

**BEING AWAY OR BEING THERE: BRITISH  
HOLIDAYMAKERS' MOTIVATIONS AND  
EXPERIENCES VISITING ALANYA, TURKEY**

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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## **Abstract**

This thesis investigates British holidaymakers' motivations, behaviours and experiences visiting Alanya, Turkey, based on the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data gathered through structured self-administrated questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Employing a convenience sample of 505 holidaymakers visiting a coastal holiday resort in the Mediterranean, the thesis provides a destination-based analysis of the tourist experience process in three analytical phases. Utilising qualitative and quantitative techniques, the study investigates and addresses, in particular, two specific issues: Motivators, constraints and facilitators of holiday choice; and evaluation of holiday/destination behaviour and experiences. The underlying characteristic of Alanya holiday was found to be seeking 'fun in the sun'. 'Being away' was more important than 'being there' as long as sunny weather and the 'right price' were guaranteed. Coastal pleasures dominated the holiday activity, and social and cultural contacts were also significant. Motivations, constraints and facilitators were significant determinants of holiday choice and holiday activity patterns. Supporting consumption experiences were the facilitators of peak experiences. Both peak and supporting consumption experiences were crucial in combination for holidaymakers' satisfaction. Preferences and perceptions indicated both similarities and differences between holidaymakers. Differences that are rather more significant were based on repeat visitation patterns. Socio-demographic characteristics were more significant for pre-and on-site experience phases. Trip characteristics were more significant for on-site- and post-experience phases. This study adds substantially to our understanding of tourist motivations, behaviours and experiences and provides additional evidence in terms of their complexity and heterogeneity. Demonstrating the relevance of peak touristic experiences and supporting consumption experiences, the study highlighted the importance of the constraints/facilitators, on the structural, interpersonal and intrapersonal levels. Using mixed methods research design and studying three phases of the tourist experience process simultaneously, the study provides both a theoretical and a methodological base for future research. The study has important implications for the management and marketing of destination experiences. This study calls for cross-national research involving its replication with random sampling in the same resort area, and other tourist resorts in the Mediterranean.

## Acknowledgements

The subject of this thesis and the experience that I had gone through as a Ph.D. researcher has similarities. It was like a ‘journey’ as tourists go through. It started with anticipation; I was positive and enthusiastic about the excitement of professional development, enlightenment and self-actualization, but I also was worried of being away from home and the family ... More pros than cons ... so I decided to come to the UK. Like many holidaymakers, I was physically inactive. However, it still was one the most challenging times that I had ever experienced. At times, it was frustrating and full of angst, demanding constant effort for a long time. The journey was one of personal development; I hope, I am a much more humble person, listening and thinking more before, I act or react. This personal note heralds that this journey is coming to an end, a significant achievement in my life. I will always recall the memorable experiences of this journey.

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## **Author's declaration**

I, Muhammet Kesgin, declare that the work presented in this thesis is original. It has been produced by me, except as acknowledged in the text, as the result of my own research. The material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

As cited below, it should be noted that the jointly authored article has been published based on some of the findings in chapter five and their relevant literature in chapter two:

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## Abbreviations

3S	Sun, Sea, and Sand
ALTSO	Alanya Chamber of Commerce and Industry (in Turkish)
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BC	Before Christ
CIT	Critical Incidents Technique
FTT	First-timers to Turkey
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
LMS	Leisure Motivation Scale
MCT	Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Turkey)
MMR	Mixed Methods Research
NVIVO	Qualitative data analysis software
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PTMS	Pleasure Travel Market Surveys
QUAL	Qualitative Research
QUAN	Quantitative Research
RTA	Repeaters to Alanya
RTT	Repeaters to Turkey
SOC	Standard Occupational Classification

SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TCL	Travel Career Ladder
TCP	Travel Career Pattern
TR	Turkey (Turkish Republic)
TRPS	Travel Role Preference Scale
TurkStat	Turkish Statistics
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USA	United States of America

## **1. CHAPTER ONE: Overview of the thesis**

### **1.1. Introduction**

This introductory chapter attempts to provide a synopsis of why and how this research is undertaken. The chapter opens with background information on a number of issues surrounding tourism, which are pertinent to the topic of this thesis. The chapter then provides the rationale of the thesis, the aims and objectives of the research, and justification of research methodology. Finally, the chapter ends with an outline of all other chapters in the thesis.

