

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328694466>

Ramadan bazaar, international tourists' attraction and disseminating information behaviour

Chapter · January 2012

CITATION

1

READS

5,462

4 authors, including:



Mohd Salehuddin Mohd Zahari

Universiti Teknologi MARA

320 PUBLICATIONS 1,894 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE



Salleh Mohd Radzi

Universiti Teknologi MARA

84 PUBLICATIONS 763 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Editors:

Artinah Zainal

Salleh Mohd Radzi

Rahmat Hashim

Chemah Tamby Chik

Rozita Abu



Current Issues in Hospitality and Tourism

Research and Innovations

 CRC Press
Taylor & Francis Group

A BALKEMA BOOK

CURRENT ISSUES IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM RESEARCH AND INNOVATIONS

This page intentionally left blank

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM CONFERENCE,
IHTC 2012, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, 3–5 SEPTEMBER 2012

Current Issues in Hospitality and Tourism Research and Innovations

Editors

Artinah Zainal, Salleh Mohd Radzi, Rahmat Hashim,
Chemah Tamby Chik & Rozita Abu

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia



CRC Press

Taylor & Francis Group

Boca Raton London New York Leiden

CRC Press is an imprint of the
Taylor & Francis Group, an **informa** business

A BALKEMA BOOK

CRC Press
Taylor & Francis Group
6000 Broken Sound Parkway NW, Suite 300
Boca Raton, FL 33487-2742

© 2012 by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC
CRC Press is an imprint of Taylor & Francis Group, an Informa business

No claim to original U.S. Government works
Version Date: 2012912

International Standard Book Number-13: 978-0-203-07536-4 (eBook - PDF)

This book contains information obtained from authentic and highly regarded sources. Reasonable efforts have been made to publish reliable data and information, but the author and publisher cannot assume responsibility for the validity of all materials or the consequences of their use. The authors and publishers have attempted to trace the copyright holders of all material reproduced in this publication and apologize to copyright holders if permission to publish in this form has not been obtained. If any copyright material has not been acknowledged please write and let us know so we may rectify in any future reprint.

Except as permitted under U.S. Copyright Law, no part of this book may be reprinted, reproduced, transmitted, or utilized in any form by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying, microfilming, and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without written permission from the publishers.

For permission to photocopy or use material electronically from this work, please access www.copyright.com (<http://www.copyright.com/>) or contact the Copyright Clearance Center, Inc. (CCC), 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, 978-750-8400. CCC is a not-for-profit organization that provides licenses and registration for a variety of users. For organizations that have been granted a photocopy license by the CCC, a separate system of payment has been arranged.

Trademark Notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Visit the Taylor & Francis Web site at
<http://www.taylorandfrancis.com>

and the CRC Press Web site at
<http://www.crcpress.com>

Table of Contents

Preface	XIII
Acknowledgements	XV
Organizing committee	XVII

Training and education

Information Seeking Behaviour (ISB) among postgraduate students in Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia <i>N. H. Che Ahmat, W.N.B. Wan Kamarudin, R. Abdul Aziz & S.M. Radzi</i>	3
Basic western cuisine modular system and students' psychomotor performance: A case of Malaysia community colleges <i>A.R. Reezlin, H. Ishak, M.S. Mohd Zahari & A. Inoormaziah</i>	9
The relationship between career development learning, workplace experience and employability among UiTM hospitality graduates <i>H.F. Ariffin & H. Saedahtinnur</i>	15
Strategies in embedding hospitality students employability skills and employability level <i>F. Mohd Napiah, M.I. Zulkifly, M.R. Jamaluddin & M.H. Mohd Hanafiah</i>	21
Career decision making among hospitality undergraduates in UiTM Shah Alam and Puncak Alam <i>N. Putit, R. Atlas, H. Hanan, K. Ramie, L. Lua & R. Abd. Rahim</i>	25
Training and education of OSH practices in managing man-machine safety of food manufacturing firms in Malaysia <i>M. Saad, M.S. Md. Sharif, P.S. Toh & E. Breukelman</i>	31
An overview of management training program in Malaysia hospitality organizations: A dual perspective <i>A.B. Noor Diyana & N. Sumarjan</i>	35
Postgraduate's thesis accomplishment: Issues on its attributable <i>A.H. Hamizad, M.S. Mohd Zahari, M.N. Shuhirdy & N.M. Shahril</i>	39

Organization and management

Achieving corporate social responsibility based on HR: Porto Marina Resort, Egypt <i>R.Y. Zoweil & M.G. Montasser</i>	45
The moderating effect of employment type on the relationship between service standards and job performance in 4 and 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia <i>N.H. Nazlan & A. Zainal</i>	51
The influence of ethical responsibility initiatives on perceived tour program quality and tour booking intention <i>W. Marchoo & K. Butcher</i>	57
The role of cultural familiarity on customer satisfaction in the context of hotel service failure <i>Trianasari, B. Sparks & K. Butcher</i>	63

Impact of service guarantee on empowerment, employee responsiveness in service recovery and service quality in the Malaysian upscale hotels <i>A. Mohd Shahril, Y. Abdul Aziz, M. Othman & J. Bojei</i>	69
Emotional intelligence and turnover intention: The case of front office frontliners in Kuala Lumpur's 5-star hotels <i>R.I.P. Raja Mustapha, W.A.N. Wan Salman & S.M. Radzi</i>	75
Customer satisfaction towards service quality in the hotel industry in Melaka <i>S.F. Yeo, S.L.F. Wee, M.L. Goh, J.M.S. Lam, S.H. Tan & T.A. Choon</i>	81
Sustainable tourism development practices of MICE venue provider in East Coast Region, Peninsula Malaysia <i>M. Abd Hamid, N. Ismail, Z.I. Mohd Fuza, K.N. Ahmad & K.W. Awang</i>	87
Rail services perceptions and satisfaction of foreigners and its impact on their stay in Malaysia <i>G.C. Saporna & S. Geetha</i>	91
Identifying job satisfaction dimensions among rank and file employees in selected budget hotels as correlates of organizational commitment and turnover intentions <i>G.C. Saporna, S. Geetha & R.A. Claveria</i>	97
Direct financial compensation and future graduates career choice in hotel industry <i>N.A. Ahmad, A. Abdul Aziz, M.S.Y. Kamaruddin, A. Abdul Aziz & M.F.S. Bakhtiar</i>	105
Influential factors effecting fast food consumers' intention to use menu labels in fast food restaurants: A conceptual framework <i>S. Delvarani, M. Othman & H. Ghazali</i>	111
Revenue management practices and restaurant performance: A study on theme restaurants in Klang Valley, Malaysia <i>M.H.I. Noorkhizan, S.M. Radzi, F.S.C. Abdullah & A.A. Azdel</i>	117
Boutique hotel business: A survey on tourist preference to stay at boutique hotels in Georgetown, Penang <i>K.M. Ng & J.S.L. Low</i>	121
Barrier-free dining environment for the visually impaired: A case study of restaurant in Taichung, Taiwan <i>W.-C. Chung & C.-C. Lue</i>	125
Important Hong Kong shopping mall characteristics as perceived by tourists <i>V.C.S. Heung & D. Kucukusta</i>	129
Occupancy improvement in serviced apartments: Customer profiling <i>L.N. Fukey</i>	135
Hypermarket fresh foods' attributes toward customer satisfaction <i>M.F.S. Bakhtiar, M.S. Mohd Zahari, A.R. Azhar & M.S.Y. Kamaruddin</i>	141
Case study: Measuring service quality of homestay in Malacca using SERVQUAL matrix <i>A.F. Mohd Khodri</i>	147
A clustering study of operational efficiency for international tourist hotels in Taiwan <i>Y.H. Kuo, H.N. Jiang, Y.Z. Hung, F.Y. Su & Y.Z. Lee</i>	153
Organizational citizenship behavior of hotel employees: Investigating the impact of organizational justice <i>M.A. Hemdi, M.A. Razali, N.R. Nik Abd Rashid & R. Nordin</i>	159
Global versus local HRM practices in the hospitality industry: The case of Greek luxury hotel managers <i>C. Giousmpasoglou</i>	165
Assessment of service quality dimensions in the fast food restaurants <i>Z. Mohi, H.C. Wu, R.P.S. Raja Abdullah, L.B. Jipiu & A.A. Abd Majid</i>	171

Effects of emotional labor on customer outcomes: Tourists' perspectives <i>L.S. Yiing, Y. Abdul Aziz, S. Md. Samsinar & R. Saleh</i>	177
Meal pace experience, customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention at casual dining restaurants in Kuala Lumpur <i>H. Ismail, S. Amirhonarvari & S.M. Radzi</i>	183
The moderating effect of environmental variables on business strategy and performance of hotels in Batam Island, Indonesia <i>A. Riyadi & S.M. Radzi</i>	189
The impact of perceived commercial hospitality on perceived service fairness and behavioral intentions <i>M. Mohamed & A.A. Mohd Ariffin</i>	195
The impact of food safety practices on organizational performance <i>M. Saad, P.S. Toh, M.A. Mohamed Adil & D.F. Moginon</i>	201
The relationship between occupational culture, organization tenure and occupational commitment of chefs in 4 and 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur <i>F.A. Hanan & A. Zainal</i>	205
 <i>Innovation</i>	
The relationship between product innovation and fusion cuisine in food and beverage establishments: A discussion on Turkish cuisine <i>B. Erdem, M. Doğdubay & M. Sarıođlan</i>	213
GIS approach in promoting Perlis tourism <i>E.S. Mokhtar, S.M.A. Wahab, N. Zainal & N.A. Yusof</i>	219
Ecotourism planning using remote sensing and GIS: A case study for Marvdasht, Iran <i>M. Ghadiri Masoum, H. Nasiri, A. Hosseini & Y. Rafii</i>	225
The usage of ICT applications in 5 star hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia <i>A. Abdul Aziz, M.F.S. Bakhtiar, N.'H. Che Ahmat, M.S.Y. Kamaruddin & N.A. Ahmad</i>	231
Food and beverage technology and employees' acceptance in 4 and 5 star hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia <i>M.S.M. Stamam, M. Nenin, R. Hashim & S.M. Radzi</i>	237
Pitaya powder potential as antioxidant functional ingredient in food products <i>C.T. Chik, S. Bachok, N. Baba, A. Abdullah, W.A. Wan Mustapha & N. Abdullah</i>	243
Proximate compositions and physicochemical characteristic of soybean waste in chicken patty <i>N. Baba, L.B. Jipiu, C.T. Chik & A.F. Amir</i>	247
The potential of nanotechnology application in improving bioactivity of Malaysian plants <i>A. Norhidayah, A. Noriham & M. Rusop</i>	253
 <i>Marketing</i>	
Customer relationship management in small and medium sized hotels <i>S. Feiz, Z. Khalifah & A.R. Ghotbabadi</i>	259
Branding Kuching City as health tourism destination <i>S.M. Abdul Hamid & N. Putit</i>	263
Creating new dimension in marketing new destination in Jordan: Suggested strategy for Aqaba region <i>J.H. El-Harami</i>	269
Tourism representation of Malay myths and traditional values in destination marketing <i>N.A. Razak</i>	275

From drinking to tasting: An exploration amongst Malaysian wine connoisseurs <i>S.J. Dias</i>	281
Determination of food acceptance in restaurants and sensory evaluation laboratory <i>C.T. Chik, S. Bachok & S. Sulaiman</i>	287
The role of price fairness, cleanliness and physical environment on customer retention in family restaurants <i>M.H. Mohd Kamal, N.A. Rahim, N. Husin, R. Che Mat & I. Ismail</i>	291
Relationship between yield management practices and hotel performance: A study on 4 and 5 star hotels in Kuala Lumpur <i>A.A. Khana & S.M. Radzi</i>	297
Measuring customer satisfaction: The case of Kelantan Delights Restaurant <i>W.A.N. Wan Salman, N.M. Sebi, I.R. Othman & R.M. Yahyauddin</i>	303
The mediating effect of service quality on market orientation and business performance relationship of hotels in Klang Valley <i>M.B. Lopez & S.M. Radzi</i>	309
A preliminary study of internal reference prices and purchase intentions in hotels <i>M.T. Zimri @ Zamri, N. Sumarjan & A. Abdul Aziz</i>	315
 <i>Islamic hospitality and tourism</i>	
The expectations of Muslim religious customers in the lodging industry: The case of Turkey <i>I.M. Ozdemir & O. Met</i>	323
Pull and push motivation in Islamic tourism <i>Y.H. Nik Muhammad Naziman, S. Idrus, N.F. Mohd Aznan & R. Musa</i>	329
Detection of non halal ingredient for halal verification in bakery and confectionery in Malaysia <i>S. Bachok, C.T. Chik, A. Arsat, J. Jamil & M. Abd Ghani</i>	333
Muslim guest perception of value towards <i>Syariah</i> concept hotel <i>A. Zulkharnain & A.J. Salamiah</i>	337
 <i>Gastronomy</i>	
Contesting locality and sustainability of food tourism in Taiwan <i>H.A. Su</i>	343
Routine of cooking practices among Malaysian working women <i>M.S.Y. Kamaruddin, S.K.A. Bakar, M.S. Mohd Zahari & M.F.S. Bakhtiar</i>	349
Indigenous food and destination marketing <i>D.F. Moginon, P.S. Toh & Mazni Saad</i>	355
Acculturation, foodways and Malaysian food identity <i>I. Noriza, M.S. Mohd Zahari, M.S. Shazali, M. Rosmaliza & S. Hamita</i>	359
Traditional Food Knowledge (TFK) of Malay festive foods <i>M.S. Md. Sharif, M.S. Mohd Zahari, N. Ishak, R. Muhammad, A. Md. Noor & H. Mohd. Salleh</i>	365
Homestay destination: Assessing destination's food image, tourists' satisfaction and tourists' revisit intention <i>H.F. Talhah & R. Hashim</i>	371
International tourist acceptance of Sabah's gastronomy product <i>A.M. Noor, M.R. Remeli & M.H. Mohd Hanafiah</i>	377
Are gastronomic products important to Malaysian tour operators? <i>M.Y. Nuraisyah, M.S. Mohd Zahari, A. Inoormaziah & O. Zulhan</i>	383
Displacement: Orang Asli socio-culture and food practices <i>N.M. Shahril, M.S. Mohd Zahari, A.H. Hamizad & M.N. Shuhirdy</i>	389

Ramadan bazaar, international tourists' attraction and disseminating information behaviour <i>A.K. Noor Ibtisam, M.S. Mohd Zahari, S.M. Radzi & S. Izni</i>	395
Gastronomy in Malay feasts: Sociological changes and modernization <i>M.R. Alina Shuhaida, M.S. Mohd Zahari, A. Roslina, M. Rosmaliza & M. Aishah@Eshah</i>	401
<i>Current trend</i>	
Impact of information exchange of e-Word-of-Mouth towards intention to purchase <i>A.N. Zamzuri, M.S. Mohd Zahari & S.M. Radzi</i>	407
Visitors' preferences on travel website content <i>N. Mohd Akhuan, F. Fazil & S.S. Abdul Hamid</i>	413
User reluctance to post online recommendation: A Brunei case study <i>D.I.N.F. Pengiran-Kahar</i>	419
Teenagers' involvement in the night club: A case study of Langkawi Island <i>A.M. Sultana, A.S. Lazim & M.M. Akonb</i>	425
Social Network Sites (SNS) as purchase intention predictor for foodservice marketing on students with access to internet <i>A.S. Jais & P.S. Toh</i>	429
E-payments: How Malaysian restaurant operators and customer respond? <i>S. Zurena @ Rena & M.S. Mohd Zahari</i>	435
<i>Tourism</i>	
Tourist stimulus to attend Penang International Dragon Boat Festival <i>M.H. Mohd Hanafiah, N.I. Ismail & N.N. Mohamad</i>	441
Heritage tourism management in the World Heritage Sites, Malaysia: Legal and planning issues <i>S.S. Sulaiman, N. Yahaya & R. Md. Khalid</i>	447
Customer experience study on Tidal Bore Festival Sri Aman, Sarawak 2011 <i>R. Atlas & N. Putti</i>	453
Local community participation in sustainable tourism planning of Malaysian protected areas <i>A. Abdul Gani, K.W. Awang, Z. Samdin & A. Mohd</i>	459
An exploratory study on the determinants of repeat visitation to Melaka among Melaka's university students <i>S.L.F. Wee, M. Tan, K.P. Tan, S.F. Yeo & V. Woo</i>	465
Product development and sustainable rural tourism: The case of Kilim Geopark, Langkawi <i>M. Jaafar, A. Marzuki & N. Mohd Bakri</i>	471
Preliminary study on sustainable community development through the homestay programme <i>S. Mohamad Nor, K.W. Awang, N.W. Ismail & A. Radam</i>	477
The cultural observations of volunteers during an amateur international sporting event <i>E.J. Trolan</i>	483
Important attributes that affect tourist's decision to visit Penang as a medical tourism destination <i>K.M. Ng & E.S. Tianhuei</i>	487
The effect of tourism experience on elderly with chronic pain <i>S. Alizadeh-Fard & M.K. Sarpoolaky</i>	491
Destination competitiveness, tourism performance and resident's quality of life <i>Z. Zainuddin, P. Hilmy, A. Ghafar, M.S. Mohd Zahari & S.M. Radzi</i>	497
Environmental protection culture – perspective of tourists in a water-based tourist destination <i>N.'A. Yusof</i>	503

Tourism receipts, education and economic growth in Malaysia <i>C.L. Cheam & C. Ong Soon</i>	509
Medical tourism destination brand positioning model <i>S. Idrus, R. Musa, Y.H. Nik Muhammad Naziman, N.F. Mohd Aznan, A. Yaacob@Othman & N. Mohd Pauzi</i>	515
Strategies for improving leisure spaces position with an emphasis on urban regeneration: A case study of Ghaytarieh neighborhood, Tehran <i>A. Pourahmad, A. Hosseini & H. Nasiri</i>	519
The role of security in development of tourism <i>A. Daneshvarinasab</i>	525
Hot sleeping beauties: Touristic development potential of hot thermal springs in West Malaysia <i>K. Wagner, N. Salim & B. Mohamed</i>	529
Tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience in Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia <i>S.E. Tan, Y.A. Aziz, K.W. Awang & S. Zaiton</i>	533
Tourism area life-cycle model and its applicability to lodging development of Langkawi Island, Malaysia <i>N. Hazmi, S.I. Omar & B. Mohamed</i>	539
Impacts of physical development on Malaysia Islands: How island tourism survives? <i>M.F. Sazali, M. Muhibudin & B. Mohamed</i>	545
Malta: A tourism destination to the land of the Goddess <i>L. Laganà</i>	549
The relationship between recreational quality and desert tourism development in Esfahan, Iran <i>S. Tarzaban & A. Zainal</i>	555
Religious tourism: Shiite shrine a powerful tool for regional development for Mashhad City, Iran <i>R.S. Hosseini & A. Zainal</i>	561
Exploring nature based hiking experiences at the Mount Datuk in Malaysia <i>N. Mohd Amin & P. Chhetri</i>	567
Sustainable tourism development and stakeholders' networking: A case study on medical tourism in Malaysia <i>K.M. Azmi & K.W. Awang</i>	571
Assessment of the socio-cultural impacts of ecotourism development in Penang National Park, Malaysia <i>M.M. Huda Farhana, L.K.L. Vivien, M.A.A. Zaman & Z. Noor Aini</i>	577
The image representation of Taiwan: An analysis of a travel guidebook <i>P. Hsieh</i>	583
Stakeholder engagement for sustainable tourism development: A study of local authorities in Malaysia <i>A.K. Siti Nabihah, N.H. Md Saad & R. Mahadi</i>	587
Foreign tourists' perception on the safety and security measures in Kuala Lumpur <i>A.F. Amir, M.N.I. Ismail, M.H. Mohd Hanafiah & N. Baba</i>	591
Strategies for sustainable wetland tourism in Iran and its environmental impact: A case study of Anzali Wetland <i>M. Khoshkam & A. Marzuki</i>	595
A study of international tourists' motivation, satisfaction and behavioral intentions to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry <i>N.C. Musa, M.M. Tajudin & M. Saeed Siddiq</i>	601

Government's role in Malaysian homestay program <i>Y. Yusnita, I. Yahaya, M. Mohd Shaladdin & W.M.A. Wan Abd Aziz</i>	607
The need and opportunity of establishing a tourism information and promotion center in Oltenia under the mountain <i>E. Constanta, E. Constantin, S. Carina & P. Daniela</i>	613
Goal programming model for self-drive tourism route selection: A case study in Langkawi <i>Z. Hashim & W.R. Ismail</i>	619
The obstructions for sustainable tourism development in rural areas <i>M.S.M. Aslam, K.W. Awang, Z. Samdin & N. Othman</i>	625
Neighbouring countries tourism demand implication on Malaysia's tourism exports <i>A. Roslan, Mohd A.A. Bakar & Y.H. Aw</i>	631
A synchronic investigation of the significance of foreign languages for the tourism trade in Malaysia <i>S.H. Chan, A.N. Abdullah & S. Rafik-Galea</i>	637
Tourist friendly destination concept: Analysis in macro level perspectives <i>A.N.A. Anuar, H. Ahmad, H. Jusoh & M.Y. Hussain</i>	641
Author index	647

This page intentionally left blank

Preface

Dear Distinguished Delegates and Guests,

The Organizing Committee warmly welcomes all delegates and guests to the International Hospitality and Tourism Conference 2012, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on September 3–5, 2012.

