expansion of its diverse branches, and the creation of specialized educational institutions concerned with tourism studies (Da'bas, 2020).

Early official and public efforts to attract tourists were largely centered on preserving and maintaining the country's rich archaeological sites and landmarks. Alongside these preservation initiatives, attention was also given to providing essential tourism services, including hotel construction, transportation facilities, and the development of supportive infrastructure aimed at encouraging tourism from across the globe (Zahran, 2014). Educational institutions play a key role in this process, as they are responsible for promoting tourism awareness among students at various educational stages. Since education is fundamentally concerned with shaping human behavior (Sarab, 2020), these institutions seek to develop and refine students' conduct by providing them with knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. This enables students to become responsible citizens who are capable of adaptation, effective interaction, and constructive communication within their communities (Abdellatif, 2023). Education also contributes to strengthening tourism culture among students by addressing the key components

and challenges of tourism and by equipping learners with information that supports positive values and attitudes toward the tourism sector. In this way, education becomes an important mechanism for guiding tourism-related awareness within society (Ajana, 2019).

At the global level, education helps shape students' understanding of the complex relationship between individuals and the tourism industry within their country, including its cultural, historical, civilizational, economic, and social dimensions (Ames, 2016). Tourism education also supports the clarification of contemporary concepts, such as tourism globalization, which enables students to better understand the rapid changes occurring in tourism worldwide (Wang & Ryan, 2018).

Globalization has increasingly transformed the world into an interconnected space and has encouraged individuals to travel across borders to explore and learn about other cultures. It has also facilitated faster and easier international mobility, prompting many countries to pay unprecedented attention to their natural resources and tourist attractions (Eijgelaar, 2023). In this regard, tourism culture should be viewed as a societal issue and a central factor for the success of the tourism industry.

Although promoting tourism culture is a shared responsibility, it becomes particularly important within universities due to their direct engagement with students and their role in providing them with knowledge and skills that influence their future lives. The university functions as a social and cultural environment with its own traditions, objectives, philosophy, and regulations, which are designed to align with the broader values of society (Ray & Wakelin, 2019).

The university's ability to fulfill its mission in supporting societal development depends largely on the effectiveness of its core functions, which are commonly reflected in three major areas: generating knowledge through scientific research, transmitting knowledge through teaching, and applying these two functions in ways that serve society and the environment. Universities are therefore established as social institutions intended to contribute directly to societal progress (Rogerson, 2015).

Universities are often described as centers of knowledge and culture, serving as intellectual foundations for the advancement of civilization. Through the research activities of faculty members and students, universities contribute to discovering scientific principles and transforming these findings into technological innovations, while also disseminating knowledge to raise the cultural and intellectual level of society (Van Niekerk & Saayman, 2014).

Given the university's influence and the central role of students in serving society, higher education institutions must remain aware of contemporary social issues and actively contribute to addressing them. In this context, the researcher observed a decline in tourism awareness and cultural understanding among university students regarding many tourist destinations in Jordan. This issue is particularly significant because university youth represent a vital segment of society characterized by energy, dynamism, and the capacity for meaningful contribution.

Young people, with their vitality and enthusiasm, have strong potential to participate effectively in community development. Therefore, the present study primarily aims to examine the university's role in enhancing tourism culture among its students within the Jordanian university context. In addition, the study seeks to identify whether statistically significant differences exist in faculty members' perceptions of the university's role in promoting tourism culture, based on the variables of gender and type of college.

One of the major challenges facing tourism offerings in today's world is the increasing demand for innovative attractions and diversified tourism products at destinations. In response, the tourism industry continues to adjust to contemporary market expectations by introducing new ideas and upgrading existing destinations and activities. In this context, supporting the development of cultural tourism routes that can be practically applied is essential, as such routes enhance the presentation and visitor experience of cultural heritage resources. However, designing appealing cultural routes requires a solid understanding of the distinctive features and richness of the cultural heritage found within tourist destinations. Accordingly, cultural heritage topics should be systematically integrated into the plans and educational programs of higher education institutions specializing in tourism studies (Hyasat, 2025).