### **1.2. Setting the scene: why British holidaymakers in Turkey?**

The purpose of this research was to investigate British holidaymakers' motivations, behaviours, and holiday experiences in Alanya, Turkey. An understanding of 'being a tourist' in general or 'being a holidaymaker' in particular has important implications for theory and practice (Sharpley and Stone 2012b; Bowen and Clarke 2009; Pearce 2005). Many distinguished writers highlight the importance of tourism as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon (Urry and Larsen 2011; Wearing, Stevenson and Young 2010; Cohen 2008). Cohen states "tourism became recognised as a major domain of contemporary life, a huge international industry, reaching out into ever more remote corners of the world, and preparing to reach into space" (2008:330). By its very nature, the defining characteristic of tourism is the movement of people; especially international movements. In 2010, the year of this study, international tourists' arrivals accounted for 940 million (UNWTO 2011). These figures are significant for United Kingdom (UK) and Turkey, as these countries are among top destinations in the world. UK is a major tourist generating country, whereas Turkey is major tourist receiving country. In the same year, 55 million British tourists travelled internationally and Turkey welcomed 27 million international tourists (ONS 2011; TurkStat 2011). Of greater concern is the visit of more than 2.5 million British holidaymakers to Turkey.

The past fifty years or so have seen increasingly significant contributions to our understanding of tourism from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (Cohen 2008;

Sharpley 2003). As a major human activity, tourism has proven to be a valuable research area with particular reference to studies into tourist behaviours and experiences (Sharpley 2011, Decrop 2006; Smith 1995). Scholars have introduced many explanations as to why holidays are significant periods for people: 'the need to escape' (Dann 1977); 'for well-being and recuperation' (Wickens 2002); 'for having fun' (Bakir and Baxter 2011); 'anticipation' (Parrinello 1993); 'having something to look forward to' (Sharpley 2003); and 'necessary part of life' (Gibson and Yiannakis 2002). Research into tourist behaviour has become field of primary importance to the consumer behaviour analysts (Bowen and Clarke 2009; Swarbrooke and Horner 2007). Rather more significantly, analysts from different social science fields have shown a growing interest in studying contemporary holiday behaviour as a manifestation of 'modern consumer culture' (Wearing *et al.* 2010; Pons, Crang and Trovlu 2009b; Van Egmond 2007; Dann 2002; Wang 2000).

Recognising multidisciplinary nature of tourism, this thesis employs an interdisciplinary perspective. Studying tourists' behaviours and experiences, the thesis attempts to contribute to marketing management of tourism. It has conclusively been shown that this endeavour has significant implications: "The management of tourism depends in part upon the successful management of tourist behaviours and experiences" (Moore, Smallman, Wilson and Simmons 2012:1), and "There is nothing more central to marketing than consumption, and nothing more central to consumption than consumers" (Gabbott 2008:109). Taking individual tourist as the unit of analysis, this study examines tourist's on-site behaviours and experiences by identifying their relationship with their antecedents and consequences (Sharpley and Stone 2012a; Pearce 2005). In so doing, this study attempts to shed some light on the nature of tourist experience, and provide implications for destination management and marketing.

The scholarly debate surrounding the nature of tourism has centred upon its 'complexity' and 'definitional fuzziness' (Reisinger 2001; Dann 1981; Cohen 1974) and it often continues to be misunderstood (Cooper and Hall 2008). It is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by 'tourism' (and also the 'tourist') to make the context of the thesis more explicit before moving to the research problem.



### **1.3. Background to the research**

Many scholars argue that the term 'tourism' originated from the Latin/Greek word 'tornus', denoting 'a return journey' (Theobald 2005; Leiper 1979; Boorstin 1992). Tourists' stays in travelled destinations are said to form "tourists' relationships" and the significance of studying tourism (Urry and Larsen 2011:4). Although increasingly regarded as pleasure and leisure activity (Bowen and Clarke 2009; Uysal, Li, and Sirakaya-Turk 2008), there is little agreement on a global tourism definition due to its relevance to wide variety of areas and innumerable manifestations (Netto 2009). Many scholars, therefore, emphasise that 'defining tourism is almost conceptually impossible' (Pike 2008; Leiper 2008; Smith 1998). As such, Mill and Morrison argue: "All tourism involves travel, yet not all travel is tourism. All vacation travel involves recreation, yet not all tourism is recreation. All tourism occurs during leisure time, but not all leisure time is spent on tourism activities" (2002:1).