The IHTC is jointly organized by Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) and Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. The aim of IHTC 2012 is to provide a platform for academia and hospitality practitioners to share the “up-and-coming” paradigms and innovative practices that is transformative and that hold serious intellectual discourse within the broader hospitality and tourism realm. This conference intends to foster and explore the issues of hospitality, tourism, foodservice, culinary arts and gastronomy research and professionalism around the globe.

This conference aspires to be the milestone to motivate further knowledge sharing and collaboration among delegates from different parts of the globe in advancing mindsets, knowledge and skills to adapt and create innovations for the enhancement of hospitality and tourism education and best practice.

The conference has solicited a total of 200 abstracts submitted by authors from 20 countries. However, only 116 papers have been accepted after the process of peer reviewing by the reviewers in the area of hospitality, tourism, foodservice and gastronomy. The papers were selected on the basis of originality, significance and clarity for the purpose of the conference.

The accomplishment of IHTC 2012 is the result of perseverance and commitment from several parties. We hope that all participants and other interested readers benefit scientifically from the proceedings and find it inspiring in the process. We would like to thank the organizing committee for their work and we are grateful to all those who contributed to the success of IHTC 2012.

Lastly, we would like to wish you success in the presentation and networking during your stay in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

This page intentionally left blank

Acknowledgements

Abhinav Kamal Raina (Dayanand College, Ajmer, India)
Alan Fyall (University of Bournemouth, United Kingdom)
Alan Lew (Northern Arizona University, USA)
Alan Rodrigue Frazer (Canterbury, New Zealand)
Amrul Asraf Mohd Any (Universiti Malaya, Malaysia)
Artinah Zainal (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Ashish Dahiya (H.N.B Garhwal University, Uttarakhand, India)
Barbara Santich (University of Adelaide, Australia)
Charles Arcodia (The University of Queensland, Australia)
Chemah Tamby Chik (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Fadzilah Mohd Shariff (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Inoormaziah Azman (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Hashim Fadzil Ariffin (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Kamril Juraidi Abd Karim (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Khairil Wahidin Awang (Universiti Putra Malaysia)
Lim Lay Kian (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Mohhidin Othman (Universiti Putra Malaysia)
Mohd Hafiz Mohd Hanafiah (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Mohd Onn Rashdi Abd Patah (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Mohd Raziff Jamaluddin (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Mohd Salehuddin Mohd Zahari (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Muhammad Naim Kamari (UMTECH, Malaysia)
Norliza Aminuddin (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Norzuwana Sumarjan (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Nor Khomar Ishak (UMTECH, Malaysia)
Rahmat Hashim (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Roslina Ahmad (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Salleh Mohd Radzi (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Salamiah A. Jamal (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Shahariah Ibrahim (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
T. Ramayah (Universiti Sains Malaysia)
Toh Poh See (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Vanessa Gafar (Bandung University, Indonesia)
Wan Ahmad Nasroun Wan Salman (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)
Yuhanis A. Aziz (Universiti Putra Malaysia)
Zurinawati Mohi (Universiti Teknolgi MARA, Malaysia)

This page intentionally left blank

Organizing committee

Patron

Dato' Prof Ir Dr Sahol Hamid Abu Bakar
FASc,PEng,DSPN, DJN, DSM, BCN

Advisor

Assoc. Prof Abd Azis Abd Majid

Conference Chair

Prof Datin Dr Toh Poh See

Committees

Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Salehuddin Mohd Zahari
Assoc Prof Dr Rahmat Hashim
Assoc Prof Dr Artinah Zainal
Assoc Prof Dr Salleh Mohd Radzi
Assoc Prof Rozita Abu
Assoc Prof Zafrul Isa
Dr Chemah Tamby Chik
Dr Salim Abdul Talib
Dr Norliza Aminuddin
Dr Norzuwana Sumarjan
Dr Salamiah A. Jamal
Ahmad Fitri Amir
Alina Shuhaida Mohd Ramly
Azdel b Abd Aziz
Fadzilah Shariff
Hashim Fadzil b Ariffin
Inoormaziah Azman
Muhamad Izzat b Zulkifly
Mohd Faez b Saiful Bakhtiar
Mohd Hafiz b Mohd Hanafiah
Mohd Noor Ismawi b Ismail
Mohd Shazali b Shariff
Mohd Raziff b Jamaluddin
Mohd Syaquif Yasin b Kamaruddin
NoorAzmi b Ahmad
Wan Ahmad Nasroun b Wan Salman
Zulhan Othman

Graduate Assistants

Amirah Che Ayub
Amril Mu'idzuddin Amrahi
Dziatul Nadiah Dziauddin
Hanif Hanan
Maisarah Mazlan
Norshailla Erna Zainal
Nurul Nadiah Azizan
Shamsul Khairul Annuar Nordin
Sharifah Nor Sabah
Sharifah Nur Safeera Syed Mahbob
Wan Nur Farhana Wan Sazali
Wan Siti Zubaidah Yahya

This page intentionally left blank

Training and education

This page intentionally left blank

Information Seeking Behaviour (ISB) among postgraduate students in Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

Nur'Hidayah Che Ahmat, Wan Nor Bayah Wan Kamarudin, Rafidah Abdul Aziz & Salleh Mohd Radzi

Universiti Teknologi MARA, UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This paper fills the gap in understanding the Information Seeking Behaviour (ISB) among the postgraduate students in Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, UiTM, Shah Alam, Malaysia. Specifically, the aims of this paper are to determine the information needs, to identify the main information source in ISB, and to investigate the relationship between ISB and information needs satisfaction. By using self-administered questionnaire adapted from previous researchers, some of the issues of interest were obtained. Result revealed that ISB of postgraduate students were motivated by a wide variety of information needs including the need to fulfil research requirements. Also, internet was found as the main formal source while conversation with friends/colleagues was the main informal source used in seeking and obtaining information needed. It is worth mentioning that ISB was positively correlated with information needs satisfaction. This study could be considered as a starting point for further studies and for comparisons across faculties and disciplines in the University particularly in social sciences disciplines pertaining to ISB of the postgraduate students.

Keywords: information needs, information source, information needs satisfaction.

1 INTRODUCTION

Information has become one of the basic needs and important elements for survival in knowledge-based societies. Looking into the perspective of postgraduate students, they occasionally use information for personal and educational purposes hence their behaviour of seeking for information will be dissimilar due to differences in human behaviour. Wilson (2000) defined ISB as a learning process and information that people seek, give, and use which are based on different context such as in everyday living, the workforce place or educational institutions while Ajiboye and Tella (2007) described ISB as the means of individual or group of community required and accumulate for information in order to fulfil their personal use, knowledge improvement and development. There are number of reasons that lead the behaviour of individual in their choice of information, which includes course of studies, age, level, and religion, particularly among postgraduate students (Owolobi, Jimoh & Okpeh, 2010). There are no comprehensive study on this matter mainly in Hospitality and Tourism courses thus there is a need to fill the gap.

Ajiboye and Tella (2000) stated that existing studies on excellence in higher education, have been modestly taken into consideration in the aspect of the way students in higher institutions manage their learning and its pursue for quality. As well, the enhancement in good

services and equipped facilities along with the qualified educators will subsequently lead to improvement in students' academic accomplishment. Conversely, this supposition may seem too ingenuous since it is possible to argue that students' accomplishment may still be vulnerable due to some factors like how the students seek and search academic information. Therefore, it is very crucial to study students' manner on managing their learning skills to seek for academic information in order to excel in their academic. Past scholars affirmed that when students were being given tasks and assignments pertaining to the course requirements, they will automatically seek for the required information independently and confer with the right information sources in relation to academic information. To complete postgraduate programs with flying colours, the right application of ISB is imperative. Not to mention, seeking and searching for effective information requires tremendous effort whereby they must be able to know how to use the correct method in obtaining the information to satisfy their information needs. For that reason, it is important to understand the information needs and ISB of the postgraduate students to help graduates in their research activities for their Master and PhD degrees hence there is a need to fill this gap.

Based from the abovementioned statement, this study aims to investigate the ISB of postgraduate students and specifically, researchers will focus on

the behaviour in obtaining information on the nature of academic information needed by the postgraduate students.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *The concept of information*

Information is defined as something which students need during their studies when they construct meaning about the subjects in the process of learning (Ajiboye & Tella, 2007). Behaviour of each individual seeks for information will be different due to differences in human behaviour and the environment surroundings (Owolobi et al., 2010; Ajiboye & Tella, 2007). Moreover, Safahieh (2007) described information needs as a gap in a person's knowledge, when an individual experienced an ambiguity at the conscious level as a problem, then attempts to seek for solution. It is agreed that the search may be taken continuously until the individual contented the unknown matters.

2.2 *Information Seeking Behaviour (ISB)*

Wright and Guy (1997) stated that the activity of ISB can be defined when information is accumulated in order to recognize a message that satisfied a perceived need. Wilson (1999) describes ISB as a consequence of a need perceived by an information user, who, in order to satisfy that need, makes demands upon formal or informal information sources, which result in success or failure to find relevant information. If successful, the individual then makes use of the information found and may either fully or partially satisfy the perceived need or if they fail to satisfy the need, they have to restart the search process. In other words, failure to gain desirable information from right information sources will lead to dissatisfaction of information need. However, Bawden (2006) argued that Wilson (1999) should include an explicit consideration of the organizational and cultural environment since Leckie, Pettigrew and Slyvian (1996) postulated that ISB can be influenced by other factors such as personal reasons for seeking information, the type of information required and sources and also ways which needed information is required.

2.3 *Information sources*

Information seeking can be performed by formal and informal sources (Majid & Kassim, 2000; Majid & Ai, 2002). Formal sources of information primarily encompass sources from internet and library while informal source of information consist of oral interaction through telephone calls, letters, e-mail, conversations at meeting and conferences (Wilson, 1999). Previous scholars declared internet as the main formal source to complete research work due to limited service offered by library make them less to visit the library (Vezzosi, 2008; George, Bright, Hurlbert,

Linke, Clair & Stein, 2006). The emergence of internet allows people to search for information conveniently as it is more user friendly and easy accessibility (Bhatti, 2008). In contrast, Majid and Kassim (2000) contended that books from the university library were ranked as the most important information source for teaching and research. On the other side, for informal sources, Vezzosi (2008) classified people include the academicians, librarians and colleagues as the most important informal source in advising and directing to the relevant and needed information. Additionally, other scholars choose colleagues (Bhatti, 2008), and meeting with the experts (George et al., 2006; Marouf & Anwar, 2010) as their main informal sources.

2.4 *Information needs satisfaction*

Information is needed because it affects people's lives and people need information to obtain answers to specific questions (Nicholas, 2000). Yet, George et al, (2006) stated that information need varies among disciplines and by programs which were depends on what the respondent is taken. The used of formal and informal sources of information are based on individual purpose and need of information search. In order to satisfy information need, the process started from the ISB will lead the user starts to search upon formal or informal information sources which result in success or failure to find relevant information. Sheppard (1993) claimed that sources of information used to satisfy information need were the library, other teachers and their supervisors.

3 METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted using a quantitative research method where empirical investigation was carried out to determine the relationship on ISB among postgraduate students. 303 full-time and part-time students from Masters and PhD programs in the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam were chosen as the sample. The survey was adapted from previous literatures and was divided into four sections. Section A with 14-items measured the information needs using ranking from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). Section B was created to measure ISB with 25-items using six-point Likert Scale on the level of agreement from (1) "Never" to (6) "Always" while Section C measuring Information Needs Satisfaction also with 25-items by using six-point Likert Scale on the level of agreement from (1) "Not Applicable" to (6) "Very Satisfied". Section D asking on customer personal data includes gender, age, program specialization, level of program, and student status.

A pilot study was conducted among 30 postgraduate students from the total population of postgraduate students in Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management in order to ensure the reliability and effectiveness of the instrument. The survey was conveniently distributed and conducted within 2 weeks with the help of research

assistants. A brief detail about the purpose of the study was mentioned and participation was voluntary and all the information provided is strictly confidential. A total of 167 questionnaires was collected and the data were coded and keyed in Social Statistical Package (SPSS) version 17. The reliability test was undertaken for Section B and C separately. The result showed that the instrument and items used was reliable with coefficient alpha value at 0.899 for Section B, and 0.885 for Section C.

4 FINDING, ANALYSES, AND RESULTS

4.1 Customer's profiles

From the descriptive statistics, more than 50 percent ($n = 120$) were females and 85.6 percent ($n = 143$) were between 20–30 years old. It was found that 65.3 percent ($n = 109$) were full-time students compared to 34.7 percent ($n = 58$) of part-time. Majority of the respondents belonged to Master by Coursework program which represent by 89.8 percent ($n = 150$) and not to mention, 66 of them were from Hospitality Management program.

4.2 Mean Scores and Standard Deviation

It was found that the main information needs of postgraduate students was the need to fulfil research requirements ($M = 2.19$). In addition, Table 1 reflect the formal source of information which revealed internet search engines ranked the highest ($M = 5.37$; $SD = 1.021$) and more often used by respondents followed by journal online ($M = 4.37$; $SD = 1.184$). On the other hand, for informal source, Table 2 demonstrated that conversation with friend/colleagues ranked the highest mean score ($M = 4.42$; $SD = 1.272$). Result for information needs satisfaction through their ISB of information sources shows on mean scores between 4.96 and 3.11. Most of the respondents were satisfied using internet search engine as their formal source ($M = 4.96$; $SD = 0.996$) followed by Citations ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.992$), while for informal sources, respondents were somewhat satisfied on Consultation with experts in the field with a mean score of 4.61 ($SD = 1.014$).

4.3 Analyzing the relationship between ISB and information needs satisfaction

The Pearson's Correlation Analysis was conducted to test the relationship between the independent and dependent variable. It was found that there was a positive relationship with large correlation between ISB (Independent Variable) and Information Needs Satisfaction (Dependent Variable) ($r = .737$, $p < 0.01$). The correlation between formal source and information needs satisfaction showed that there was a positive relationship with a large correlation ($r = .692$, $p < 0.01$) while for informal source, it was found that

Table 1. Results of mean score and standard deviation for Information Source (Formal source).

Information source (Formal source)	Mean (M)	Standard deviation (SD)
Books	3.34	1.615
Abstracts and indexes in print	2.85	1.180
Online public access catalogue (OPAC)	2.77	1.371
Abstract and indexes on CD-ROM	2.37	1.204
Scanning journal titles in the library	2.76	1.394
Browsing shelves for books	2.91	1.171
Research Articles	4.05	1.173
Abstracting and indexing Sources	3.37	1.292
Journals online	4.37	1.184
Theses and Dissertations	4.23	1.260
Media, TV, radio and newspapers	3.93	1.547
Books reviews	3.08	1.373
Bibliographies	2.81	1.312
Internet search engine	5.37	1.021
Citation (references in material used)	3.92	1.441
By chance (e.g.: while searching on a specific topic)	3.85	1.096
Website of bookstores (e.g.: Amazon.com)	3.40	1.419
Indexing journal	3.11	1.458
Internet discussion forums or newsgroups	3.44	1.421
Electronic database	3.92	1.482
Publisher catalogues and flyers	2.83	1.423

Table 2. Results of mean score and standard deviation for Information Source (Informal source).

Information source (Formal source)	Mean (M)	Standard deviation (SD)
Conversation with friends/colleagues	4.42	1.272
Consultation with experts in field	3.93	1.432
Attending conference, seminars, and workshops	3.24	1.465
Conversation with library staff	2.34	1.292

Table 3. Correlations among variables.

Measures	Information needs satisfaction	Information needs satisfaction (Formal Source)	Information needs satisfaction (Informal Source)
Pearson correlation	.737**	.692**	.460**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000

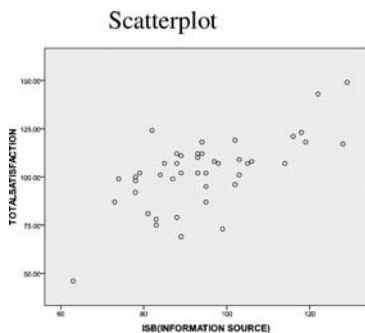


Figure 1. Scatterplot for information needs satisfaction (Dependent Variable).

there was a positive relationship with a medium correlation ($r = .460$, $p < 0.01$). All in all, correlation analyses support the hypothesis testing mentioned in preceding paragraphs.

5 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study has investigated the ISB of postgraduate students through formal and informal sources in the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management at UiTM, Shah Alam, Malaysia. Findings depicted that the needs to fulfil research requirement was the most important to be the main information need compared to other items which corroborated well with the existing literatures (Maarof & Anwar, 2010; Nicholas, 2000; Kakai et al., 2004). Hence, not counted into different levels which were PhD, Master by research and Master by coursework, conclusion can be done by saying that the nature of the postgraduate students was research based with different complexity of research requirements depending on different program levels. Again, for main formal information source, internet search engines with the highest mean score overwhelmed other formal sources and this supported findings by George et al. (2006), Vezzosi (2008) and Bhatti (2008). Indubitably, the era of information technology slightly affects the ISB of the postgraduate students. Moreover, for informal source, conversation with friends/colleagues simultaneously supported the other researchers (George et al., 2006; Marouf & Anwar, 2010).