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

In light of the study's objectives and the type of data required, the researcher adopted the descriptive research method. This method is concerned with examining a phenomenon in its real-life context and providing an accurate account of its characteristics. The choice of this approach is justified by the fact that the study belongs to the field of social and human sciences, where descriptive research is widely regarded as an appropriate method for investigating social and human-related issues. Moreover, the descriptive approach goes beyond merely portraying phenomena and practices as they occur; it also supports deeper understanding of reality and enables the researcher to draw conclusions that may contribute to improvement and positive change (Obaidat, Abdul Haq & Adas, 2013).

2.2 Participants

The online questionnaire link was circulated to all faculty members at the University of Jordan. The researcher kept the survey available for one week in order to provide participants with sufficient time to complete their responses and, if needed, revise them. After the survey period ended, a total of (211) faculty members had submitted valid responses. Table (1) presents the distribution of the study sample according to the two study variables: gender and type of college.

Table 1. Distribution of the study sample in light of the two study variables

Variable	level	number	Percentage
Sex	Male	118	56%
	Female	93	44%
the total		211	100%
type of college	Humanities	129	61%
	Scientific	82	39%
the total		211	100%

2.3 Instruments

A questionnaire was employed as the primary instrument for data collection. It was structured into two main sections: the first section gathered participants' demographic information, while the second assessed the role of Jordanian universities in promoting tourism culture among students from the perspective of faculty members, with the University of Jordan selected as the study case.

The questionnaire was designed by drawing on several relevant previous studies, including Ajlouni (2017), Minguez and Yubero (2021), and Hyasat (2025). In addition, the researcher developed a number of items in their preliminary form, as explained below in the description of the instrument development process.

2.4 Questionnaire Construction

The preliminary version of the questionnaire included 28 items. To support clear interpretation of the findings, the researcher adopted a specific procedure for determining the response levels of the questionnaire items. Numerical weights were assigned to the response options as follows: very high (5), high (4), medium (3), low (2), and very low (1). Participants' responses were then classified into three levels (high, moderate, and low) by dividing the scale range from 1 to 5 into three equal intervals. Accordingly, the interval length was calculated as (1.33), resulting in the following categories: low level (1.00–2.33), moderate level (2.34–3.67), and high level (3.68–5.00).

To establish face validity, the questionnaire in its initial form was submitted to five experts in curriculum and teaching methods, as well as educational measurement and evaluation. The reviewers were asked to assess the relevance of the items, their appropriateness for the target population, and the clarity of wording. Based on the feedback and recommendations received, the instrument was revised accordingly. The final version of the questionnaire consisted of 21 items.

2.5 Procedure

To accomplish the objectives of the study, the researcher carried out several sequential procedures. First, the relevant theoretical literature and previous studies related to the research topic were reviewed. Next, the study sample was selected from the target population. The final version of the research instrument (the questionnaire) was then prepared, and its validity was examined by submitting it to a panel of experts whose comments and suggestions were considered in the revision process. After that, an official facilitation letter was obtained from the relevant departments at the University of Jordan to support the implementation of the study. The questionnaire was subsequently distributed to the participants through an electronic link. Finally, the collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS software, after which the results were interpreted, discussed, and used to develop appropriate recommendations.

2.6 Data Analysis

The data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 27.0. Means and standard deviations were used for the question concerning the role of Jordanian universities in developing tourism culture among students, from the perspective of faculty members – using the University of Jordan as a case study. A t-test was also used to determine the significance of differences in faculty members' assessments of the university's role in developing tourism culture among students, attributable to the variables of gender and college type.

3. Results

The current study aimed to identify the role of Jordanian universities in developing tourism culture among students from the perspective of faculty members – using the University of Jordan as a model. To this end, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the study instrument items were calculated. Table (2) shows these results.

Table 2. Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and ratings of the role of Jordanian universities in developing tourism culture among students from the perspective of faculty members

Rank	Number	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rating Level
1	7	Faculty members encourage their students to participate in various trips to different tourist destinations.	4.98	0.15	High
2	8	Some university courses highlight the importance of tourism to society.	4.93	0.31	High
3	10	Faculty members encourage their students to preserve tourist sites.	4.93	0.32	High
4	20	The university organizes specialized lectures and seminars to develop tourism awareness among its students.	4.88	0.33	High
5	2	Faculty members urge their students to propose solutions to the problems hindering tourism development.	4.86	0.52	High
6	18	The university website includes topics on tourism awareness	4.72	0.48	High
7	3	Faculty members explain the different types of tourism to their students	4.43	1.18	High
8	1	Faculty members strive to instill positive tourism concepts in their students, such as respecting tourists and showing them hospitality.	4.31	0.75	High
9	11	Some university courses cultivate pride in our society's tourism assets.	4.25	0.43	High