Recognising this complexity, the literature stresses different purposes for travelling (Holloway 2006). For example, Chadwick (1994) suggests three main categories for different travel purposes: (1) pleasure: leisure, culture, active sports, visiting friends and relatives; (2) professional: meetings, missions, business, etc. (3) other purposes: study, health, transit. Describing general commonalities such categorisation schemes enhance our understanding of different tourism types (Gee and Fayos-Sola 1997). However, contemporary tourism has become more diversified, segmented (Cohen 2008), and even the same tourism activity type has been shown to involve different behavioural and experiential patterns (Wickens 2002). Although continually treated as homogenous categories, tourists and tourists' experiences are not alike (Pearce 2005; Wang 2000). Tourism researchers are, therefore, suggested to clarify the context, tourism or tourist types when presenting the results of their research (McCabe 2005; Wickens 1999).

Dealing with tourists' relationships holidaying at a Mediterranean coastal resort, this thesis regarded tourism as a pleasure travel incorporating leisure and recreation activities in the travelled destination (Page and Connell 2010:15). To this end, the type of tourists in this thesis was 'holidaymakers' (Ryan 2003; Pearce 1982).

In understanding this complex process, scholars have developed generic tourism system models based on tourists' geographical movements to destinations (Leiper 2008; Mill and Morrison 2002; Gunn 1994). In their respective conceptualisations, these models differ little, and they all highlight the fact that tourism depends on destinations (Saraniemi and Kylänen 2011). Relevant to this destination-based study, the push-pull based model has been shown to be useful to contextualise the position occupied by destinations within the overall tourism system (Prideaux 2009). Push represents origin-based factors (e.g. demand, motivation), and pull represents destination-based factors (e.g. tourist activities, attractions and facilities). Travel and marketing constitute other components of system models. This thesis utilised push-pull model to address some of its key research questions.

Tourism as a business subset requires knowledge of how it is produced and consumed so that it can be managed effectively (Sharpley and Stone 2012a, 2011a; Cooper and Hall 2008). The literature reveals that tourism is a complex production and consumption system involving commodities, goods, services, experiences and ideas (Sirakaya and Woodside 2005). Although providing an exact tourism product definition is inherently found to be difficult, it can be suggested that tourists are consumers of various service industries as they purchase and consume a 'global bundle of services and commodities' (Page and Connell 2006; Burns and Holden 2005). However, there also exist complexities in relation to being a service industry (e.g. intangible, inseparable, and perishable) (Williams and Buswell 2003). Service aspects of tourism consumption experience are part of tourism product and they constitute commercial experiences (McIntyre 2007; Quan and Wang 2004). It should, however, be noted that not all tourist experiences are provided by tourism service suppliers (Reisinger 2001). For example, place and people are also seen as essential components of tourism experiences (Ryan 2003:324). These components are not necessarily commercial, and, therefore, it is important to recognise both the commercial and non-commercial aspects of tourism consumption experience (MacCannell 2002).

The following part focuses on the purpose of the research and outlines its methodological design.

#### **1.4. The research problem**

This thesis attempted to provide a picture of tourism consumption process in a coastal holiday resort setting. The literature demonstrates that more information is required on the holiday behaviour and experiences of tourists visiting coastal holiday resorts (Morgan 2010; Pons *et al.* 2009b; Wickens 2002), especially in Turkey (Aktas, Cevirgen and Toker 2010; Duman and Kozak 2010). Tourist motivation and satisfaction were prime concerns of this thesis. Satisfaction has been regarded as a fundamental issue; Kilbourne argues, "The primary issue of economics now is the satisfaction of consumer preferences *as they exists* [italics in original]" (2010:365). The literature suggests that preferences are related to both tourist motivation and satisfaction (Gilbert 1991). It has been shown that tourists' preference analysis provides an appropriated lens in studying the tourism consumption process (Pearce 2005). Studying tourism consumption system has practical implications for tourism business (Sharpley and Stone 2011a).

Consistent with literature, this thesis utilised the phrase 'tourist behaviour' both in the meaning of physical (i.e. human body, tourist behaviour) and mental (i.e. human mind, tourist experience) activities. This perspective suggests that tourist's experiences (thoughts, feelings, and reactions) cannot be separated from tourist's behaviours (actions) (Pearce 2011; Bowen 2008; Pearce 2005). This perspective also allows linking and differentiating common and unique concepts in 'tourist behaviour' and 'consumer behaviour' (Bowen and Clarke 2009; Pearce 2005; Seaton 1996). The term tourism consumption has also been utilised to involve the meaning of tourism experience and vice versa.