Furthermore, finding revealed that most of the postgraduate students were depend on informal sources of information rather than formal sources and this statement opposed to Marouf and Anwar (2010) as they believed students mainly depending on and more satisfied with journals and books (formal source). The level of information needs satisfaction with informal source for conversation with friends and colleagues is lower than satisfied and it was somewhat positively lower than formal source level of satisfaction and this aligned

with Marouf and Anwar (2010). This study contributes to the very limited research literatures pertaining to this topic in Malaysia. Ergo, it can be used to educate and create awareness on the information sources available for the postgraduate students besides declares the importance of ISB in providing benefits to the knowledge of the postgraduate students' academic. There is a need to conduct further research in other faculties as this study were limited to the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management only and the result cannot be used to generalize in ISB studies. It could be considered as a starting point for further studies to make comparisons across faculties in social science disciplines.

REFERENCES

- Ajiboye, O. & Tella, A. 2007. University Undergraduate Students' Information Seeking Behavior: Implications for Quality in Higher Education In Africa. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*. TOJET January 2007 ISSN: 1303-6521, Vol. 6, No. 1, Article 4.
- Bawden, D. 2006. Users, user studies and human information behavior. A three-decade perspective on Tom Wilson's "On user studies and information needs". *Journal of Documentation*, Vol. 62, No. 6:671-679.
- Bhatti, R. 2008. Information Needs and Information-Seeking Behavior of Faculty Members at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. *Library Philosophy and Practice* (e-journal).
- George, C. Bright, A. Hurlbert, T. Linke, E.C. Clair, G.S. & Stein, J. 2006. Scholarly Use of Information: Graduate Students' Information Seeking Behavior. *Information Research*. Vol. 11, No.4.
- Kakai, M., Ikoja-Odongo, R. & Kigongo-Bukeny, I.M.N. 2004. A Study of the Information Seeking Behaviour of Undergraduate Students of Makerere University, Uganda. *World Libraries*, Vol. 14, No.1: 544-564.
- Leckie, G.J., Pettigrew, K.E., & Sylvain, C. 1996. Modeling the Information Seeking of Professionals: A General Model Derived from Research on Engineers, Health Care Professionals, and Lawyers. *Library Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 2: 161-193.
- Majid, S. & Ai, T.T. 2002. Usage of Information Resources by Computer Engineering Students. A Case Study of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. *Information Review*, Vol. 26, No. 5: 318-325.
- Majid, S. & Kassim, G.M. 2000. Information-Seeking Behavior of International Islamic university Malaysia Law Faculty Members. *Malaysian Journal of Library & Information Science*, Vol. 5, No. 2: 1-17.
- Marouf, L. & Anwar, M.A. 2010. Information-Seeking Behavior of the Social Sciences Faculty at Kuwait University. *Library Review*, Vol. 59 No. 7, pp. 532-547. Retrieved October 1, 2010, from www.emeraldinsight.com/0024-2535.htm
- Nicholas, J. 2000. Anomalous States of Knowledge as a Basis for Information Retrieval. *The Canadian Journal of Information Science*, Vol. 5: 133-43.
- Owolobi, A.K, Jimoh, A.M, & Okpeh, C.S. 2010. Information Seeking Behaviour of Polytechnic Students: The Case of Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. ISSN 1522-0222, Vol 5, No. 1:38-47
- Safahieh, H. 2007. Information Needs and Information Seeking Behavior of International Students in Malaysia.

- Retrieved June 11, 2006, from Retrieved October 1, 2010, from [http:// www.emeraldinsight.com](http://www.emeraldinsight.com).
- Sheppard, M.O. 1993. Information Seeking by TAFE Trade Student-Teachers, Australian Academic and Research Libraries, Vol. 14, No.3: 149–57.
- Vezzosi, M. 2008. Doctoral Students' Information Behavior: An Exploratory Study at the University of Parma (Italy). New Library World, Vol. 110 No. 1/2: 65–80.
- Wilson, T.D. 1999. Models in Information Behavior Research. Journal of Documentation, Vol. 55, No.3: 249–270.
- Wilson, T.D. 2000. Human Information Behavior. Special Issue on Information Science, Vol. 3, No. 2: 49–55.
- Wright, M. & Guy, L. 1997. where do I find it and what do I do with it: Practical problem-solving in the data library, at <http://dphs.dacc.wisc.edu/types/data>

This page intentionally left blank

Basic western cuisine modular system and students' psychomotor performance: A case of Malaysia community colleges

A R. Reezlin & H. Ishak

Sungai Petani Community College, Malaysia

M.S. Mohd Zahari & A. Inoormaziah

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This study empirically investigates the effectiveness of basic western cuisine as part of culinary arts modular program in Malaysia community colleges toward students' psychomotor performance. Using triangulation approach of self completed questionnaire and interview, some useful insights were obtained. The introduction of basic western cuisine module is creating promising outcomes. The module is gradually enhancing students' knowledge, skills, confidence level and psychomotor performance which enable them to at least prepare the western food ranging from breakfast cookery to simple appetizers, main courses and desserts. This positive indication although in the early stage has given implications for students, lecturers, parents, ministry of higher education, hospitality and foodservice industry in general.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Basic Western Cuisine, Community College Modular System, Students Psychomotor Performance

1 INTRODUCTION

Most jobs in this challenging economic growth not only require knowledge but training and skills in specific area. Neumann and Banghart (2001) regard the relationship between academia and industry must be bridged to minimize the gap which involves designing, delivery and assesment of the specific courses. The implementation of curriculum emphasizing on hands on activities is one of the ways to increase students skills and improve their knowledge in specific area (Yusuf, 2006). Kazis, (1996) argued that the work-based learning, apprenticeship and dual systems in the curriculum should be part for the students training and the development of a school-to-career system which can equip them for future performance. The work-based learning should not just be implemented to the full time students but include the process of re-skilling and up-skilling the unemployed degree holder, jobless, job seekers and those who would like to upgrade their skills and this physical training is part of modular system education.

Modular system education has been practiced in many developed countries. Through this system, countries like Germany and Australia have been successful in developing the manpower for the industries. In Germany, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) emphasize on 30 percent theory and 70 percent hands on practices to fill the gap between education and industry need. Similar to the

Technical and Further Education (TAFE) in Australia, the comprehensive modular system which combined the academia and industrial participation is proven to be one the best approach in developing industry manpower.

With the objectives to equip the school leavers, communities and producing adequate supply with relevant knowledge, skills and sustain a flexible, agile and mobile workforce, Malaysia through its Community Colleges has recently implemented short courses of modular program. This program runs between 3–4 months with one subject for each module and students will be awarded certificate after completing each module. In addition, graduates are allowed to proceed to the second module with another certificate and all in all, they are eligible to complete all the modules (8 modules) in two years period. Similar to TEVT and TAFE, the approach of each module emphasize 75 percent on practical hands on and 25 percent on theory with industry internship (MOHE, 2010). This modular system involve all the short courses relating to automotive, motorboat, aquaculture, air conditioning, carpenter, building construction, tourism including culinary arts and many others.

With regards to the Certificate in Culinary Arts program, the curriculum is based on the idea and effort from the academia and industry experts through the actual job task in the hotel or foodservice industry. All the Community Colleges in the country which offer certificate in culinary arts have been given mandate to

run the program. Basic western cuisine besides others is one of the pilot module programs offering which aim to train students to have some form of proficiency in preparing this popular cuisine. Despite this, there are no empirical evidences available so far with regard to the effectiveness of the modular. In other words, to what extent the effectiveness of modular system which relate to knowledge, skill, level of confidence and students psychomotor performance is not known and yet to be assessed. This study is empirically diagnosing the effectiveness of basic western module as part of the Malaysia community colleges modular system toward students' psychomotor performance.

2 LITERATURE

2.1 *Modular system*

Vocational scholars views modular system is an independent units or sub division of educational organization (Üstün, 2010; Edward, 2009; Yasmeen, 2010). It is a self contained, internally consistent and independent unit of the subject matter of a course which also comprises guidelines for teaching, learning and testing through mutual relations between institution and industry (Schwaller, 2002). Each unit or block plays a significant role as part of flexibility learning. David (2002) argues the introduction of modular system is owing to a growing heterogeneity of student population, a growing need from employers for a skill workers and rapid changes in occupational content caused by technical and organizational developments in trade and industry. Rafee (2002) notes that the major concerned of modular curriculum are the learning outcomes, motivation of the students and school output. The modular bridged several known gaps on vocational education between theory and practical, between learning in school and learning on the job and between education and work as a whole. The process includes building the standards for qualifications for skill assessment procedures, criteria and procedures for recognising / crediting equivalents including skills that are acquire through work experience and developing procedures for certifying non-formally and informally acquired knowledge. The concept of teaching modular system is more precise, focus and provide learning that student can integrate and effectively apply (Young, 2001).

2.2 *Competency and skill*

Boyatzis (1982) defines competency as a capability or ability or any characteristic or abilities that enhance a job holder's ability to perform and it cannot be separated from personal characteristics and professional skill (Levy-Leboyer, 1996). Both are interrelated and support each other in the process of fulfilling the duties requirement. From the student perspective, it denotes the characteristics of a student that lead to the demonstration of skills and abilities, which result in effective

performance within a specific area (Wan, 2002). In this sense, student must achieve the competency and skill standard set by the institutions to be part in achieving program goal and they have to be adapted and to be more aggressive and confident in performing action (Chin and Wu, 2010).

2.3 *Psychomotor performance*

In learning perspective, psychomotor is closely associated to skill based and the learning of skills (Schwaller, 1995) and the development of skills requires practice and it is measured in terms of ability, speed, precision, distance, procedures, or techniques in execution (Simpson, 1972). Based on the Taxonomy Bloom (Huit, 2009) perception, set, guided response, mechanism, complex overt response, adaptation, origination and words are the seven major components of psychomotor skills.

Perception: The ability to use sensory cues to guide motor activity. This ranges from sensory stimulation, through cue selection, to translation. **Key Words:** chooses, describes, detects, differentiates, distinguishes, identifies, isolates, relates, selects.

Set: Readiness to act. It includes mental, physical, and emotional sets. These three sets are dispositions that predetermine a person's response to different situations (sometimes called mindsets). **Key Words:** begin, displays, explains, moves, proceeds, reacts, shows, states, volunteers.

Guided Response: This is the early stages of learning are the complex skills that include imitation, trial and error. Adequacy of performance is achieved by practicing. **Key Words:** copies, traces, follows, react, reproduce, responds.

Mechanism: This is the intermediate stage in learning a complex skill. Learned responses have become habitual and the movements can be performed with some confidence and proficiency. **Key Words:** assembles, calibrates constructs, dismantles displays, fastens, fixes, grinds, heats, manipulates, measures, mends, mixes, organizes and sketches.

Complex Overt Response: The skillful performance of motor acts that involve complex movement patterns. Proficiency is indicated by a quick, accurate, and highly coordinated performance, requiring a minimum of energy. This category includes performing without hesitation, and automatic performance. **Key Words:** assembles, builds, calibrates, constructs, dismantles, displays, fastens, fixes, grinds, heats, manipulates, measures, mends, mixes, organizes, sketches.

Adaptation: Skills are well developed and the individual can modify movement patterns to fit special requirements. **Key Words:** adapts, alters, changes, rearranges, reorganizes, revises and varies.

Origination: Creating new movement patterns to fit a particular situation or specific problem. Learning outcomes emphasize creativity based upon highly developed skills. **Key Words:** arranges, builds, combines, composes, constructs, creates, designs, initiate, makes, originates.

2.4 Modular program in Malaysia

Similar to TVET (Germany) and TAFE (Australia), the fifty nine Malaysia Community colleges are offering courses mainly related to crafts, technical and engineering fields with 75 percent of the curriculum emphasize on hands-on or practical compared to 25 percent theoretical aspects (Ministry of Higher Education, 2009). The courses ranged from automotive, fashion, engineering and computer to hotel catering, culinary arts and food processing. Realizing the importance of the community colleges contribution in the provision of skill manpower to the industry, the government recently has given mandate to certain community colleges in running a modular program as pilot project which emphasized on short courses (MOHE, 2010). This module allowing students to take short courses which run between 3 to 4 months based on their interest. Each module taken qualifies students to get the Malaysia Skill Certificate and they are also allowing to proceed to the next four modules which will eligible them to get the diploma. The curriculum is also modelled using the Outcome Based Education (OBE) and Competency Based Education (CBE).

3 METHODOLOGY

Triangulation approach or mix method which combine the quantitative and qualitative was chosen for information gathering. These approaches are opted in obtaining more clear insights or in depth findings on the issue investigated. Populations for quantitative information were chosen among students who are in verge finishing their basic western cuisine module in six selected Community Colleges. For the qualitative, six lecturers from six selected Community Colleges who is involved in teaching the module is chosen through interview. These lecturers are believed to have vast experience in teaching the module and would provide relevant and valuable information.

Two (2) instruments were employed, a self-completed questionnaire for the students and semi structured interview questions for the lecturers. Survey questionnaire was divided into three (3) major sections. Students were required to translate their view on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 with "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree". A pre testing of the instrument was conducted among thirty (30) students from the Sungai Petani Community College.

On qualitative instrument, standardized interviewing method was developed with a pre-determined set of open ended questions. Questions relating to the student's knowledge, skills, confident level and psychomotor performance were probed.

Six respective community colleges that offer the basic western cuisine module were involved in this study. The process of data gathering (survey and interview) was personally undertaken by researcher. The process was ran into two sessions with the first session

involving students while second session interviewing the lecturers. With no obvious problem, a total of 223 questionnaire were collected. For the interview, each session lasted between thirty minutes to one hour on average and all sessions were tape-recorded.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Characteristics of the sample

Frequencies showing that 90.1 percent ($n = 210$) students age were between 18 and 22 years old, 6.3 percent ($n = 14$) above 38 years old and 2.7 percent ($n = 6$) in age range between 23 and 27 years old. Number of male students exceeded the female with 66.8 percent ($n = 149$) against 33.2 percent ($n = 74$). 45.7 percent ($n = 102$) of students were from the village as opposed to 42.2 percent ($n = 94$) from the city upbringing and 12.1 percent ($n = 27$) were from a small town. On previous work experience, only 31.8 percent ($n = 71$) of students used to work in culinary field compared to 68.2 percent ($n = 152$) who did not have any culinary working experience.

4.2 Quantitative analysis

Test of internal reliability was initially undertaken to see how much consistency presents among the ratings given by students in all the data collected. Result showed that the instrument and items used were reliable with coefficient alpha value 0.726 for section B and 0.617 for section C. As most of the items in the survey instrument are newly developed, the underlying relationships within them were statistically processed with exploratory factor analysis. Using Principal component analysis with varimax rotation and Kaiser Normalisation on the thirty six items with factor loading of 0.30, four factors were extracted with only two items deleted. The four factors were Psychomotor Performance (PSY, 8 items), Knowledge (KNW, 7 items), Skill (SKIL, 10 items) and Confidence Level (CONF, 9 items).

4.3 Effectiveness of students' knowledge

A descriptive statistic revealed that students believed the module help students to know basic western cooking ingredients ($M = 4.20$, item 1) and basic western cuisine ($M = 4.20$, item 2). They also believed that the module help them understand the right cooking method ($M = 4.22$, item 3), identify the right cooking technique ($M = 4.23$, item 4), understand the function of decoration in food ($M = 4.23$, item 5) and gathering knowledge about the cleanliness and safety value ($M = 4.22$, item 6). In addition, they agreed that the module help them to identify food composition ($M = 4.22$, item 7) and expanding their knowledge in western cuisine ($M = 4.17$, item 8).

4.4 *Effectiveness of students' skill*

On the effectiveness of skill, majority of students agree that basic western cuisine module gradually enhancing their skill which enable them to at least prepare the western food ranging from breakfast cookery ($M = 4.25$, item 1) to simple appetizer ($M = 4.26$, item 2), main courses ($M = 4.28$, item 3), desserts ($M = 4.27$, item 4) with the right texture and taste ($M = 4.27$, item 5). Students believed that the module develops their ability to prepare food presentation properly ($M = 4.25$, item 6) and practice good sanitation in food preparation ($M = 4.23$, item 7).

4.5 *Effectiveness of students' confidence level*

With regard to confidence level, students generally agreed that culinary field is a fun and challenging ($M = 4.36$, item 1) and believed knowledge gained from the module benefit in their career ($M = 4.36$, item 2). They were satisfied with the offer of the module ($M = 4.33$, item 3), agreed that the culinary field provides more job offer compared to other fields ($M = 4.34$, item 4) and the module give exposure to real working environment ($M = 4.35$, item 5). In addition, they were agreed that they were satisfied with their career choice ($M = 4.38$, item 6) and confidence of preparing the products according to the module objective ($M = 4.33$, item 7) and overall getting confidence of preparing basic western cooking ($M = 4.34$, item 8). Students also strongly agreed that their knowledge in western cuisine has increased ($M = 4.57$, item 9) and able to show safety and sanitation practice ($M = 4.56$, item 10).

4.6 *The effectiveness of basic western cuisine module on student's psychomotor performance*

Result clearly supports the preceding analyses that basic western module enhances students psychomotor performance. Majority of students expressed were able to differentiate the types of western breakfast ($M = 4.37$, item 1), accomplished western breakfast items ($M = 4.37$, item 2), handling techniques of commodity cutting ($M = 4.35$, item 3). They also expressed that able to prepare basic appetizers ($M = 4.37$, item 4), main courses ($M = 4.38$, item 5), used the right techniques and method in preparing dessert ($M = 4.38$, item 6), able to identify the right texture and taste based on recipe standard ($M = 4.33$, item 7), arrange the food composition and presentation ($M = 4.32$, item 8) and able to assemble the dishes according to time required ($M = 4.31$, item 9).

4.7 *Lecturers' opinion on student's knowledge, skills, confidence level and psychomotor performance*

On lecturers' feedback, all six lecturers have given almost identical opinion. Generally, they admitted that students' are grasping better on practical knowledge

of the basic western cuisine compared to theoretical knowledge. The practice of embedding theory in the practical classes is slightly less effective. Majority of them agreed that student's theoretical knowledge could be more improved if both are run separately. The enhancement of students' skill occurs throughout practical classes. The intensive training and full day in the kitchen increases their skill.

Each of the lecturers believed that students are doing the right things based on their understanding and developing level of confidence although slight confusion on theoretical aspect and need to be monitored by the lecturers. In other words, students epistemological need to carefully be developed.

Most of the lecturers confidently expressed that the psychomotor performance stipulated in the objectives of the module are generally accomplished. This is evidence when at the end of module students' are able to prepare some of the important western food ranging from breakfast cookery to simple appetizer, main courses and desserts and ready to be in real working environment and confident in taking entry job in the hospitality industry.

