

## Oman's Position in U.S. Tourists' Mind: The Use of Importance-Performance Analysis on Destination Attributes

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**Abstract :** Tourism is making its presence felt across the Sultanate of Oman. The story is one of the most recognized phenomena as a sustainable solid growth and is considered a remarkable outcome for any destination. The competitive situation and challenges within the tourism industry worldwide entail a better understanding of the destination position and its image to achieve Oman's aspiration to retain its international reputation as one of the most desirable destinations in the Middle East. To access general perceptions of Oman's attributes, their importance and their influences among U.S. tourists, an online survey was conducted with 522 American travelers who have traveled internationally, including non-visitors, virtual-visitors and visitors to Oman. This research involved a total of 36 attributes in the survey. Participants were asked to rate their agreement on how each attribute represented Oman and how important each attribute was for selecting destinations on 5- point Likert Scale. They also indicated if each attribute has a positive, neutral or negative influence on their destination selection. Descriptive statistics and importance performance analysis (IPA) were conducted. IPA illustrated U.S. tourists' perceptions of Oman's destination attributes and their importance in destination selection on a matrix with four quadrants, divided by actual mean value in each grid for importance ( $M=3.51$ ) and performance ( $M=3.57$ ). Oman tourism organizations and destination managers may use these research findings for future marketing and management efforts toward the U.S. travel market.

**Keywords :** analysis of importance, performance, destination attributes, Oman's position, U.S. tourists

**Conference Title :** ICSRD 2020 : International Conference on Scientific Research and Development

**Conference Location :** Chicago, United States

**Conference Dates :** December 12-13, 2020