Over the last five decades, there have been attempts to map out all related concepts of tourist behaviour (see Bowen and Clarke 2009; Pearce 2005; Cohen 2004; Ryan 2002). These initial attempts have often produced grand models or large systems with consideration of both micro and macro levels of analysis and phases of consumption or experience process (Smallman and Moore 2010; Bowen and Clarke 2009). The literature reveals several contributions to this area: e.g. 'vacation tourist behaviour model' (Moutinho 1987); vacation decision-making (Van Raaij and Francken 1984); 'travel buying behaviour' (Mathieson and Wall 1982). It must be

noted that there have been serious reservations regarding these grand models (Kassarjian and Goodstein 2009; Bowen and Clarke 2009; Gilbert 2001). In part due to these criticism, there exists partial or alternative models in the literature: e.g. 'an activities-based model of destination choice' (Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang and O'Leary 1996), 'a stimulus-response model of buyer behaviour' (Middleton 1994); and, 'a general model of traveller destination choice' (Woodside and Lysonski 1989). Using grand and partial models, studies often concentrate on decision-making with an emphasis on buying process (information search and selection) and the production of supply. These studies are considered as mainstream or conventional (Kassarjian and Goodstein 2009).

In recent years, the literature has seen critical reviews of these modelling approaches (see Moore *et al.* 2012; Hyde and Decrop 2011; Smallman and Moore 2010; Bowen and Clarke 2009). Criticising grand models, recent studies consider issues related to both decision-making and consumption experience with an emphasis on the consumption and co-creation (Mittal *et al.* 2010; Eka *et al.* 2008; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982). A number of recent illustrations are: 'vacation decision making' (Decrop 2006); 'the concept map for understanding tourist behaviour' (Pearce 2005); 'the tourist experience' (Ryan 2002c); and 'tourism consumption system' (Woodside and Dubelaar 2002). Recent evidence suggests that these approaches provide deeper understanding of tourist behaviour and reflects a clear departure from the mainstream literature (Pearce 2011; Decrop 2010; Bowen and Clarke 2009; Jones, Shaw and McLean 2009).

Based on these considerations, the relevant literature recognises three key analytical phases for tourism consumption experience: pre-purchase (pre-experience) or anticipatory, purchase (on-site experience) or experiential, and post-purchase (post-experience) or reflective (Cutler and Carmichael 2010). Each phase has specific characteristics and covers related but distinct concepts (Pearce 2005). Examining these phases simultaneously helps to provide more robust and comprehensive understanding of tourist experience. This comprehensive understanding has theoretical and practical implications (Ryan 2010).

In the light of the literature, this thesis concerns comprehensive analysis of tourist experience in three analytical phases. Experiential phase covers the tourists' visit to

the destination and it forms the core element of this process (Ryan 2002c). This phase involves three levels of contacts with the destination: social, cultural and environmental (Pearce 2005). The literature stresses key influential factors of experiential phase and their significance for subsequent satisfaction and enjoyment (Ryan 2002c). The literature demonstrates that tourists' on-site experiences have antecedents (i.e. anticipation) and consequences (i.e. profit, destination loyalty). It is clear that a destination's ultimate concern is the consequences of tourists' visits of the destination (Crouch 2011). To achieve positive outcomes, destinations compete with one another to provide memorable tourists' experiences (Ritchie and Crouch 2005). This requires an understanding of the antecedents of experiential phase, as well as ensuring to provide appropriate settings for satisfactory tourists experiences during the experiential phase (Tung and Ritchie 2011; Pearce 2005; Ryan 2002c).

The design of this thesis was guided by these recent conceptualisations (Sharpley and Stone 2011a; Pearce 2011; Morgan, Lugosi and Ritchie 2010; Ryan 2010; Bowen and Clarke 2009; Uysal *et al.* 2008; Decrop 2006; Pearce 2005; Quan and Wang 2004; Woodside and Dubelaar 2002; Ryan 2002c; Reisinger 2001; Wickens 1999). Examining tourist experiences in three analytical phases, this thesis aims to provide a richer understanding of the phenomenon rather than to test a grand model of tourist behaviour. This approach is consistent with those of other studies; it is based on the analysis of tourist experiences and/or behaviours in three analytical phases. However, it is necessary here to note that due to the breadth and complexity of process, it is important to recognise that this endeavour is a troublesome effort.