5 DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

This study highlights range of interesting and significant findings. Students saw that they are gaining knowledge from the basic western cuisine module as it helps them not only to know the basic ingredients of western cuisine but understand the right cooking methods, techniques, cleanliness and safety practices during the cooking process as well as the function of garnishing in food. The module is gradually enhancing their skills which enable them to at least prepare the western food ranging from breakfast cookery to simple appetizers, main courses and desserts. The module also exposed them to a real kitchen working environment which gradually boasting their confidence in taking entry job in the industry. These students' feelings are further supported through more realistic lecturers opinion that knowledge, skill, confidence level and students psychomotor performance enhances and meeting the objectives of the module. This promising indication is directly given implications for students, lecturers, parents, Ministry of Higher Education, hospitality and foodservice industry in general. Students perhaps feel that the module meet their expectations and satisfied with their program choice and feel enchanted with their future career in the industry and prospective employment. This is in other words that their educational experience itself is worth and they hopefully end up clearer in what they want in their future life. Students may also feel that their parents' investments of money in their education, along with the effort and time spent for personal skill development during the module worthwhile. This may further create motivation for them to do well in subsequent industry

work. For the government, the funding through taxpayer dollars on higher hospitality education may also have been used efficiently. Another wider implication is related to industry practitioners industry that they may be able to recruit qualified and sufficient skillful entry level workers in the future.

This study finding also clearly signify that the basic western cuisine module introduces in selected Community College as pilot project at this stage is showing some good indication and considered effective. With this indication the present module not only need continuously being carried out but other modules related to the psychomotor skill need also to be introduced. Besides this students' proportion in all Community Colleges in addition to the school leavers should be widely open to the young adult (25–40 years old). In addition, the theoretical components which are currently embedded into practical classes is therefore worth to be separated without reducing the practical classes contact hours. In other words, 2 hours per week at least must be allocated for theoretical classes. Finally, the government effort in implementing this approach of education and the collaboration between academic institutions and industry practitioners should continuously be held and improved. This effort, in the long run, will ensure the government intention of giving opportunity, employment to less academic individual and producing skills qualified workers in the local and as well as international hotel industry will gradually being achieved.

REFERENCES

- Boyatzis, r.e. 2008. Competencies in the twenty-first century. *Journal of management development*, 27 (1), 5–12.

- Chin, b.j., and wu, c.m. 2010. The popular competence of hospitality education in taiwan: constructing a baking curriculum model. *The business review*, 16 (2), 207–303.
- David, s. 2002. *Varieties of capitalism: the institutional foundations of comparative advantage*. London: oxford press.
- Edward l.w. 2009. *Core curriculum courses: a study to determine the impact on vocational-education studies*. Unpublished phd thesis, capella university.
- Huitt, w. 2009. Bloom et al.'s taxonomy of the cognitive domain. *Educational psychology interactive*. Valdosta, ga: valdosta state university. (online) available at: <http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/topics/cogsys/bloom.html>
- Levy-leboyer, c. 1996. *La gestion des competences*. Les edition d'organisation, paris.
- Mohe, 2010. *Malaysian ministry of higher education*, kuala lumpur: dewan bahasa dan pustaka.
- Neumann, r.b., and banghart, s. 2001. Industry-university "consulternships": an implementation guide. *International journal of educational management*, 15 (1), 7–11.
- Raffe, d. 2002. *Bringing academic education and vocational training closer together*. Working paper for esrc research project on the introduction of a unified system. Centre for educational sociology, university of edinburgh.
- Schwaller, a. E. 1995. *Instructional strategies for technology education*. In g. E. Martin (ed.), *foundations of technology education* (421–442) new york: glencoe mcgraw-hill.
- Simpson e. J. 1972. *The classification of educational objectives in the psychomotor domain*. Washington, dc: gryphon house.
- Üstün, g. 2010. *Vocational high school female students' opinions about application level of skill education*. *Journal of faculty of educational science*, 43 (1), 1–16.
- Yusuf, a. 2006. *Citizenship education: an instrument for unity and stability in nigeria*. Phd thesis, university of ilorin, ilorin, nigeria.
- Wan, y.f. 2002. *Evolution of taiwan hospitality education*. *Journal of life application and science*, 3 (4), 453–464.

This page intentionally left blank

The relationship between career development learning, workplace experience and employability among UiTM hospitality graduates

H.F. Ariffin

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

H. Saedahtinnur

Faculty of Technical & Vocational Education, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This study investigates the relationship of career development learning towards employability among hospitality graduates and how it is moderated by workplace experience. Survey instruments that consist of career development learning, workplace experience and graduate's employability was administered to 425 hospitality graduates from Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). Findings showed that career development learning can facilitate and enhance graduates' employability upon graduation. In term of moderating effect, it was found that internship training moderate the influence of career development learning toward employability. Implications and suggestions for future research are also provided.

Keywords: employability, career development learning, workplace experience, internship training.

1 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia's economy has growth at an annual rate of 6.6% for the past three decades, but the unemployment rates has increased from 2.6% in 1996 to 3.6% in 2003 as reported by Department of Statistics Malaysia, 1996–2003 (Ismail, 2011). From 1998 until 2010, Malaysia's Unemployment Rate with an average of 3.43% has reached the highest rate of 4.5% in March of 1999 and a lowest record of 2.90% in March of 1998. In July of 2011, the unemployment rate in Malaysia was reported at 3.3% (Trading Economic, 2011).

In 2010, the breakdown of unemployment rate was reported in Tenth Malaysia Plan with 30,000 graduates could not get employed within six month after graduation (Economic Planning Unit, 2010). Each year an estimation of 200,000 of the total 923,000 students will graduate in various area of studies from higher learning institutions. According to the Graduate Online Tracer Study (MOHE, 2010), 42,955 of graduates were still unemployed after 6 month of their graduation. Statistics on recent graduate's employment status by MOHE graduates online survey in 2008 also indicated that there were 35.6% of first degree graduates in Tourism, Hospitality and Food and Beverage were unemployed (Abu Bakar, Jani & Zubairi, 2009).

Above all, labor market now is less predictable, changing more rapidly and more competitive (OECD 1993; Conner & Pollard, 1996, cited in Perrone & Vickers, 2003). As a result, some fresh graduates are facing difficulty in getting a job. Regard to this, it

is pertinent to highlight some effects on the unemployed graduates to the economy growth and towards graduates themselves. It appears that both unemployment and underemployment has contribute some negative effects such as increase case in burglary and armed robbery; psychological and financial stress; aggression, fear anxiety and frustration; homelessness, wandering, vagrancy and insecurity; and prostitution, kidnapping and drug addiction (Olowe, 2009). At the same time, these issues also contribute some negative effects on graduates both from psychological and physical health such as distress and mental health (Cassidy and Wright, 2008).

To prevent an effect of unemployment among graduates become worst, Pool & Sewell (2007) recommended that it is essential for students to receive some early expose in career development learning in a way to get better chance of securing job in which they could be satisfied and success. The current and future working environment also requires graduates to be "work-ready", equipped with work experiences (Hodges & Bruchell, 2003) in order to be more competitive.

Smith, Brooks, Lichtenberg, McIlveen, Torjul & Tyler (2009) suggested that there is a need to provide evidence that career development learning could significantly gives impact to the employability of the graduates. Therefore the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between career development learning and employability from the perspective of Malaysian graduates course of hospitality. Workplace experience through internship training is one of

the important factors in the hospitality program. Thus, the effect of internship training on career development learning toward employability among graduates also was addressed.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 *Graduates' employability*

Recently graduate employability has become a main issue for higher learning institutions because of the changing nature of the labor market, mass participation in Higher Education Institutions (HEI), pressures on student's finance, competition of recruitments expectations among students, employers, parents and government (McNair, 2003). From the perspective HEIs, employability is about to produce graduates who are able and capable which gives an impacts upon all areas of university life, in terms of the delivery of academic programs and extra curricula activities (Lees, 2002).

Pool & Sewel (2007) added that employability is referred as "having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes which makes a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful". Based on definitions, they have developed a model that can be used to explain the concept of employability which is known as "CareerEDGE" model. According to this model, career development learning and experience are the "keys" for the graduates to gain secured and satisfied jobs.

2.2 *Career development learning*

A clear definition for a better understanding needed to differentiate career, development of career and career development learning. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD (2004) has identify career as a lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure and transition in order to move towards a personally determined and evolving future. Career development on the other hand is define as the process of interpreting and managing individual learning, transition, work and leisure to determine own career future (OECD, 2004; McMahon, Patton & Tattham, 2003). Finally, career development learning integrated these work related learning experiences further by assisting students to develop knowledge, attributes, understanding and awareness in relation to self awareness, opportunity awareness, decision-making and transition learning (Watts, 2006).

According to Watts (1977), career development learning consisting of planned experiences designed to facilitate the development of: self-awareness – in terms of interest, abilities, value and etc; opportunity awareness- knowing what work opportunities and what their requirement are; decision learning – decision-making skill; and transition learning – including job search and self-presentation skill This formulation

widely describes as DOTS models; decision-making learning (D), opportunity awareness (O), transition learning (T) and self-awareness (S). Based on the DOTS model, it should includes activities that help students to become more self-aware, to enable them to give real deliberation to the things that they take pleasure in doing, engrossed in, motivate them and suit their personalities. They also need to learn how to search the job markets to see what opportunities are available for them, how to present themselves effectively to the prospective employers, and how to make decisions about their careers (Watts, 2006). Watts (2008) also claim that career development learning may be organize variously to raise students' awareness of employability and how to get self-management in their studies and extra-curricular activities to optimize the employability.

H1: There is a significant relationship between career development learning and graduates' employability.

2.3 *Workplace experience*

Known as work integrated learning, workplace experience is kind of learning resulting from involvement in a workplace community setting (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services, AGCAS, 2005). Most of the universities provide their students with work-integrated learning such as internship, practicum, practical placement, and industry based project, mentoring or vacation work in many of their academic programs. These programs need students to implement their learning knowledge and reflecting upon the experience, knowing themselves and the world of work better in order to authorize them to succeed (AGCAS, 2005). In addition, good work experience can enhance learning and employability, thus work experience opportunities can be well-managed to be educationally valuable (Knight & Yorke, 2002).

H2: Workplace experience moderate relationship btween career development learning and employability

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 *Participants and procedures*

The respondents of this study comprised fresh graduates of Hotel Management, Tourism Management, Foodservice Management and Culinary Art from Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). All respondent was graduated in May 2011 both in degrees and diplomas. The rationale of choosing these groups was due to their experiences as a first time job seeker after graduate from university. In addition they were also selected since they already have some working experiences

during their internship or practical training during tertiary program. Data was collected via mail survey and self-administered questionnaires to 760 respondents. However, there were only 450 questionnaires returned and only 425 questionnaires that were found useful and non-missing value have been retained for further analysis.

3.2 Measures

A 22-items instrument used to measure career development learning was adapted from the outcome of career development learning, namely the DOTS model as listed by Watts (2006). 24-items used to measure workplace experiences through internship training adapted from Muhammad, Yahya, Shahimi & Mahzan (2009); Smith, Dalton & Dolheguy (2004); Singh & Dutta (2010); and Dickerson & Kline (2008). Employability was measured using 39-items adapted from Yorke & Knight (2004) pertaining on aspect of employability that graduates should possess in enhance the employability. All of the items were measured by using the 5-point Likert Scale.

3.3 Data analyses

The demographic information was used to provide an overview of respondents' profile. Principal factor analysis was performed to reduce the number of factors or items from each variable. The final results from this factor analysis then were used for further investigation to testing the hypotheses. Linear regression was used to assess the significant relationship and correlation coefficient between variable to assess the relationship between the independent variable of career development learning towards the criterion variable of graduates' employability. Finally, a hierarchical regression was run to analyze the moderating effects of the workplace experience between career development learning and graduates' employability.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Profile of sample

70.8% ($N = 301$) of the respondents were female while the remaining 29.2% ($N = 104$) were male. The ages of respondents involved were at a range from 22 and 26 years old. Most of the respondents are 24 years old with 36.2% ($N = 154$). Among of them, 69.4% ($N = 295$) are degree holder graduates and only 30.6% ($N = 130$) held a diploma certificate. 28.7% ($N = 122$) were graduates from Tourism Management program. It was found that all of the respondents had internship training experience or practical work experience in hospitality industry with duration of training for 3-6 months. The respondents' present status show that majority of graduates were employed with 76.2% ($N = 324$), 9.9% ($N = 42$) were unemployed and 13.9% ($N = 59$) furthering their study to the higher level.

Table 1. Results of linear regression analyses for testing relationship of career development learning on employability.

Step	Variable	Employability		
		β	R^2	$R^2 \Delta$
1	Career development learning	.47**	.283	.279
	Awareness and decision making	.500*	.274	.224
	Transition learning	.216**	.046	.224

Table 2. Result of the hierarchical regression on workplace experience in the relationship between career development learning and graduates' employability.

Step	Variable	Employability without internship	Employability with internship
		β	β
1	Career development learning	.470*	.516*
	R^2	.220	.225
	$R^2 \Delta$.219	.221

4.2 Hypotheses testing

Table 1 provides the result of the linear regression analyses to test the relationship between career development learning and employability. At the significant level 0.01, career development learning overall was significant and have positive relationship to the graduate employability where [$\beta = 0.470$, $R^2 = 0.283$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.279$]. The finding revealed that self/opportunity awareness & decision-making dimension have significant and positive influence on graduate employability [$\beta = 0.500$, $p < 0.01$]. In addition, the second dimension, transition learning also has been reported has significant and positive relationship on graduates' employability [$\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.01$], thus Hypothesis 1 was fully supported.

Table 2 provides the result of hierarchical regression to test the moderating effect of workplace experience in the relationship between career development learning and employability. The result shown that the significant effect of career development learning on graduates employability [$\beta = 0.470$, $p < 0.01$]. In the presence of internship training [$\beta = 0.516$, $p < 0.01$], it can be observed that the beta value increased, indicating that the moderation effect has taken place in the relationship between career development learning and graduates' employability. Thus Hypothesis 2 was supported.

5 DISCUSSION

Based on the findings presented, it was observed that career development learning significantly influences graduates employability with a fairly correlation

and beta value, $\beta = 0.470$ ($p < 0.01$), indicating that career development learning significantly predicted graduates' employability, thus supporting H1. It was supported by Watts (2008) where career development learning will able to assist students to clarify their chosen career path which they can develop and build their employability and competence. He also claimed that career development learning can help to optimize the employability among the graduates. Meanwhile, career development learning is able to raise student's awareness and capable on managing their studies and extra-curricular activities. Based on the result between career development learning dimensions, it was found that self/opportunity awareness and decision-making learning has more influence on graduates' employability compare to transition learning. The result is aligned with a study conducted by McIlveen, Brooks, Lichtenberg, Smith, Torjul & Tyler (2011) which indicated that the convergence of the career development-learning domains are self-awareness and opportunity awareness, but relatively less integration of decision-making and transition learning.

The hierarchical regression also showed that the workplace experience dimension, internship training moderates overall the career development learning effect on graduates' employability as there was an addition in beta value when the internship training was presented in the evaluation, thus supporting H2. The result indicates that the more exposure on internship training helps students to be more aware on self-interest, abilities and value or knowing what opportunities are available and what requirements need to be complied. The students also feel that they are able to make considerable decision on their career path after internship training. This is supported by Brooks, Cornelius, Greenfield & Joseph (1995) and Taylor (1998) that stressed practical experience and exposures gained during internship program are helpful in improving career decision making. The result from In McIlveen *et al.* (2011) study from universities' career services also found that self-awareness and opportunity awareness were rated as most often present in work-integrated programmes. However, workplace experience through internship training does not influence their transition learning toward employability as they are not learn much from industry about the job search strategy.

6 IMPLICATIONS

It was hoped that the importance of career development in enhancing graduate employability after graduation such as self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision-making and transition learning has been realized and aware among students. By that, it will be helping them to enhance their employability chances upon graduation. Therefore, it is important for the students to take part in their career planning by make their own career goals and action plans to attain better career employability and employment chances in the future.

This study also can be used as a guideline for learning institution to develop a better career development learning programs. It was known that the learning institutions play a significant role in ensure the level of their students through the learning outcomes especially which related to career development. With result of this study in mind, university departments especially academics staff and career development practitioners may reflect upon which extent to give their students to possess and perceive about the career learning process during their tertiary program. Teaching and learning should be more effective in the curriculum to prepare the graduates to link their potential skills and knowledge to meet demand required by employers.

Through this study also, the industry have more detailed information regarding on students perception of internship program so that they will know how to assist students in meeting their internship goals better. On the other hand both school and industry should collaborate closely to develop a well-organized quality internship program in order to enhance the level of graduates' employability. Employers also can incorporate career development during any work experience by provision of career mentor; provide in house speaker, rotated students through a range of role and skill development and training. The inclusion of career development opportunities within workplace experiences also can lead better matching of students and opportunities and help students to have a clear sense of where they fit or not in any industry.

7 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Result gained might not be able to generalize to the other sample due to the limited sampling frame used since the respondents were UiTM students only. For future research, a bigger and more diversified sample could be used from various type institutions. Private and public universities have a different implementation and career development planning for their students. Since this study only focuses on one of the public university, it is worth to conduct and compare the result from both public and private institution students in the future research.

It is recommended that future research can be done in long term period to cover both perception and expectation from students regarding on the workplace experiences through internship training before and after the programs. It is also recommended that future research to study on the level of understanding on career development learning in teaching and learning process among university employers and also in workplace supervision of internship training among employers.

8 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that career development learning is one of the important element that could assist graduates to secure their future

work after graduation. Thus, Higher Education Institutions should be aware of the need of an effective career development learning program among students during their tertiary programs. Internship training program also should be designed systematically and well planned by the learning institution and industry for the students. Lack of commitment from the industry on preparing a good and sufficient internship program has implicated negative perceptions among the students about the effect of internship in influence their learning on employability. Therefore, both learning institution and industry should play their own role by taking actions in order to increase and enhance the learning condition and workplace experience learning to help students to gain employability upon graduation.