Rank	Number	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rating Level
10	19	The university encourages its students to participate with official and private entities in organizing tourism events and festivals.	4.21	0.47	High
11	5	Faculty members strive to raise students' awareness of the positive aspects of working in the tourism sector.	4.00	0.14	High
12	14	Students participate in trips organized by the university to tourist sites.	4.00	0.23	High
13	16	The university showcases numerous documentaries and films on tourism to cultivate tourism awareness among its students.	4.00	0.18	High
14	9	Some university courses explain the concept of tourism and the tourist.	3.99	0.12	High
15	12	The university is keen to contact all tourism companies to obtain discounted and special programs for its students.	3.98	0.17	High
16	13	The university deepens tourism culture by activating international tourism weeks and days.	3.98	0.17	High
17	21	Some university courses introduce all ministries and agencies related to tourism.	3.98	0.46	High
18	4	Faculty members engage in discussions with their students to clarify the tourism potential of Jordan.	3.80	0.66	High
19	6	Faculty members aim to train students in the skills necessary for optimal interaction with tourists.	3.78	0.64	High
20	15	The university prepares publications and informational brochures about tourist attractions in Jordan.	3.74	0.79	High
21	17	The university library contains references, books, and maps about Jordan's tourist attractions.	3.01	0.14	Medium
Total Score	Total Score	Total Score	4.23	0.16	High

The results from the previous table indicate that the arithmetic means for the items related to developing tourism culture ranged between (3.01 – 4.98). The study participants' assessments of the role of Jordanian universities in developing tourism culture among students, from the faculty members' perspective, were high in all items except for three, where the assessments were moderate Item (7), which reads “ Faculty members encourage their students to participate in various trips to different tourist destinations.” ranked first with an arithmetic mean of (4.98). the last item was.” Item (17), which reads, “The university library contains references, books, and maps about Jordan's tourist attractions,” ranked last with an arithmetic mean of (3.01). The current study also used a t-test to determine the significance of differences in faculty members' evaluations of the role of Jordanian universities in developing a culture of tourism among students, from the faculty members' perspective, attributable to the variables of gender and college type. A review of these findings follows:

3.1 Variable sex

Table 3. Results of the t-test for the significance of differences between the mean responses of the study sample regarding the role of Jordanian universities in developing tourism culture among students from the perspective of faculty members, attributed to the gender variable

Variable	Gender	Number	Mean	Deviation	Value (t)	Significance Level*
The role of universities in developing tourism culture	Male	118	4.24	0.15	1.381	0.169
The role of universities in developing tourism culture	Female	93	4.21	0.17	1.381	0.169

* (Statistically significant at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$)

The results in the previous table indicate that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of ($\alpha=0.05$) between the average responses of the study sample regarding the role of Jordanian universities in developing a culture of tourism among students from the point of view of faculty members, which are attributed to the gender variable, as the significance level value reached (0.169), and this value is greater than (0.05).

3.2 Variable type of college

Table 4. Results of the t-test for the significance of differences between the mean responses of the study sample regarding the role of Jordanian universities in developing tourism culture among students from the perspective of faculty members, attributed to the variable of college type

Variable	type of college	Number	Mean	Deviation	Value (t)	Significance Level*
The role of universities in developing tourism culture	Humanities	129	4.24	0.14	1.703	0.090
The role of universities in developing tourism culture	Scientific	82	4.20	0.18	1.703	0.090

* (Statistically significant at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$)

The results in the previous table indicate that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of ($\alpha=0.05$) between the average responses of the study sample regarding the role of Jordanian universities in developing a culture of tourism among students from the point of view of faculty members, which is attributed to the variable of college type, as the significance level value reached (0.09), and this value is greater than (0.05).