## **1.5. Research aim and objectives**

In an attempt to shed light on the tourist experience, this study aimed at to understand pre-, on-site- and post-experiences of British holidaymakers' visits to Alanya. Consulting a large body of the literature, four specific objectives of this study were:

1. To examine socio-demographic and trip related characteristics of British holidaymakers in Alanya.

2. To examine British holidaymakers' motivation and behaviour choosing a holiday in Alanya.
3. To examine British holidaymakers' on-site behaviour and experience holidaying in Alanya.
4. To examine British holidaymakers' overall evaluation of holidaying in Alanya.

To fulfil the research objectives, the following research questions were developed:

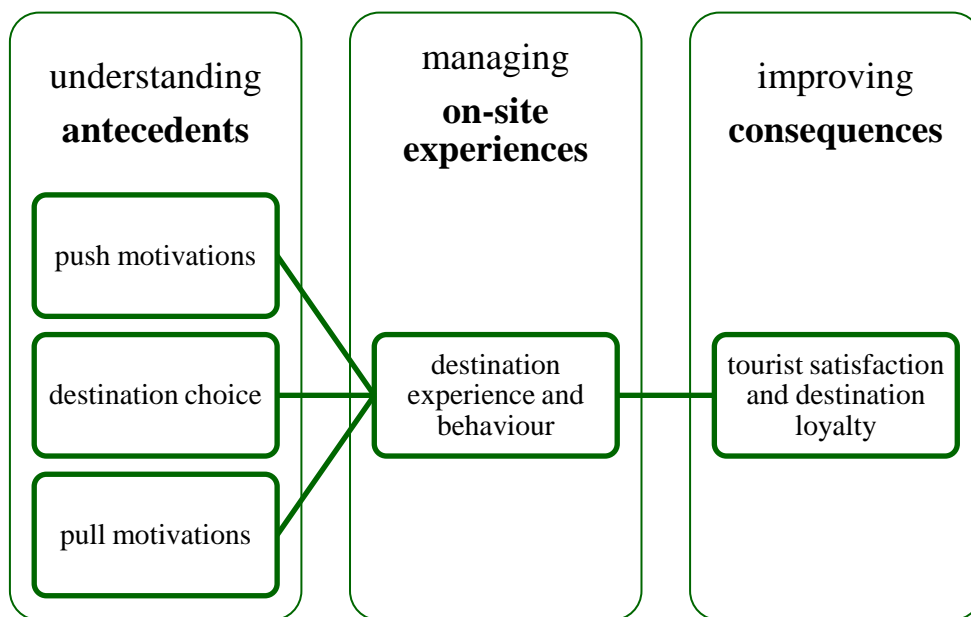
1. What are the socio-demographic and trip characteristics of British holidaymakers in Alanya?
2. What are the push-pull motivations and facilitating/constraining factors that influence British holidaymakers choosing a holiday in Alanya?
3. What are the holiday activities undertaken and which destination areas visited by British holidaymakers in the course of their holiday in Alanya?
4. What are the significant factors that influenced the British holidaymakers' on-site holiday experiences in Alanya?
5. What are the significant factors that influenced British holidaymakers' overall evaluation of their holiday in Alanya?
6. What are the significant factors that influenced British holidaymakers' loyalty to Alanya and Turkey?

## **1.6. Conceptual and methodological framework**

This thesis embraced several constructs in relation to the phases of tourist experience process (see Figure 1-1). Anticipatory phase examined the relevance and influence of tourist motives (push factors), destination attributes (pull factors), constraints and facilitators of holiday choice. Experiential phase covered the analysis of holiday activity participation, destination areas visited, perceptions of hotel/destination attributes, and most/least enjoyed experiences. Reflective phase investigated tourists' evaluative assessments concerning overall satisfaction, destination loyalty and

memorable impression of holiday destination. The study also stressed the relevance and influence of socio-demographic and trip characteristics on tourist motivations, behaviours and experiences.

This thesis contributes to research into tourist motivation, behaviour and experience. A review of the literature reveals that there exists a rich and growing body of empirical research on tourist motivation, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty (Ryan 2010; Bowen and Clarke 2009; Uysal *et al.* 2008). However, more research is required on constraints and facilitators, holiday activities and perceptions of destination attributes (Bowen and Clarke 2009; Meng *et al.* 2006; Quan and Wang 2004). Developing a holistic approach, this study is different from many other studies, as it simultaneously deals with a variety of constructs in three phases of tourism experience process (Cutler and Carmichael 2010). This approach allows the investigation of relationship among the constructs of these phases (e.g. motivation and actual holiday behaviour) (Lee *et al.* 2002).