REFERENCES

- Abu Bakar, M.Y., Jani R., & Zubairi Y.Z. 2009. An overview of graduate employability of recent Graduate: Some Facts and Figure. *Seminar on Employability, Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia, Putrajaya, 21–22 July 2009*.
- Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services, AGCAS 2005. *Careers education benchmark statement*. Report by Careers Education Task Group. Sheffield: AGCAS.
- Brooks, L., Cornelius, A., Greenfield, E., & Joseph, R. 1995. The relation of career related work or internship experiences to the career development of college seniors. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 46, 332–349.
- Dickerson, J. P. & Kline, S. F. 2008. The early career impact of the co-op commitment in hospitality curricula. *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism*. 8(1) 3–22.
- Economic Planning Unit (EPU), 2010. *Tenth Malaysia Plan 2011–2015*. Retrieved January 7, 2011, from <http://www.epu.jpm.my/RM10/html/english.htm>
- Hodges, D., & Burchell, N. 2003. Business graduate competencies: Employers' views on importance and performance. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 4(2), 16–22.
- Ismail, N.A., 2011. Graduates' characteristics and unemployment: A study among Malaysian graduates. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(16).
- Knight, P. & Yorke, M. 2002 *Skills Plus: Turning the undergraduate curriculum*. Retrieved March 4, 2011, from <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/945.htm>.
- Lees, D. 2002. *Graduate employability – literature review*. Retrieved August 27, 2010, from <http://www.palatine.ac.uk/files/emp/1233.pdf>.
- McIlveen, P., Brooks, S., Lichtenberg, A., Smith, M., Torjul, P., & Tyler, J. 2011. Perceptions of career development learning and work-integrated learning in Australian higher education. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 20(1).
- McMahon, M., Patton, W., & Tatham, P. 2003. *Managing life learning and work in the 21st Century*. Subiaco: Miles Morgan Australia.
- McNair, S. 2003. *Employability in Higher Education: Developing institutional strategy*. United Kingdom.
- Ministry of Higher Education, MOHE 2010. Graduate Tracer Study, Statistic of Malaysia Higher Education. Available at http://www.mohe.gov.my/web_statistik/statistik_2010.htm
- Muhammad, R., Yahya, Y., Shahimi, S., Mahzan, N., 2009. Undergraduate internship training attachment in accounting: The interns perspective. *International Education Studies*, 2(4).
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD 2004. *Career guidance: A handbook for policy maker*. Retrieved March 4, 2011 from <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/53/34060761.pdf>.
- Olowe, O. 2009. Graduate unemployment and its resultant effects on developing economies country. *A paper presented at the International Conference of Covenant University's College of Business and Social Science, 10–13 March 2009 at Covenant University Canaanland, Ota*. Ogun State, Nigeria.
- Patton, W., & McMahon, M. 2001. *Career development programs: Preparation for lifelong career decision making*. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research.
- Perrone L. & Vickers, M. H. 2003. Life after graduation as a “very uncomfortable world”: an Australian case-study. *Education + Training*, 45(2), 69–78.
- Pool, D.L. & Sewell, P. 2007. The key to employability: Developing a practical model of graduate employability. *Education + Training*, 49(4), 277–289.
- Singh, A. & Dutta, K. 2010. Hospitality internship placement: analysis for United Kingdom and India. *Journal of Services Research*, 10(1).
- Smith, M., Brooks, S., Lichtenberg, A., McIlveen, P., Torjul, P. & Tyler, J. 2009. *Career development learning: Maximising the contribution of work-integrated learning to the student experience*, Academic Services Division, University of Wollongong, Australia.
- Smith, P. J., Dalton, J. & Dolheguy, R. 2004. Student experiences of work placement in school-based vocational programs. *Education + Training*, 46, 262–268.
- Taylor, M. S. 1998. Effects of college internship in individual participants. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 73, 393–492.
- Trading Economic Data 2011. Malaysia unemployment rate. Retrieved from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/malaysia/unemployment-rate>.
- Watts, A. G. 2006. *Career development learning and employability*, The Higher Education Academy, Melbourne, Australia.
- Watts, A. G. 2008. *Career development learning and work-integrated learning: A conceptual perspective from the UK*. National Symposium, Melbourne.
- Yorke, M. & Knight, P. T. 2004. Embedding employability into the curriculum. *Learning and Employability Series 1*. Higher Education Academy, New York England.

This page intentionally left blank

Strategies in embedding hospitality students employability skills and employability level

Fadliza Mohd Napiah, Muhammad Izzat Zulkifly, Mohd Raziff Jamaluddin & Mohd Hafiz Mohd Hanafiah

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The main purpose of this conceptual paper is to investigate hospitality students' employability skills and level in general. Before looking at those skills and levels, it is also important to look at the strategies or approaches used by the higher learning institutions to embed these important elements to their students. It is important to gauge the hospitality students' performance to ensure the students' employability in the future and towards producing quality hospitality graduates for the industry. The study is also important to improve the employability skills that the hospitality students have towards the objective of producing employable graduates for the industry. For this reason, students from Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management will be the population of this study in the future. This will help to ensure the quality of the graduates of UiTM and also as one of the supporting factor for UiTM to achieve its goal in becoming the world class university.

Keywords: hospitality, employability skills and employability level

1 INTRODUCTION

Hospitality industry is one of the leading industries in any developing and developed countries including Malaysia. The rapid growth of this industry can be remarkably seen in the changes of its development. In China, the rapid economic growth has promoted the development of domestic tourism industry which has accounted for over 90% of total tourism market in terms of tourist arrivals (Ellis, 2009). The same situation occurs in other countries as well. Hence, the size and significance of the hospitality industries is revealed when Oxford Economics published that it is the fifth largest industry in the UK, directly employing 2.4 million and indirectly a further 1.2 million people (British Hospitality Association, 2010). People involved in hospitality industry are the main backbone for the whole daily operations as the service provided require human's factor. Therefore, it can be said that hospitality industry is inter-related with the service sector as services engage with human regardless the level of involvement.

Service delivery amongst human varies from one to another. However, the definition of good delivery service always reached at a common focal view where it can be defined as service that is able to satisfy the customers' needs and wants. Whilst customers' satisfaction level also varies, there are certain elements that can contribute to that perspective.

A highly performed service delivery personnel is someone who is well-trained and highly skilled and

able to optimize his knowledge and experience to perform his job at an optimum level. The question is how a highly competent employee can be developed? Partially, the answer lies in the roles of higher learning institutions.

Institution of higher learning is a platform for individuals to get their tertiary education as it is where the most number of human capitals being produced. Education is an investment in human capital where the knowledge and skills acquired will produce a better return to the individual (Schiller, 2008). In today's world, there is a need for individuals to compete in getting employed. According to Ministry of Higher Education (2009):

“With the current challenges posed by globalization, the nation needs a highly sophisticated workforce capable of facing the challenges at home and in abroad”

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Employability can be defined as knowledge and skills possessed by individual that will ensure a possible job opportunities in the industry. It is a wide concept that brought different meanings to different school of thoughts. Morris (2007) mentioned in the report of 'Employability across the Region' that earlier version of definition on employability had some variations of scope. Thus, there were common perceptions on

employability which constitutes of skills mixtures; knowledge of attitudes and behavior but the perceived levels on the employability varies (Morris, 2007).

In today's world, the workforce has become more challenging with the concept of globalization and the incorporation of technologies. More organizations are competing against themselves with the technologies advancement and as well as the performance. Minister of Higher Education (MOHE) stated in a conference that other than technological advancement, education and workforce competencies will be the competitive advantage for the 21st century.

Some Higher Learning of Institutions have taken highly structured strategies in mapping graduates attributes across curriculum to ensure that these attributes are readily seen across an entire course program (Australia, 2007). Bakar, Jani & Zubairi (2009) mentioned MOHE's objective in the seminar on employability which is to produce competent graduates to fulfill national and international human capital need with 75% of the graduates employed in their relevant fields within six months upon graduation.

Nowadays, graduate or key skills are being emphasized on and therefore it dictates that Higher Learning of Institution incorporates chances in developing the skills based on the subject-specific skills and knowledge (Saunders & Zuzel, 2009). With the expansion in Higher Learning of Institution and recent economic downturn, there is tough competition for jobs in the graduate employment market (Saunders & Zuzel, 2009). Recently, there is an increase number in private institutions that offer hospitality courses throughout Malaysia. Therefore, it is important for UiTM to pay extra attention to this crucial issue to ensure that hospitality graduates from UiTM are employable for the future. In addition, our future human capitals need to have the employability skills demanded by all industries (Bakar & Hanafi, 2007).

Acquiring employability skills is one of the global issues which employers are dealing with when it comes to graduates or their future employees (Rasul, Ismail, Rajudin & Rauf, 2010). Therefore, a proper solution should be made for this issue. Questions arose on what are the most important skills that should be acquired by graduates in order to be employable. There are several studies that had been done to identify the set of employability skills demanded by employers and among the prominent ones are the employability skills defined by Carnevale, Gainer & Meltzer (1990) and The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS, 2000). For this study, the researcher chose employability skills assets by Carnevale, Gainer & Meltzer (1990).

The employability skills contain 15 skills that are categorized into six groups; basic skills, communication skills, adaptability skills, developmental skills, group effectiveness skills and influencing skills. Each group elaborates more on the employability skills that students should have in them. These skills are important in performing daily tasks at the workplace. By having these vast employability skills for the workplace

will improve oneself competency in performing the job.

The skills outlined by Carnevale, Gainer & Meltzer (1990) will be used as guidelines to assess the hospitality students' level of employability skills. After discussing the importance of graduates' employability, this approach is very important to measure the employability level of the students. There are several approaches to impart employability skills into students during the learning processes. Strategy like Problem Based Learning (PBL) is said to be effective in enhancing the employability skills. PBL is believed to produce independent learners who are motivated, involved in deep learning, work as a team, develop effective strategies, skills and knowledge for life-long learning and as well as professional work (Beaumont & Frank, 2003).

Apart from that, a theory model in embedding employability skills had been developed by Yorke & Knight (2004). The model is called as USEM model. This learning theory model explains on four ways of imparting employability skills which had been published through a book. The book by Yorke & Knight (2004), is designed for educators who may be at the beginning stage of considering the students employability enhancement.

The first item in the theory model is to develop understanding. The word understanding or knowledge reflects as the main objective of higher education (Yorke & Knight, 2004). As strong as the word itself, no further arguments should be placed on that. The next item is skillful practices that should be available based on the course program. The third item in the model is to develop efficacy beliefs. Efficacy belief is defined as the belief in an individual's capability of organizing and executing the courses of action required to managing prospective situations (Bandura, 1995). In a simpler definition, it also can be defined as an individual's belief in his capability to achieve things (Yorke & Knight, 2004).

The last item is the metacognition. Metacognition is a connected process of acquiring knowledge, the capabilities of oneself and how to gain more knowledge. This process helps to understand and comprehend learning that consists of planning and monitoring the activities as well as examining the outcomes from those activities (Livingston, 1997). For example, a student is about to learn a complex mathematical calculation, he may question himself about the mathematical formulation concept where his goal is to understand the concept. If he does not understand, he needs to identify the steps he could do next in order to understand the mathematical theories.

The model theory discussed above is going to be used as another outline towards assessing the acceptance level of hospitality students on the strategies in embedding the employability skills. The questionnaires for this study will be adopted from previous studies that are related directly in measuring USEM model theory and employability skills by Carnevale, Gainer & Meltzer (1990).

In this context, the issue of how the strategies can affect the employability skills of hospitality students arose. For some time now, a wide range of protagonists have been involved in developing programmes focusing on the development of work skills (Pieck, 2009). But to what extent it affects the students' competency level? Shen & Liu (2011) mentioned about the study by (O'Donnell, Dansereau, Hall, and Rocklin, 1987) had revealed that basic and supportive strategies affect the learning process where the student had better learning outcomes. This study shows that the strategy itself is truly important in assisting the students' learning process in order to develop the employability skills.

3 CONCLUSION

Based on the overall discussion, it is important for this study to be carried out to examine on the hospitality students' level of employability in Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management of UiTM Shah Alam in UiTM. The students' employability is crucial to ensure that UiTM produces high quality graduates for the hospitality industry. In addition to that, this can be taken as performance appraisal for the students pertaining employability skills throughout the learning process so that further improvements will be done in this area.

In the competitive environment in the hospitality industry, it is important for a hospitality student to have the most demanded skills by the employers in order to guarantee a job placement in the industry. Furthermore, the competition rises due to more hospitality courses had been offered in private colleges and universities. Therefore, this study is to ensure that these students will be able to compete with other hospitality graduates during job hunting. Apart from that, the employers expect higher learning of institution to produce graduates with vast employability skills demanded without additional training from the industry (Hussain et al., 2010).

The result of this study will be important in determining the hospitality students' level of employability for the working industries. This also can be seen as an indirect approach of students' assessments for their performances in the learning process.

REFERENCES

- Arensdoerf, J. 2009. The Perceptions of Employability Skills transferred from Academic Leadership Classes to the workplace: A Study of the FHSU Leadership studies certificate program. *Kansas State University*, 1–209.
- Australia, C. 2007. Graduate Employability Skills. Department of Education, Science & Training. Australia: Precision Consultancy.
- Bakar, Jani & Zubairi 2009. An Overview of Graduate Employability of Recent Graduates: Some Facts and Figures. Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia.
- Bandura, A. 1995. Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies. *Journal of Cognitive*, 1–13.
- Beaumont, C. & Frank, B. 2003. Enhancing Employability Through Problem Based Learning. *Edge Hill College of Higher Education*, 1–8.
- British Hospitality Association. 2010–11. British Hospitality Association Annual Report. United Kingdom: British Hospitality Association.
- Glasgow Caledonian University. 2005. Employability Strategy. Academic Policy Committee, 2–24.
- Bakar, A. R. & Hanafi, I. 2007. Assessing Employability Skills of Technical-Vocational Students in Malaysia. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 3 (4), 202–207.
- Carnevale, A. P., Gainer, L. J. & Meltzer, A. S. 1990. *Workplace basic training manual*. San Fransisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ellis, C. B. 2009. Hotel Operators in China: New Opportunities in a More Sophisticated Market Place. Asia: CBRE Research.
- Hussain, M. Y., Mokhtar, S. B., Ahmad, A. A. & Mustapha, R. 2010. Importance of Employability Skills from Employers' Perspective. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Science*, 7 (C), 430–438.
- Israel, G. D. 1992. Determining Sample Size. University of Florida, 1–8.
- Livingston 1997. Metacognition: An Overview. Retrieved April 21st., 2011, from <http://gse.buffalo.edu/fas/shuell/cep564/metacog.htm>
- Marimuthu, M., Arokiasamy, L. & Ismail, M. 2009. Human Capital Development and its Impact on Firm's Performance. *The Journal of International Social Research*, 2 (8), 266–272.
- Ministry of Higher Education 2009, July 21st.. "Enhancing graduate employability: issues concerns and the way forward. Ministry of Higher Education.
- Minister of Higher Education 2009. National industry dialog: Workforce Development in a Changing Market by Engaging Industries. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.
- Morris 2007. Employability across the Regions. Northampton: Skills for Business Network Employability Project.
- O'Donnell, A. M., Dansereau, D. F., Hall, R. H. & Rocklin, T. R. 1987. Cognitive, Social/Affective, and Metacognitive Outcomes of Scripted Cooperative Learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 79 (4), 431–437.
- Ogbeide, G. 2006. Employability Skills and Students' Self-Perceived Competence for Careers in Hospitality Industry. *University of Missouri-Columbia*, 1–98.
- Othman, H., Sulaiman, A., Masrom, N. R. & Buntat, Y. 2009. The Instillation of Employability Skills Through Problem Based Learning Model at Malaysia's Higher Institution. *Management And Technopreneurship*, 1–8.
- Overtoom, C. 2000. Employability Skills: An Update. In E. Digest, Clearinghouse on Adult, Careers and Vocational Education. Eric.
- Pieck, E. 2009. Skills Development Strategies: A Slow Learning Process How Much Have We Learned? 1–11.
- Pool, L. D. 2007. The Key to Employability: developing a practical model of graduate employability. *Education & Science*, 49 (4), 277–289.
- Rasul, M. S., Ismail, M. Y., Ismail, N., Rajudin, M. R. & Rauf, r. A. A. 2010. Development of employability skills assessment tool for manufacturing industry. *Jurnal Mekanikal*, 30, 48–61.
- Robinson, J. P. 2000. The Workplace. In C. Extension. *Alabama Extensive Cooperation System*, 1 (3), 1–3.
- Saunders, V. & Zuzel, K. 2010. Evaluating Employability Skills: Employer and Student Perceptions. *Bioscience Education*.
- Scans 2000. Skills & Tasks for JOBS. America: US Department of Labor.

- Schiller 2008. Human Capital and Higher Education: How does our Region Fare. In *Business Review*.
- Shen, C. Y. & Liu, H. S. 2011. Metacognitive Skills Development: A Web-Based Approach in Higher Education. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 10 (2), 140–150.
- Teijlingen, E. R. V. & Hundley, V. 2001. The Importance of Pilot Studies. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 35, 289–295.
- Teye, V. B. & Leclerc, D. 1998. Product and Service Delivery Satisfaction among North American Cruise Passengers. *Tourism Management*, 19 (2), 153–160.
- UiTM. 2011. Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management. Retrieved November 11, 2011, from Universiti Teknologi MARA: <http://fhtm.uitm.edu.my/V1/>
- Glasgow Caledonian University. 2005. Employability Strategy. Academic Policy Committee, 2–24.
- Victoria, J. 2007. Pilot Study of an Instrument to Measure Attitudes to Palliative Care Practice in Neonatal Intensive Care Nursing. *Collegian*. 14 (4), 1–5.
- Yorke & Knight 2004. Embedding Employability into the Curriculum. *Learning and Teaching Support*, 2–24.

Career decision making among hospitality undergraduates in UiTM Shah Alam and Puncak Alam

Nuraini Putit & Ranees Atlas

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, UiTM Sarawak, Malaysia

Hanif Hanan, Kameley Ramie, Lucas Lua & Rosmaliza Abd. Rahim

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, UiTM Puncak Alam, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Hospitality industry is labor intensive with high employee turnover. It is a demanding and yet promises exciting career prospect for the young undergraduates. However, the hospitality industry is facing problem in attracting and retaining qualified employees in their organizations. The fact is that, even though these students study in hospitality, not all of them intend to work in the industry after they graduated. This paper focuses primarily on the factors that influence hospitality undergraduates in decision making on their future career and to provide insight on their plan towards working in hospitality industry or other industry upon graduation.

Keywords: career, decision making, undergraduates, self-efficacy, outcome expectation

1 CAREER DECISION MAKING

1.1 *Career decision in hospitality*

Career decision making process is one of the most critical decisions that will be made by individual to achieve their personal goals in their life. However, obtaining a career could be the most challenging period for fresh graduates as there are many considerations factors such as career development opportunity, opportunity to obtain a role that offers responsibility, brand/perception of (quality) employer, training provided by the employer and remuneration. (Hospitality Graduate Recruitment, 2011).

There have been numerous studies regarding career decision-making and intention. However, not many studies have been done regarding students who are still in school or hospitality students, for that matter. Bonafede (2006) stated that the problem of attracting and retaining qualified employees have becoming a major concern worldwide. Bonafede also suggested that one of the reasons that contribute to this problem is that the hospitality undergraduates, not all of them, intended to work in the industry upon their graduation.

Chuang & Dellman-Jenkins (2010) suggested that the hospitality programs and also the industry can work together to help students not only build realistic knowledge of the field but also to instill hospitality attitudes while they are still in school.

1.2 *Problems in hospitality industry*

Hospitality industry is synonym with high turnover problem and therefore it is necessary to understand

the undergraduate students' career intentions as they are the feeder to the industry (Chuang, Goh, Stout, & Dellman-Jenkins, 2007). The industry is still lack of manpower due to high turnover despite the fact that many educational institutions, both private and government, produce thousands of graduates every single year.

Survey by Hospitality Graduate Recruitment (2011), found out that 41% of the participants are considering employment outside of the hospitality sector. Although the number decreased by four percent compared to the previous year, the number still troubles many employers as there are always vacancies in the hospitality industry and they are losing employees to other industries despite the fact that these people were students and some of them are still studying in hospitality.

Ghazali (2010) identified one of the sources for high turnover for employment in hospitality sector in Malaysia is based on cultural perspectives which include practice of religions and dress codes. This could add to the countless reasons undergraduate students intend not to work in the industry. The findings were confirmed by Chuang & Dellman-Jenkins (2010) reported that in Malaysian undergraduates are different compared to American undergraduates based on the local environment and culture that been practice by local people. In response to this concern, this research is to identify the factors which influence hospitality undergraduates in UiTM Puncak Alam and Shah Alam on their career decision making and to investigate how many of them do actually have intentions to pursue careers in the hospitality industry.