4. Discussion

The results from the previous table indicate that the arithmetic means for the items related to developing tourism culture ranged between (3.01 – 4.98). The study participants' assessments of the role of Jordanian universities in developing tourism culture among students, from the faculty members' perspective, were high in all items except for three, where the assessments were moderate. Item (7), which reads “ Faculty members encourage their students to participate in various trips to different tourist destinations,” ranked first with an arithmetic mean of (4.98). the last item was.” Item (17), which reads, “The university library contains references, books, and maps about Jordan’s tourist attractions,” ranked last with an arithmetic mean of (3.01).

From the researcher’s perspective, tourism culture also plays an important role in strengthening cultural awareness and promoting empathy and respect for others, particularly in relation to natural features and tourism resources. In addition, it contributes to safeguarding the cultural heritage of society and helps prevent its deterioration or loss due to neglect. This outcome may also be explained by faculty members’ positive perceptions that increasing tourism awareness among students can further improve societal attitudes toward tourism as a human activity that generates clear economic and cultural value.

The high evaluations may also reflect faculty members’ awareness of their responsibility in developing tourism awareness among students. This includes their efforts to instill constructive tourism-related concepts, such as respecting visitors and demonstrating hospitality, as well as their engagement in proposing solutions to

obstacles that limit tourism development. Moreover, university cultural courses contribute to emphasizing the importance of tourism for society and encouraging positive behaviors toward tourists.

Educational research highlights the critical role of universities in fostering tourism culture and in shaping students into responsible citizens. Tourism not only contributes to national development but also promotes a country's attractions by showcasing historical, cultural, religious, and recreational sites. Additionally, tourism emphasizes the importance of treating visitors with integrity, courtesy, and hospitality, thereby creating a positive image of the destination (Eijgelaar, 2023).

Although faculty members identified some shortcomings in the university's efforts to develop tourism culture—particularly in terms of promotional materials and the accessibility of knowledge resources—several initiatives were noted. The university website features topics related to tourism awareness, and various documentaries and films are screened to cultivate tourism knowledge among students. The university library also provides references, books, and maps covering Jordan's tourist attractions; however, faculty members rated these resources as only moderately effective.

The findings further revealed no significant differences in faculty members' perceptions of the role of Jordanian universities in promoting tourism culture among students, based on gender or college type, using the University of Jordan as a case study. This outcome appears reasonable, as faculty members, irrespective of gender, are generally well aware of the university's pivotal role in promoting tourism culture through specialized lectures, seminars, and partnerships with tourism companies offering discounted programs for students. Moreover, faculty members share similar social environments and hold comparable positive views regarding the economic and social importance of tourism in Jordan, reinforcing their perception of the university's role in fostering tourism culture.

In line with this, Abdul Qader (2020) emphasized that students cannot meaningfully contribute to the development of the tourism sector unless they develop positive behaviors and attitudes toward tourism and tourists. Such behaviors enable students to address challenges effectively and contribute to improving the industry. Regarding the variable of college type, the absence of significant differences in faculty members' assessments may be explained by their recognition—across both humanities and science colleges—of the vital role universities play in developing students' tourism awareness and instilling the values of tourism culture. Students, as a central part of the university community, significantly influence Jordan's tourism image through their daily conduct. Universities, therefore, bear a major responsibility in educating students about tourism by integrating it into academic curricula, offering dedicated lectures, seminars, and conferences, and preparing experts capable of advancing and sustaining the growth of the tourism sector.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of Jordanian universities in fostering tourism awareness among students, from the perspective of faculty members, with the University of Jordan serving as a case study. The research was carried out with faculty members at the University of Jordan after obtaining the necessary official approvals. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via a web link, and the responses were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. The findings revealed that faculty members hold a high level of appreciation for the role of Jordanian universities in promoting tourism awareness among students. Additionally, the results showed no statistically significant differences in faculty members' perceptions of this role based on either gender or college affiliation.

In light of these findings, the researcher proposed several recommendations: universities should place greater emphasis on developing students' tourism awareness; tourism-related content should be made available on university websites; documentaries and films about tourism should be screened to enhance student understanding; and university libraries should be equipped with relevant references, books, and maps covering Jordan's tourist attractions.

The author also notes that this study received no funding from any official or unofficial sources and was conducted entirely at the researcher's own expense.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Authorship and Level of Contribution

The author contributed to the research in the literature, the collection of data, its analysis, and the interpretation of the collected data.

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