**Figure 1-1 Conceptual framework of the thesis**

Combining both qualitative and quantitative data, this study utilises mixed methods research design. Methodologically, this study is different from many other studies, especially from those studies using quantitative research strategies, which are dominant in the field. The general research design used in this thesis is similar to the approaches used by Kao, Patterson, Scott, and Li (2008), Yoon and Uysal (2005),

Kozak (2000), Wickens (1999), and Ryan (1994). The research design parallels recent empirical studies of tourist motivation (Jacobsen and Dann 2009; Pan and Ryan 2007), holiday activities (Carr 2002; Wickens 1999), perceptions of hotel/destination attributes (Litvin and Ling 2001), experiences (Pritchard and Havitz 2005); satisfaction (Alegre and Garau 2011) and destination loyalty (Yuksel, Yuksel and Bilim 2010).

### 1.7. Thesis outline

The thesis has been divided into seven chapters (Figure 1-2). The first chapter gives a brief overview of the overall thesis. In chapter two a review of literature is given and chapter three lays out the research methodology and framework. Chapter four presents a description of the study setting, and the profile of fieldwork’s respondents. Chapter five presents the results for pre-experience phase. Chapter six presents the results of the analysis for on-site and post-experience phases. Finally, chapter seven presents the study’s conclusion, outlining major findings, their implications for theory and practice, and suggestions for further research.

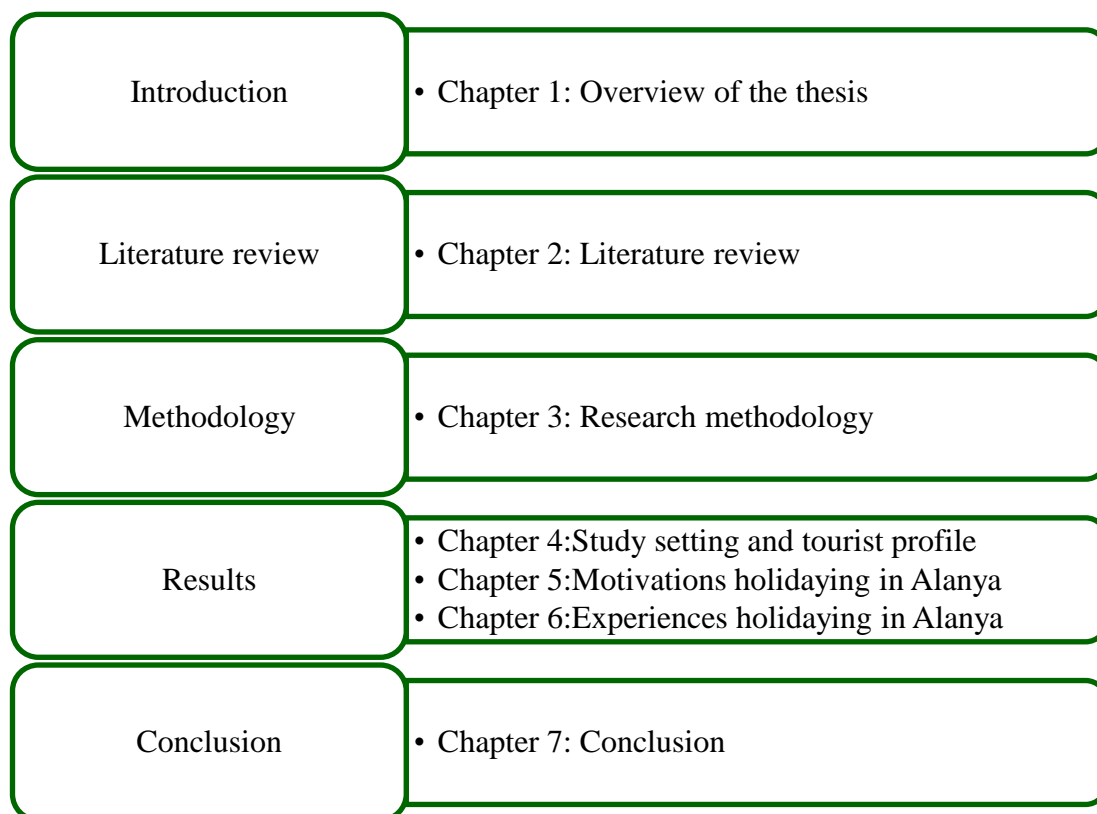


Figure 1-2 Thesis outline