This research will be focusing on two main objectives which are identifying factors that influence the students' decisions on their choice of future careers and investigate possibilities of undergraduate to enter the hospitality industry.

H0: Self efficacy > outcome expectations

H1: Self efficacy < outcome expectations

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Hospitality career decision making*

There have been a few studies regarding career decision-making among students but only a few involved hospitality students. The study done by Chuang & Dellman-Jenkins (2010) researched into the factors which determine undergraduate hospitality students' career intentions in the hospitality industry. These include motivations and if there are variables which could be used to predict their careers intentions. The self-report survey used three measures which are Career Decision Self-Efficacy-Short Form scale, COE scale, Vocational Exploration Commitment (VEC) scale.

2.2 *Social cognitive career theory*

Another researcher, Bandura (1977) indicated that people who are lack of confidence in their judgment have difficulty making decisions and sticking with them even if they have been taught the strategies for doing so which means that, student are doubtful to provide much attempt in searching career options except they are confident in their abilities to make good decisions.

In his further research in 1986, he emphasized on social cognitive theory that comes from self-efficacy, outcome expectations and personal goals which influenced an individual's career choice. This theory proven that with self efficacy, student will be able to think on where they want to work upon graduation. In his theory also stated that human achievement depends on interactions between one's behaviors, personal factors and environmental conditions. For example, parents influence from home will affect the student decision on their career choice. Personal factors include student's intention because of their interest, ambition and target when finishing their study and the environmental condition from the industry itself.

Earlier, Taylor & Betz (1983) develop the career decision making self efficacy (CDMSE) scale to measure the self efficacy expectation on the student on the term goal selection, occupational information, problem solving, planning their goal and self appraisal. The higher of the career decision self efficacy is correlate with higher career exploration behavior, vocational identity and career commitment, thus individual who have this higher career decision self efficacy were improved in career planning and goal setting in their self. The above studies were supported by

Pajares (1996) who mentioned that self efficacy influences academic achievement motivation, learning and academic achievement.

2.3 *Undergraduates' expectation*

Pavesic & Brymer (1989) stated that hospitality undergraduate entering the industry often have pre-established perception and expectation of the industry imprinted by their education and work experiences.

Chuang & Natalie (2009) found that students are provided with a strong foundation in the dynamics of interpersonal relationships and human development across the years. The student from Hospitality Management (HM), are prepared with knowledge and skills required by the industry that is associated with specific industry areas such as food service and lodging or functional areas such as accounting, marketing, and management. That mean student have an opportunities to increase their interpersonal skill during their study in the hospital management.

Cox et al. (2009) mentioned that improving student's personal growth, career and academic goals, as well as their determination in continuing with his specific major in outcome expectation. Students who have good level of outcome expectation will have opportunities for the personal growth and academic goal. Survey by South Pacific Board (2006) found that high outcome expectation of students will develop interpersonal skills to work with people.

There are three expected factor that makes undergraduates outcome expectation on decision making which is social, physical environment and self-evaluations. According to Lent et al. (1994), outcome expectation are both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards that career choices and goals. The intrinsic and extrinsic are related to the three factors that being stated by these factors makes the undergraduates in the hospitality courses find difficulty in choosing their career. According to Chuang, Walker & Natalie (2009), outcome expectation of undergraduates had the lowest means score in job security and conflicts among personal, family, professional life. Even though the industry provides numerous opportunities for ownership or entrepreneurship, there are some drawbacks working in the hospitality industry. In addition, tourism industries have to work long hours and during holidays. They have to sacrifice their personal life, an imbalance between family and work time and a lack of time for leisure activities.

Kim (2008) said that students tend to have high desire for their future working career when they began their studies, but their desire changed after recognizing the real situation and negative expectation such as poorly paid, working unsociable days and times, long hours and multi-skill with shift work in the industry after starting work in the hospitality industry. Therefore, most of the student change their career direction and resulted in few students remain to work in hospitality industry. It also will impact the hospitality industry to select and retain employees, who have quality qualifications.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This study used a correlation study in order to find out the important factors which cause the hospitality undergraduates to choose or reject careers in hospitality. Since the study only utilized questionnaires, there will only be minimal interference done. This study is a non-contrived setting since UiTM is the location for the field study. The data were just gathered once, through questionnaire distributed throughout December 2011.

3.2 Sample size

The total number of sample are 220. However, only 150 were used as the other 70 did not complete the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed in UiTM Puncak Alam and UiTM Shah Alam using the convenience sampling method, therefore, the researchers do not consider subjects chosen are representative of the entire population.

3.3 Data selection method

A set of questionnaires which consist of four sections were developed using questionnaires from previous studies and have been modified and altered to suit this study. The first part is demographic, which require students to state general information regarding themselves such as age, gender, and marital status.

For self-efficacy, the Career Decision Self-Efficacy–Short Form (CDSE-SF) was used. This scale was developed by Betz & Luzzo (1996) and includes 25 items. However the scale has been modified to only 18 items for this study because some of the items are irrelevant for the respondents. This scale was used in evaluating a person's confidence level in making career decisions (Chuang & Dellman-Jenkins, 2010).

To measure students' expectations of pursuing a career in the hospitality industry, the Career Outcome Expectation was used. The scale was expanded to 22 items by Chuang (2010) based on the original 12-items scale by Hackett, Betz, Casas, & Rocha-Singh (1992). The scale originally used a 7-point scale but was modified to a 5-point scale (1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree). After that, they will be asked on whether they will choose a career in hospitality or otherwise.

A pilot test has been carried out before the questionnaires are given to the students. This was to make sure that the questionnaires will be able to give the expected results. Besides that, this will give space to correct mistakes before the real survey is conducted. Questionnaires were distributed to 20 students to make sure the wordings are clear and that they are able to understand all of the questions. The result was that the questionnaire is reliable and therefore the researchers proceeded to distributing them to respondents.

3.4 Data analysis

After the data collection, the data from the questionnaires were counted, followed by coding procedures and tabulated. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze the closed ended questions as it is also not time consuming and easy to be understand. To analyze the data collected, the SPSS/PC version 17.0 was used to obtain the descriptive statistics. The open ended response data were analyzed through word counts using Microsoft Excel to determine on the frequencies of word counts mentioned from questions on suggested areas of improvement and the changes could be made to improve the event. Suggestions or comments with the highest repetitions or word counts were presented in the findings section, the *respondents' suggestions*.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Profile of respondents

The distribution of respondents by gender is 62% for female and 38% for male. A majority of respondents are made up of female. Most of the respondents (64.7%) are aged between 21 and 23. It was followed by respondents from the age 24–26, which is 34%. The percentage of respondents aged from 27–29 and those above 30 are at 0.7% each. Academic perspectives, 48% of the respondents achieved Grade Point Average (GPA) between 3.00 and 3.49, 12% between 3.50 and 4.00 along with 37.3% has GPA between 2.50 and 2.99, meanwhile 2.7% stated that their GPA between 2.00 to 2.49.

4.2 Self efficacy

Uses of internet to find information about jobs are the main elements to measure the self efficacy. Total of 88.7% of participants are agree and strongly agree that internet had been the best medium for them to find the information about the job been offered.

The second question been asked was level of the confidence that the participant had in choosing the career that fit to their interest which created 4.11 as the highest mean for this question. Next questions been asked and also got the highest mean was confidence that they could identify employers, firms and institutions relevant to their career possibilities. The Figure 4.1 show the result for the most significant statement in questionnaire where it show that the undergraduates have the highest confidence in the statements 'use the internet to find information about jobs that you like'. This is because as Rozee (2009) said it, the students are more aware of the internet and are internet-savvy.

As for the lowest mean, it is the question which ask how much confidence that they have to make a career decision and then not worry whether it was right or wrong (3.27). Other questions with lower mean asks if they have confidence that they could find out the

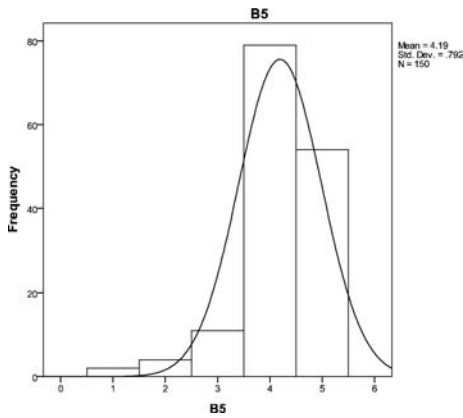


Figure 1. Histogram for the statement with highest confidence in self-efficacy.

employment trends for an occupation over the next ten years and if they could persistently work at their major career goal even when they are frustrated.

4.3 Outcome expectations

Statement of ‘a career in hospitality will make me worry about my interpersonal skill’ creates the highest mean which is 4.09. This indicated that the students are concerned of their communication and administrative skills are low and in the same time this situation creates low confidence among them to enter the hospitality industry. As for the question which has the lowest mean, it is the statement that “A career in hospitality will provide me with opportunities for personal development”. This reflects that undergraduates are not convinced that the industry will provide them with the opportunities for personal development.

4.4 Overall mean for self-efficacy and outcome expectations

The overall mean for self efficacy is 3.8007 while outcome expectation mean is 3.179. This means that self-efficacy is a more significant factor in the decision making of hospitality undergraduate students of UiTM Puncak Alam and Shah Alam. This means that we accept H0: Self efficacy > outcome expectations since the mean is bigger and therefore more significant than outcome expectations. Therefore, the null

hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

- H0: Self efficacy > outcome expectations
- H1: Self efficacy < outcome expectations

4.5 Percentage of undergraduate decision making

Based on the result, 57.89% of undergraduate do not wish to work in hospitality industry and 42.11% intended to pursue a career in the industry. This is correspond to Fraser (2003) stated that although they do not quit from studying, students are more likely to quit the industry once they gain more exposure to the industry and know about the theory and management’s practices as they advance in their studies.

5 DISSCUSSION AND CONCLUSSION

5.1 Limitations of study

Due to time constraints, samples were limited to UiTM hospitality undergraduates in Shah Alam and Puncak Alam campus only. The convenience sampling method was used and the result could not be generalized throughout the whole of UiTM system. Besides that, sample is basically homogenous, which means that more female dominated the samples and this imbalance might have affected the findings in this study.

5.2 Recommendation

As mentioned before, the convenience sampling limited the generaliability of the results, and therefore, a large-scale, nationwide study is recommended in the future. Besides, the samples are taken from one educational institution only; comprising of two branch campuses and perhaps there will be a study which uses samples from all campuses within the UiTM system.

Based on our findings, most undergraduates stated that they do not wish to work in the hospitality industry. Therefore, another research could be carried out to identify the reasons why many hospitality students who chose to study in this course refuse to work in the industry after graduation. Since the study has stated so, measures could be taken to encourage the graduates to serve in the industry. By increasing loyalty of students to the hospitality industry, there will be less problem of turnover and retention of excellent graduates. The

Table 1. Overall mean for self-efficacy and outcome expectations.

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic
Self-efficacy	150	2.22	4.78	3.8007	.45727
Outcome expectations	150	1.36	5.00	3.7179	.56748

faculty should help in identifying the perceived barriers in working and help reduce them. Even though the faculty has established a good rapport and industrial linkage, the students should play greater role and lead more initiatives to interact with the industry so that they will have a more realistic perception of the industry. This includes field trips to related organizations, and guest speakers.

5.3 Significance of the study

Currently, no empirical study has been carried out in Malaysia to determine undergraduates' career intentions. This study could help the top management of hospitality industry to determine the factors that shapes the student's intention to pursue career in the industry. Measures could be taken so that once a hospitality student has finished studying; he or she will be committed to serve in the industry. Apart from that, the institutions could identify factors that could lead to greater retention of hospitality graduates in the industry, whether they are students from tourism, hotel, culinary or food service. In addition, hospitality industry should maintain the worker that have professional and experience in the industry especially the undergraduates.

5.4 Key findings and conclusion

The researchers found out that self-efficacy is more significant than outcome expectation. Most hospitality students are not willing to work in the industry after graduation. This is because according to Roney and Oztin (2007), there might be students who started with an optimistic view of the industry, but they tend to develop a less favorable perception after the internship period or part-time work experience. The authors continue to explain that this is due to the lack of sophistication in human resource policies and practices in many of tourism organizations.

Generally, career decision making towards undergraduates is important based on their beliefs and behaviors and motivations. Our study is supported by Lent et al.'s (1994), which stated that self-efficacy is more influential of behavior in determining career related-behaviors rather than outcome expectations. Therefore, determining the self-efficacy in the career decision making among students is part of researcher's responsibility in examining the factor which is will be used more for the career decision making. The result of this study will ensure either student makes their choice based on the self-efficacy or outcome expectations. The hospitality educators should be more alert to this and take actions so that students' loyalty towards the industry will be increased.

REFERENCES

Bandura 1977. Social learning theory. Englewood Cliffs. NJ: Prentice-Hall, Department of Psychology, Stanford University, California. Page 247.

- Bandura 1986. Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. Pages 5.
- Bandura 1989. Social cognitive theory, *Annals of child development*. R. Vasta (Ed), Greenwich, CT: JAI Press (6), 46.
- Bandura 1997. Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. New York: Freeman. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 4, 285–298.
- Betz & Luzzo 1996. Career assessment and the Career Decision Self-efficacy Scale (CDMSE). *Journal of Career Assessment*, 4, 313–328.
- Bonafede 2006, December 25. Experts identify top 10 issues facing hospitality industry.
- Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins 2010. Career decision making and intention: a study of hospitality undergraduate students. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 34(4), 511–530.
- Chuang, Goh, Stout, & Dellmann-Jenkins 2007. Hospitality undergraduate students' career choices and factors influencing commitment to the profession. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 19(4), 28–37.
- Chuang, Walker & Natalie 2009. Student Perceptions of Career Choices: The Impact of Academic Major. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences Education*, 27(2), 19.
- Cox, McIntosh, Terenzini, Reason, & Quayle, 2009. Factors Shaping Faculty-Student Interaction outside the Classroom: Institutional, Demographic, and Pedagogical Influences. Conference of the American Educational Research Association San Diego, CA. Pages 3.
- Fraser 2003. Why Don't Hospitality Students Keep the Faith? A Research Report on Hospitality Students' Commitment to Careers in the Industry. Managing Employee Attitudes and Behaviors in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry. Kusluvan, S., (pp. 99–134).
- Ghazali 2010. Employee intention to leave a job: A case of Malaysian fast food industry. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Waikato.
- Hackett, Betz, Casas, & Rocha-Singh 1992. Gender, ethnicity, and social cognitive factors predicting the academic achievement of students in engineering. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 39, 527–538.
- Hospitality Graduate Survey Results 2011. 29th April 2011
- Kim 2008 Career Expectations and Requirements of Undergraduate Hospitality Students and the Hospitality Industry: An Analysis of Difference. Page 24.
- Lent, Brown, & Hackett 1994. Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, Page 79.
- Pajares 1996. Assessing self efficacy beliefs and academic success: The Case for specificity and correspondence. Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York. Page 4–5.
- Pavesic & Brymer 1989. Industry retention/attrition of hospitality graduates. *Hospitality Education and Research Journal*, 13, 267–275.
- Roney & Oztin 2007. Career Perceptions of Undergraduate Tourism Students: A Case Study in Turkey. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 6(1), 4–18.
- Rozee 2009. Fresh Graduates Vs Experienced Professionals. Pakistan's #1 Job Websites. December 5, 2009.
- South Pacific Board. 2005. Tourism and Hospitality Prescription. South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment. Page 9.
- Taylor & Bertz. 1983. Application of the Self-efficacy Theory to the understanding and treatment for the Career Indecision. *Journal Vocational Behavior*. (1)63.

This page intentionally left blank

Training and education of OSH practices in managing man-machine safety of food manufacturing firms in Malaysia

Mazni Saad, Mohd. Shazali Md. Sharif & Toh Poh See
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

Eva Breukelman
Keij & Stefels, The Netherlands

ABSTRACT: The food manufacturing firms is important because it is one of the backbones of Malaysia's economy and at the same time can be considered in the category of hazardous industry. At organizational level, the use of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) practice in food manufacturing operations to date is recognized in eliminating the non-added value or minimizing the interruptions to the production process. Due to this, this study empirically investigates existing training and education as a crucial dimension of OSH practices among the food Malaysian manufacturing firms. Quantitative approach was employed using survey data and analysed by SPSS package version 20.0. A total of 143 fulltime production related leaders from supervisor to top management voluntarily participated in the survey. From the 44% response rate, the data of training and education was obtained using the means, standard deviation and one-way ANOVA analyses of descriptive statistics. The results disclose that the minimum requirements of OSHA 1994 are established and highly practiced by all the firms. Interestingly, without depending on International management standards, training and education was found to be well practiced by the leaders regardless of types of the industry, ownership status, and duration of the business.

Keywords: training and education, OSH practices, food manufacturing firms, Malaysia

1 INTRODUCTION

The imperfect relationship between man and machine is one of the major reasons for food production interruptions. At organizational level, such interruptions can lead to loss of skilled human lives and cause accidents-related costs such as legal fees and fines, compensatory damages, investigation time, lost production, and bad reputation for firms. Careless or poor maintenance of equipment may cause to falls, cuts, scrapes, puncture wounds, and burns (McSwane, Rue, & Linton, 2000). Training and education of OSH practices therefore, are designed to help prevent such competitive disadvantages and to offer maximum beneficial safety and health practices to workers as well as organizations. The implementation of safe and healthy manufacturing operations should be considered as an investment with a potentially positive rate of return for firms. Thus, emphasis on training and education practice has to be intensified accordingly to meet this goal.

A major challenge facing Malaysia currently is to reduce the occupational accidents and incidents' rates in hazardous industries. Over a decade, Malaysia saw a clear progress in the reduction of the total number of reported industrial accidents by approximately 60% (theStar online, 2007).

However, the statistics from 1992 to 1996 and 2002 to 2006 suggest that the accidental rate in Malaysia has reached a plateau. The industrial accidental rates have remained at 70% of overall reported accidents to Social Security Organization (SOCISO, 2006). On closer examination, the statistic data reveal that there is no improvement in manufacturing sectors. With approximately 53% accident rate annually, manufacturing in general take the lead in Malaysia as the most hazardous sector since 1992 (Department of Occupational Safety and Health, 2004). This is strongly supported by the recent statistics that manufacturing sectors continue to be the most dangerous sector until 2011; there were 45 deaths, 133 permanently disabled, and 1471 non permanently disabled (Department of Occupational Safety and Health, 2012).

From accidental and hazardous rate to statistical data on employment, these statistic data are crucial because the employment in manufacturing itself has reached to 1.69 million (Department of Statistics, 2010). Statistics also reveal that food products employment ranked at top seven in the total employment. In fact, food products manufacturing represented 14.4%, ranked as second highest of total establishments in the manufacturing sectors for small and medium enterprises (SME).

This study empirically investigates existing training and education as a crucial dimension of OSH practices among the Malaysian food manufacturing firms. Thus, dealing with the hazard industry requires training and education of OSH practices for employees in order to increase skills and behaviour based safety in the workplace.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Food manufacturing firms in Malaysia*

Looking at manufacturing from a holistic perspective, OSH practices in manufacturing firms are important because the manufacturing sector is the major contributor in boosting Malaysia's economy. The country's exports grew tremendously in the period 1991–2005, placing the country as the 19th biggest trading nation in the world (MIDA, 2007; The Star, 2006). Manufacturing sector's GDP growth remained almost the same in 2008 (25.6%) and 2009 (25.5%) (Department of Statistics, 2010).

Food manufacturers on the other hand, has accounted the second highest gross output contributor for 11.8% or RM86.3. The positive sign of the economic growth included the food manufacturing sectors in the largest number of establishments, from which 387 (20%) were involved in research and development in the same year.

2.2 *Mandatory and initiatives in occupational safety and health*

OSH practices can be developed from two approaches: initiatives of mandatory and voluntary. According to Robson et al. (2006), mandatory means the use of government legislation through inspections, and fines. Conversely, voluntarily approach means OSH practices are not directly linked to regulatory requirements, instead, incentives are sometimes offered by governments. Voluntary initiatives can also be participatory programs, benchmarking, standards and guideline-based management systems.

Malaysia is a country that practices self-regulation under the OSHA (1994), which encourages certification of OHSAS 18001 by private accreditation bodies (Kogi & Kawakami, 2002). In order to convert Malaysia to a fully developed country by year 2020, numerous new hazards are expected during this transformation (Rampal & Mohd Nizam, 2006). In line with the notion, effectiveness of law enforcement of OSHA (1994), FMA (1967), and Control of Industrial Major Accident Hazard (CIMAH) was addressed (Ibrahim & Fakhru'l-razi, 2003; Rampal & Mohd Nizam, 2006). The importance of OSHA (1994) has been emphasized in many local literatures (Ahmad Nazri, 1998; Balasuperamaniam, 2003; Faridah, 2007; Ibrahim & Fakhru'l-razi, 2003).

2.3 *Training and education*

In Malaysia, the government has high concerns on the OSH training and for that reason has mandated

the provision of information, instruction, training, and supervision to all employers more so in the hospitality and food industry where all members of the population has a need for (Occupational Safety and Health Act and Regulations, 1994). In line with the government policy, Department of Occupational and Health (DOSH), SOCSO, and National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) have had to invest aggressively in training, education, research, and promotional programs in creating higher awareness of importance in OSH practices (Department of Occupational Safety and Health, 2004; Lam Thye, 2006; Mohd Khan, 2004; Navamukundan, 2006).

Goldstein (1980) and Latham (1988) were cited by Tharenou, Saks, & Moore (2007) to define training as the systematic acquisition and development of knowledge, skills, and an attitude required by employees to adequately perform a task or job or to improve performance in the job environment. Whereas, education is defined as "the knowledge or skill obtained or developed by a learning process" (Merriam-Webster, 2006).

According to Guidetti and Mazzanti (2007), training can also be conceived as a tool for skills acquired and skills used. The authors acknowledged acquisition of skills occurs through both formal education and training and informal procedures of transmission of knowledge. In addition, the learning processes such as on-job-training (OJT), learning by doing and other diverse training practices complement the relationships. Burke et al. (2006) argued that incorporating a comprehensive program into an OJT and creativity in the training were necessities. The OJT was in need to solve the lack of competencies and creative training tools arouse the employees' mind, and create the enthusiastic feelings among them. These elements are important to enable them to critically understand the importance of working in a safe and healthy working environment.

Morin and Renaud (2004) added that comprehensive contents of training was significant to generate a better job performance he or she gained. OSH training enables employees to anticipate and recognize hazards upon building a safer workplace (Nunez & Villanueva, 2010). To summarize, the creativity tools of training and education enhance workers knowledge and increase their preparedness. Continual project or program in OSH from management employees would educate workers that working in best safety and health-working environment is priority at all times and meant for all workforce in day-to-day operations of firm, of particular interest in this paper is the food manufacturing industry.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 *Research approach, unit of analysis, and criteria of respondent*

Quantitative data were employed to determine on the existing training and education as an OSH practice in

food manufacturing firms. Focusing at organizational-level of analysis, the eligible firm representative who answered the survey questions was selected from the supervisory to the top management level that is directly involved with production operations in particular the food manufacturing industry.

3.2 Population and sample size

The sampling frame was obtained from Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers in 2006 (Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers, 2006). The sampling technique was based on proportionate stratified random sampling within each stratum.

3.3 Instrument and statistical analyses

The questionnaire design was based on a five-point Likert scale (from 1 to 5), that enabled respondents to ascertain the extent of agreement such as “strongly disagree” or “strongly agree” for predictor variables. Training and education variable was represented by eight-item questions. SPSS version 20.0 statistical package was utilized and this study achieved the objective through descriptive analysis, factor analysis, and a reliability test.

4 DATA ANALYSES AND RESULTS

4.1 Response rates

Using survey data collected from 143 manufacturing firms has yielded a response rate of 44%. Out of these, only five or 3.9% are food manufacturing participated in the survey. Forty-six per cent of the respondents were locally owned firms and employed 500 or less of full-time employees. About 53% of respondents are employed in the business that has been operating for more than 15 years. This is viewed as being reflective of the stability of manufacturing the operations.

4.2 Sample profiles

The results appear that the majority of the firms have declared they have written the OSH policy (90%) and 87% of the policy was endorsed by the top management. Besides, more than half do employ a Safety and Health Officer (SHO) (68%) and have a Safety and Health Committee (SHC) (89%) in their firms. Only 13% complied with the OHSAS 18001 standards and none of them has adopted MS1722 standards. The OSH practices have been implemented in the firms; 54% stated that the practice is in “established” and “well established” situation. Respondents answered that they have knowledge on OSH issues; of their knowledge in OSH issues are at “moderate” (39%) and “good” (46%) levels. This implies that the level of OSH awareness in most firms is relatively good.

4.3 Training and education practice

The descriptive analysis reveals the mean and standard deviation for training and education was 3.83

Table 1. Test of differences (ANOVA) of demographic variables on OSH practices.

	Training and education	
	F	p
Types of industry	3.12	.01*
Ownership status	5.00	.01*
Employment size	2.22	.07
Business duration	3.55	.02*

*Mark is mean difference as indicated in multiple comparison tables.

and .68 accordingly. The mean score based on 5-point Likert scale indicated the score was between “moderate extent” and “great extent,” which implied that training and education is highly practiced in manufacturing operations. Further, one-way ANOVA was used to explore types of industry, ownership status, firm size, and duration of business on training and education. Focusing on significance value that is greater than .05, test of Homogeneity was inspected to conform if the variance was the same for training and education.

Table 1 indicates that there are significant differences in training and education practice across the demographic profiles. The inspection of post-hoc tests lead to a significance value, which is equal to, or less than .05, indicating a statistically significant result for a type of industry, ownership status, and duration of business. However, an eta squared test shows a very small range of effect size of the eta squared. All in all, the actual differences in the mean scores of the groups were very small (in between the range of not more than 1)

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The empirical evidence obtained from the quantitative analyses discloses that manufacturing firms in Malaysia, in particularly food manufacturing have performed the basic practices as required by OSHA (1994). The findings of this study are congruent with Whiteley (2006) that rules and regulations are applicable in daily practices.

Additionally, the discriminative validity test reveals that high hazard firms are aware of the good practices of training and education. The means scores of the overall descriptive statistics results show that the key person at the supervisory level and above position has well adapted the training and education of OSH practices at work. Interestingly, although food manufacturers are a small representation in this study, the practice of training and education has no significant difference compared to other manufacturing sectors. Besides, the result showed that without certifying to any International standards and regardless of types of the industry, ownership status, and duration of business, the government enforcement based on

OSHA (1994) has strongly underlined the training and education of OSH practices in those manufacturing firms.

In conclusion, the prevention practices is very important for manufacturing firms, which desire to minimise the conflict between man-machine interactions by diminishing the obstacles to obtain more effective production operations. This study therefore would suggest that the food manufacturing employers give high priority to training and education at par with other manufacturers. It is no exaggeration to say that employers will only consider this if the benefits of prevention practices outweighs the potential cost borne by the employer. Hence, in the long run, the focus on training and education of a safer work environment in food manufacturing firms would provide for stronger economy in the manufacturing industry sector.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad Nazri, A. A. 1998. Factors influencing the implementation of occupational safety and health for the electronics and electrical manufacturing firms in Penang. MBA Operational Management, University of Science Malaysia, Georgetown.
- Balasuperamiam, R. 2003. A comparison of occupational safety and health management system in multinational corporations and government owned companies. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi.
- Burke, M. J., Sarpy, S. A., Smith-Crowe, K., Chan-Serafin, S., Salvador, R. O., & Islam, G. 2006. Relative effectiveness of worker safety and health training methods. *American Journal of Public Health*, 96(2), 315–323.
- Department of Occupational Safety and Health. 2004. 2004 Annual Report. Kuala Lumpur: Department of Occupational Safety and Health Ministry of Human Resource Malaysia (DOSH).
- Department of Occupational Safety and Health. 2012. 30 April 2012. Occupational Accidents by Sector in 2011 Retrieved 11 May, 2012, from http://www.dosh.gov.my/doshv2/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=9&Itemid=141&lang=en
- Department of Statistics, M. 2010, 22 August 2011. Report on the Annual Survey of Manufacturing Industries, 2010 Retrieved 11 May, 2012, from http://www.statistics.gov.my/portal/images/stories/files/LatestReleases/findings/ Penemuan_Pembuatan_2010_BI
- Faridah, I. 2007. The reflection of management commitment on OSH within the Malaysian construction organizations. Paper presented at the 10th Conference and Exhibition on Occupational Safety & Health, Genting International Convention Centre (GICC), Genting Highlands, Malaysia.
- Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers. 2006. *Malaysian Industries* (37th ed.). Kuala Lumpur: Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM).
- Guidetti, G., & Mazzanti, M. 2007. Firm-level training in local economic systems complementarities in production and firm innovation strategies. *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 36, 875–894.
- Ibrahim, M. S., & Fakharu'l-razi, A. 2003. Major hazard control: the Malaysian experience. *Disaster Prevention and Management*, 12(5), 420–427.
- Kogi, K., & Kawakami, T. 2002. Trends in occupational safety and health management systems in Asia and the Pacific. *Asian-Pacific Newsletter on Occupational Health and Safety*, 9(2), 42–47.
- Lam Thye, L. 2006. My Reflections on OSH. Bangi: NIOSH.
- McSwane, D., Rue, N., & Linton, R. 2000. *Essentials of Food Safety & Sanitation* (2nd edition ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Merriam-Webster. 2006. Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary Retrieved 15 January 2007, from <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/practices>
- MIDA. 2007, 17 April. Malaysia's Rankings Retrieved 17 April, 2007, from <http://www.mida.gov.my/>
- Mohd Khan. 2004. Effective performance measurement and monitoring in OSH. Paper presented at the Occupational safety and health management system (OHSMS) seminar, Berjaya Georgetown Hotel, Penang.
- Morin, L., & Renaud, S. 2004. Participation in corporate university training: Its effect on individual job performance. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 21(4), 295–306.
- Navamukundan, A. 2006. Malaysia goes for tripartism on safety and health Retrieved 5 May, 2006, from www.perkeso.gov
- Nunez, I., & Villanueva, M. 2010. Safety capital: the management of organizational knowledge on occupational health and safety. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 23(1), 56–71.
- Occupational safety and health act and regulations, Regulation 1-3 C.F.R. §Part II 1994.
- Rampal, K. G., & Mohd Nizam, J. 2006. Developing regulations for occupational exposures to health hazards in Malaysia. *Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology*, 46, 131–135.
- Robson, L. S., Clarke, J. A., Cullen, K., Bielecky, A., Severin, C., Bigelow, P. L., ... Mahood, Q. 2006. The effectiveness of occupational health and safety management system interventions: a systematic review. *Safety Science*, doi:10.1016/j.ssci.2006.07.03, 1–25.
- SOCISO. 2006. 2006 Annual Report (pp. 130): Social Security Organisation.
- Tharenou, P., Saks, A. M., & Moore, C. 2007. A review and critique of research on training and organizational-level outcomes. *Human Resource Management Review*, 17, 251–273.
- The Star. 2006, March 31. 9th Malaysian Plan. Speech by the Prime Minister YAB Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi at the tabling of the motion on the ninth Malaysian Plan, 2006-2010 Retrieved March 20, 2007, from http://www.networkmalaysia.com/subtitle/articles_9thMalaysnplan.htm
- theStar online (Producer). 2007, 20 February. NIOSH: Industrial accidents down, but don't be complacent. The Star. [Business] Retrieved from <http://biz.thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2007/2/20/business/...>
- Whiteley, A. 2006. Rules as received practice: historical perspective and implications for managers. *Journal of Management History*, 12(1), 53–70.

An overview of management training program in Malaysia hospitality organizations: A dual perspective

A.B. Noor Diyana & N. Sumarjan
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The Management Training Program (MTP) has emerged in Malaysia's employment setting as another alternative of training method. Thus, this study is proposes to explore the importance, benefits received, challenges faced, expectation from both parties as well as the influence of MTP on the trainees' career development. The insights from both trainees and employers on MTP are worth to be discovered because it is becoming the fast track in nurturing future manager for hospitality industry. Additionally, this program is hoped to serve as one of the motivations for hospitality graduates to remain in the industry. Findings of the study are hoped to help the employer to better organize and improve their MTP. Meanwhile, the trainees will have greater understanding of how this program could help them to map their career in the organizations.

Keywords: employers, hospitality industry, management training program, management trainees, Malaysia foodservice establishments, Malaysia hotels.

1 INTRODUCTION

Hospitality industry is rated as one of the main economic contributor in Malaysia (Economic Planning Unit, 2011). According to the Tenth Malaysia Plan, the hospitality industry is forecast to grow 7.2% per annum driven by an additional of RM 115 billion tourist expenditures and is expected to provide 2 million jobs by 2015 (Economic Planning Unit, 2011).

The positive progression of the hospitality growth is therefore tremendous. Based on the increment of tourist arrivals, the need for more employees to cope the crowd is essential with a consequent increase in demand for qualified hospitality employees (Brien, 2004; O'Mahony & Siltoe, 2001). Tews, Michel, & Bartlett (2012) supported that attracting high-quality applicants is a fundamental first step toward ensuring a productive workforce as they provide the foundation for an effective human resource management system and effective organizational performance.

Nevertheless, recruiting and selecting high-quality applicants alone will not fulfill and suffice the need of attracting the applicants (Sheriff, 1994). The author also noted that it would be essential to undertake a systematic training and development program to build employees skills. Consequently, most companies nowadays are committed in training and developing new school graduates to secure long-term employment (Hooi, 2010).

Training is an important factor in the business strategy of every firm to build the right ability and capability (Mani, 2010). Various training programs

have been developed to augment employee's knowledge, skill, motivation and productivity (Oosterbeek, 1998; Pate & Martin, 2000). The management training program (MTP) is also a form of a training program and has emerged in Malaysia's employment setting that focuses on hiring fresh graduates (105 Management Trainee Jobs, 2012). The MTP has been implemented in hospitality industry (Brymer, 1977), banking (Sheriff, 1994), retails, services, broadcasting as well as engineering.

MTP offers career development (Mkono, 2010) and stability in employment for fresh graduates (Smith, Henry & Munro, 2002). Currently, several international and local hospitality organizations have implemented this program such as Hilton Properties, Starwood Hotels and Resorts, Imperial Palace Hotel, A' Famosa Resort Melaka, Sushi King, JCO Donuts & Coffee, and many more (Graduate Management Development Program, 2011; North America College Recruiting: Management Training, 2012; Regal Hotels Management Trainees Program, 2012; Career at Imperial Hotel Miri, 2011; Career With Us Is Different From Others, 2012; Sushi King Career Exciting Opportunities, 2011).

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Purpose and importance of MTP*

The MTP is one of most important and reliable human resource techniques to enhance skills and knowledge

as well as career development (Acton & Golden, 2003; Bhatti & Kaur, 2009; Smith, Henry, & Munro, 2002). The employers' perceived training is critical in increasing employees' adaptability and flexibility (Tai, 2006). This is shown by the significant cost invested in training expenditures and the cost is even more staggering in the hospitality organizations (Chen, Sok & Sok, 2006; Kalargyrou & Woods, 2011; Mani, 2010; Saranow, 2006; Ruiz, 2006). Additionally, the MTP is in line with the Government aspiration which to expand programs involving practical on-the-job training through graduate internship program (Economic Planning Unit, 2010).

2.2 *Benefits of MTP*

The benefits of MTP are various (Choo and Bowley (2007; Oosterbeek, 1998; Pate & Martin, 2000; Acton & Golden, 2003; Wan Ahmad, 2007). Training increased skills, motivation, productivity, experience and knowledge transfer of their employees (Choo and Bowley (2007; Jameson & Holden, 2000; Oosterbeek, 1998; Pate & Martin, 2000). Wan Ahmad (2007) posited MTP increase the quality and productivity of the trainees and provides relevant skills needed as they are exposed to the actual work procedures.

2.3 *Employer and trainee expectation on the MTP*

Among the area of competencies needed by the trainee are customer relations, employee relations, legal aspects, technical and operational knowledge and revenue management (Agut & Grau, 2002; Brophy & Kiely, 2002; Christou, 1999; Doherty et al., 2001; Jauhari, 2006; Lin, 2002; Mayo & Thomas-Haysbert, 2005; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005). Interestingly, the researchers have recognized the decreasing importance on operational and technical skills, and increment on human-relations skills (Baum, 1991; Doherty et al., 2001; Jauhari, 2006; Kelley-Patterson & George, 2001; Littlejohn & Watson, 2004; Mayo & Thomas-Haysbert, 2005; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005).

Meanwhile, the trainees expect the employers to be open, honest and realistic about the MTP (Raub & Streit, 2006). Willie et al., (2008) supported that employee attrition effect can be reduced by providing open and honest communication about the nature and scope of the job position during the MTP.

2.4 *Challenges in MTP*

One of the challenges is the facilities provided by the employer to accommodate trainees' work performance. Earle (2003) showed that the operating work environment served as an essential recruitment tool. Work environment has an impact on the learning, teamwork, creativity and significant in recruitment and retention of high quality employees. Additionally, simply assigning a trainer to supervise a trainee is not adequate. (Brymer, 1977). Leigh (2006) agreed that

trainers should be highly enthusiastic about their job, because of its positive impact on the trainees' reaction.

2.5 *Career development and MTP*

Martin et al. (2006) advocated the existence of professional development and promotional opportunities is vital to the trainees. Thus, the trainees are much more to pursue a career within the hospitality industry (Willie et al., 2008). However, career growth in the hospitality industry required hard work, sacrifice and endurance (Mkono, 2010). While in other industries graduates are appointed as managers automatically or much shorter period as compared to hospitality graduates (Mkono, 2010). The MTP provides operational experience, (Harkinson et al., 2010; Harper et al., 2005; Jauhari, 2006; Ladkin, 2000) and management experience for the trainees as to be future manager for hospitality organizations.

2.6 *MTP in the hospitality industry*

The MTP is open for fresh graduates to expose them to the working environment. This helps set the foundation for their success throughout their careers. Moreover, the MTP aims to place talented young career starters of high caliber on a solid career path, nurturing them to become future leader in the hospitality industry. Trainee appointed to the MTP should have a degree so that he/she can demonstrate his/her intellectual ability and potential (Management Trainees Policy, 2012). The MTP prepares trainees to anticipate and resolve complex problems, manage multifaceted development projects, build social networks and overcome the continuous challenges within the hospitality industry (http://www.sino.com/eng/default.asp?xid=career_mt).

According to Smith et al (2006), these program are not just about training, they are employment contracts as well as contracts of training. The trainees are offered a competitive salary during the training program and job placement opportunities into supervisory or junior managerial positions upon completion (<http://www.marriott.com/careers/graduate-careers-start-your-trip.mi>). Therefore, it is important for the trainees to demonstrate the attributes and competencies required to achieve their expected potential through the acquisition of a core set of transferable skills and competencies of professional standing (<http://www.dur.ac.uk/hr/policies/mantrainees>).

3 CONCLUSION

MTP could be seen as an alternative for hospitality establishments to increase the retention of hospitality graduates in the industry. Practically, findings of this study could help the employer to understand the benefits, challenges and expectation of their trainees. This helps them to better strategize their MTP, reduce repetitive training cost, and create a more conducive

working environment. Meanwhile, the trainees also could know better what can they be or how far can they go with an explicit and well designed MTP. Additionally, findings of this study will provide a holistic view of MTP in Malaysia and this adds to the existing literature on MTP which is still limited.

REFERENCES

- Acton, T. & Golden, W. 2003. Training the knowledge worker: a descriptive study of training practices in Irish software companies. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 27(2), 137–146.
- Agut, S., & Grau, R. 2002. Managerial competency needs and training requests: the case of the Spanish tourist industry. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 13 (1), 31–51.
- Baum, T. 1991. Management trainees in the hotel industry: what do managers expect? *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 15 (2), 3–8.
- Bhatti, M. A., & Kaur, S. 2010. The role of individual and training design factors on training transfer. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 34 (7).
- Brymer, R.A. 1977. The trainee's perspective: what every management trainee would like his trainer to know. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarter*, 17(79).
- Career at Imperial Hotel Miri. 2011. Retrieved February 21, 2012, from <http://www.imperialhotel.com.my/index.php/career/imperial-hotel-miri>
- Career With Us Is Different From Others. 2012. Retrieved April 30, 2012, from <http://www.afamosa.com/life-with-us-is-a-difference-from-others>
- Chen, C.-Y., Sok, P., & Sok, K. 2007. Exploring potential factors leading to effective training: An exclusive study on commercial banks in Cambodia. *Journal of Management Development*, 26(9), 843–856.
- Choo, S., & Bowley, C. 2007. Using training and development to affect job satisfaction within franchising. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 14(2).
- Conger, J.A., & Benjamin, B. 1999, *Building Leaders*. California: Jossey-Bass.
- Costello, T. 1997. You can manage to wear two hats: develop your training skills to be an effective manager. *Cooking for Profit*, 551 (22).
- Doherty, L., Guerrier, Y., Jameson, S., Lashley, C. & Lockwood, A. 2001. *Getting Ahead: Graduate Careers in Hospitality Management*, Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Council for Hospitality Management Education, London.
- Earle, A.H. 2003. Building a workplace of choice. *Journal of Facilities Management*, 2 (3), 244–58.
- Graduate Management Development Program. 2011. Retrieved February 21, 2012, from <http://www.hiltonworldwide.com/careers/campus-recruitment/management-development-program.html>
- Harper, S., Brown, C., & Irvine, W. 2005. Qualifications: a fast-track to hotel general manager? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(1), 51–64.
- Hooi, L. W. 2010. Technical training in the MNCs in Malaysia: a case study analysis of the petrochemical industry. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 34(4), 317–343.
- Jameson, S. & Holden, R. 2000. Graduateness – who cares? Graduate identity in small hospitality firms. *Education + Training*, 42(4/5), 264–271.
- Jauhari, V. 2006. Competencies for a career in the hospitality industry: an Indian perspective. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 18(2), 123–134.
- Jenkins, A.K., 2001. Making a career of it? Hospitality students' future perspectives: an Anglo-Dutch study, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13(1), 13–20.
- Johl, S.K. 1996. Management training for medium industries: a case study approach. Retrieved February, 20, 2012 from <http://etd.uum.edu.my/1491/>.
- Kalargyrou, V., & Woods, R. H. 2011. Wanted: training competencies for the twenty-first century. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 23(3), 361–376.
- Kang, S.K., & Gould, R. 2002. Hospitality graduates' employment status and job satisfaction. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, 14 (4), 11–18.
- Kelley-Patterson, D. & George, C. 2001. Securing graduate commitment: an exploration of the comparative expectation of placement students, graduate recruits and human resource managers within the hospitality, leisure and tourism industries. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 20 (4), 311–23.
- Kusluvan, S., & Kusluvan, Z. 2000. Perception and attitudes of undergraduates tourism students towards working in the tourism industry in Turkey. *Tourism Management*, 21, 251–269
- Kusluvan, S. 2003. *Managing employee attitudes and behaviours in the tourism and hospitality industry*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- Ladkin, A. 2000. Vocational education and food and beverage experience: issues for career development. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 12 (4), 226–33.
- Leigh, D. 2006. *The group trainer's handbook: Designing and delivering training for groups*. Philadelphia: Kogan Page, Limited.
- Littlejohn, D., & Watson, S. 2004. Developing graduate managers for hospitality and tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 16 (7), 408–14.
- Management Training Policy. 2012. Retrieved February 21, 2012, from <http://www.dur.ac.uk/hr/policies/mantraitees/>
- Mani, V. 2010. Evaluating Effectiveness of Executive Training. *International Bulletin of Business Administration*, 9.
- Mgmt Training Program. 2011. Retrieved February 21, 2012, from <http://hyatt.jobs/#pg=6§ion=33>
- Martin, A., Mactaggart, D., & Bowden, J. 2006. The barriers to the recruitment and retention of supervisors/managers in the Scottish tourism industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 18 (5), 380–97.
- Mayo, C.R., & Thomas-Haysbert, C. 2005. Essential competencies needed by hospitality and tourism management graduates as determined by industry professionals and hospitality educators. *The Consortium Journal*, 9 (2), 5–17.
- Mkono, M. 2010. In defence of hospitality careers: perspectives of Zimbabwean hotel managers. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(6), 858–870.
- North America College Recruiting: Management Training. 2012. Retrieved February 21, 2012, from http://www.starwoodhotels.com/westin/careers/recruiting/mgmt_training.html
- O'Leary, S. J., & Deegan 2005. Career progression of Irish tourism and hospitality management graduates. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17, 421–432.

- O'Mahony, G.B., & Sillitoe, J.F. 2001. Identifying the perceived barriers to participation in tertiary education among hospitality employees. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13 (1), 21–9.
- Oosterbeek, H. 1998. Unravelling supply and demand factors in work related training. *Oxford Economic Papers*, 50 (2), 266–84.
- Pate, J., & Martin, G. 2000. Company-based lifelong learning: what's the pay-off for employers? *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 24 (2–4), 149–57.
- Rancangan Malaysia Kesepuluh 2010. Retrieved November, 20, 2011 from <http://www.epu.gov.my/rmkesepuluh>
- Raub, S., & Streit, E.M. 2006. Realistic recruitment: an empirical study of the cruise industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 18(4), 278–91.
- Raybould, M. & Wilkins, H. 2005. Over qualified and under experienced: turning graduates into hospitality managers. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(3), 203–16.
- Regal Hotels Management Trainees Program. 2012. Retrieved February 21, 2012, from <http://www.regalhotel.com/Regal-Hotels-International/Main/Career/Management-Trainees-Program.aspx>
- Saranow, J. 2006. Selling the special touch: service challenged companies turn to top hotels for idea; inside look at Ritz, Four Season. *Wall Street Journal*, July 18, B1.
- Sheriff, N. M. 1994. Evaluation of the perceived effects of management training programs for commercial bank managers in peninsular Malaysia. Retrieved February, 20, 2012 from <http://psasir.upm.edu.my/11113/>.
- Smith, E., Smith, A., Pickersgill, R., & Rushbrook, P. 2006. Qualifying the workforce: The use of nationally-recognised training in Australian companies. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 30(8), 592–607.
- Smith, P. J., Henry, J., & Munro, G. 2002. Training young people through a school/enterprise partnership: a longitudinal study. *Education + Training*, 44(6).
- Sushi King Career Exciting Opportunities. 2011. Retrieved February 21, 2012, from http://www.sushi-king.com/Career_64_1.html
- Tai, W. T. 2006. Effects of training framing, general self-efficacy and training motivation on trainees' training effectiveness. *Personnel Review*, 35 (1), 51–65.
- Tas, R.F. (1988). Teaching future managers. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 29 (2), 41–3.
- Terrion, J. L. 2006. The impact of a management training program for university administrators. *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 25(2).
- Tews, M. J., Michel, J. W., & Bartlett, A. 2012. The Fundamental Role of Workplace Fun in Applicant Attraction. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 19(1), 105–114.
- Wan Ahmad, W.S. 2007. To inculcate training culture amongst Malaysian industry through national dual training system (NDTS). Retrieved February, 20, 2012 from www.mohr.gov.my/pdf/wanseman.pdf
- Watson, S., & D'Annunzio-Green, N. 1996. Implementing cultural change through human resources: The elusive organization alchemy? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 89(2), 25–30.
- Willie, P. A., Jayawardena, C., & Laver, B. 2008. Attracting and retaining quality human resources for Niagara's hospitality industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20(3), 293–302.
- Zahari, M.S., Hanafiah, M. H., Othman, Z., Jamaluddin, M. R., & Zulkifly, M. I. 2010. Declining interest of hospitality students toward careers in hotel industry: who to be blamed? *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 2(7).
- Zenger, J.H. 1996. Great ideas revisited: a retrospective analysis. *Training and Development*, 50, 48-51.105 Management Trainee Jobs. 2011. Retrieved February 21, 2012, from <http://job-search.jobstreet.com.my/malaysia/job-opening.php>

Postgraduates's thesis accomplishment: Issues on its attributable

A.H. Hamizad, M.S. Mohd Zahari, M.N. Shuhirdy & N.M. Shahril
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Thesis is a substantial piece of work, written with a view to proving or disproving something, adding to, or creating new knowledge. It requires students to demonstrate a mastery of the subject area being researched. It encompasses both intellectual and skills development and for majority of postgraduate students, thesis by far is the most challenging piece of academic work. This research note discusses on post graduate thesis by reviewing the past studies and it attributable and relate the issue to the contextual setting which the empirical study is being undertaken.

Keywords: Postgraduate, Thesis, Attributable.

1 INTRODUCTION

Human capital is vitally important investment not only for organizational success but also to the country development (Crook et al., 2011). It has a core value in term of innovation and invention which give an economic impact and high income to the country. Human capital also enhancing the organizations, country and significantly contribute competencies which in turn became a great boost for further development and innovativeness (Bonaventure, 2005). Schultz (1993) noted that human capital is a key element in a way to improve organization and country assets and productivity and sustain the competitive advantage. Besides that, as it name implied the human capital involves processes that relate to training, education and other interventions to increase the levels of knowledge, skills, abilities, values and social assets (Yasmeen, 2010). In short, education, skill and training are the integral elements of the human capital. Most of the jobs in this challenge of economic growth not only require basic knowledge, training and skills but higher level of education.

As a developing nation, Malaysia together with other countries is giving serious attention on human capital development. Effort towards shifting to a knowledge-based economy leading to the development of human and intellectual capital and the objectives are to produce an adequate supply of manpower with relevant educational knowledge and skills to support and sustain a flexible, agile and mobile workforce. This can be seen through one of the important aspects in human capital variable which is educational reform and training from primary, secondary and tertiary education.

The provisions of higher educational systems in Malaysia have undergone significant changes, reform

and restructuring (Kaur, 2009). This is in line with the ever-changing economy, social, life style and political scenario. The continuous pressure for the educational reform and transform is also deduced from the stakeholders like students, parents and industries (Kaur, 2009). As a result, the access to education at all levels is apparent either in public and private universities in this country including post graduate studies.

In regards to postgraduate education, it is generally aim to provide in-depth knowledge and understanding that include general philosophy in the world sciences, management, technologies, applications and other elements closely related to specific areas. It is used by the universities to describe the process of higher level learning than that achieved at undergraduate level. According to Preston (1994), postgraduate studies are a growth process by which students need to develop scholarly thinking with institutional support and guidance by and beyond classroom environment as it dealing with matured individuals. The key consequence of a post graduate education is the capability to recognize pattern, technique and routines for thought and action that one has learned and that are applicable to a given situation. The postgraduate education in fact is one of the modes to provide students with knowledge and experiences that will allow them to think critically and analytically in the future. In short, besides extending qualification and stimulus the intellectual challenge, this higher level education is meant in producing individual not only who can perform managerial functions and meet organizational needs as well as industrial and academic challenges.

In line with this, there has recently been an increased in the number of education institutions offering post-graduates studies both in public and private universities ranging from engineering, business, architecture, medical and many others with unexceptional

of hospitality management (Rizvi, Engel, Nandyala, Rutkowski & Sparks, 2005). Substantial increase in numbers of post graduates students can be seen since 2002 (MOHE, 2010). Kaur and Abdul Manan (2008) account for this change as stemming from the continuous demands from students, university administrators and policy makers for access to a greater share of the population to meet the needs of new economies that require trained and qualified employees in today's increasingly globalized workplaces.

On hospitality management, several public and private universities like University Utara Malaysia (UUM), University Putra Malaysia (UPM), University Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), University Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Taylors University, KDU university with University Technology Mara (UiTM) through the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, pioneering the hospitality program (MOHE, 2010). In most universities, besides other core and non-core management subjects based on individual program, postgraduates' thesis is one of the core requirements for the postgraduate students to accomplish before graduating.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Postgraduates thesis*

Generally, thesis can be referred to a study on a exacting topic in which innovative research has been done, presented by students or as a proposition stated for consideration, particularly one to be discussed and proved or maintained against opposing views (Clewes', 1996). A thesis or research project conducted by students is actually a mission for knowledge and understanding through experimentation, investigation and attentive search with the aimed at finding and interpretation or analysis of new knowledge at resolving debatable existing knowledge (Knight & Sutton, 2004). Thesis is normally associated with higher-level degree of education involving postgraduates, master or doctoral students. Clewes' (1996) further asserted that postgraduate thesis is a piece of academic work using systematic procedures which demand substantial amount of work to complete.

In the context of Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, University Technology MARA (UiTM), post- graduates' thesis is one of the missions used in achieving higher reputation and students' excellence (IPSIS, 2011). Based on report, thesis is an important part of the postgraduate degree designed to the student in consultation with a supervisor under the overall guidance of the Institute of Graduate Studies (IPSIS, 2011). As with other universities in the globe, there are two types of research projects conducted by the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management postgraduate students' namely graduate research and applied research project. Graduate research is mainly for students who obtained cumulative grade point average or CGPA at 3.33 and above while applied research is for students who obtained CGPA less than 3.33. Barras

(1991), Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010) and Shields and Tajalli, (2006) deduced that for whatever research projects conducted, both requires specific components or structures which impart the logical continuity of the thesis in way that links in a chain confer on it integrity and strength. Scholars (Nyawaranda, 2005; Shields & Tajalli, 2006; Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010) agreed that the most common and acceptable components of the thesis are as follow.

Chapter Components

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● specifying the research problem ● formulating the research topic ● presenting background of the study ● presenting the problem statement ● formulating research objectives ● formulating research questions or hypotheses ● discussing the significance of the study ● stating delimitations and limitations ● stating assumptions ● defining key terms ● outlining organization of the study
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reviewing relevant literatures
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● designing the research: creating, adopting or adapting a research design and data collection methods ● describing the population, sample and sampling techniques ● collecting data
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● analyzing and presenting data ● discussing research findings
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● summarizing major findings of the study ● drawing conclusions ● making recommendations ● compiling references ● compiling appendices <hr/>

Besides all those components, a good or poor progression of thesis project is well depending on the research processes or attributes (Nyawaranda, 2005). In other word, research project will not be accomplished without supporting attributes such as information, writing skill and other factors and these attributes could become obstacles for students in completing their research work (Lessing & Schulze, 2002).

2.2 *Information seeking/gathering*

In any research project, information seeking is a process that engrosses individual actions that involve searching, selecting, evaluating and gathering of the information need (Wilson, 2001). This process encompasses activities that students engage in identifying their own needs for information, searching for such information in any way, and using or transferring that information. Kuhlthau (1991) suggested six stages of the information seeking processes, which includes

the information seekers cognitive and affective, confidence and anxiety. The stages are ranging from initiation, selection, exploration, formulation, collection, and presentation. He further noted, in the latter stages of the processes, after formulation, the information seeker is able to understand whether information needs have been met.

Latona and Browne (2001) found that the attrition rates, completion times and the improvement completion rates of the research closely associated with three factor and areas. Those including institutional or environmental factors (including discipline differences, candidature guidelines and a sense of belonging), supervision arrangements (feedback, meeting frequency, relationships, an early start and uninterrupted arrangements), and student cohorts and characteristics (entry qualifications, nature of enrolment, discipline differences and psychological factors). Lessing and Schulze (2002) revealed that postgraduate students may have further distinctive needs to cope with the pressures of a technologically advanced environment and a system that demands independent research. They furthermore noted that these factors need to be taken into account in the design of information and support resources provided to postgraduate students.

2.3 *Writing skills and reading comprehension*

In thesis, writing skills and reading comprehension seemed to be one of the many attributes that need to be taken into consideration by most of the postgraduate students. In this context, Kaur (2009) states the ability of speaking and writing well in English among the postgraduates students are even daunting when English as a second language in the country educational systems. Number of studies reported there are high proportions of postgraduate student who struggle to complete their studies within the specific time given (Zainal & Ismail, 2009). Burns (2000) identified many factors could contribute to the pressures of undertaking and coping with the requirements of postgraduate work, which lack of writing skills using appropriate language, reading, and comprehending academic texts in a critical manner. Other attributes like lack of knowledge in research skills that includes information linkages in sentences' formation or redundancy facts in writing construction may also affect postgraduate thesis achievements (Burns, 2000).

2.4 *Other attributes*

Besides giving an attention on the attributes such as information seeking, writing skills and reading comprehension, other factors are seen as additional contributors to the positive or negative impact in the postgraduate thesis progression. As emphasized by Jacobs (1994), distance learning or known as part-time students are different to those of residential or full time students. Part-time students are resisted to cope with their concurrent academic and professional workloads and experienced a lack of support and understanding

from many factors like their family, inflexible program organization and structures, and a feeling of isolation (Lessing & Schulze, 2002). Phillips and Pugh (2000) claims internal conflicts like changing thoughts and feelings and external conflicts such as personal relationships, time and resource constraints also influence the process negatively.

3 ISSUE ON THESIS ACCOMPLISHMENT

Clewes (1996) argued thesis is a substantial piece of work, written with a view to proving or disproving something, and thus adding to, or creating new knowledge. It requires students to demonstrate a mastery of the subject area being researched as well as a comprehensive understanding of the research methodology being used. It encompasses both intellectual and skills development (Bruning, Schraw, Norby, & Ronning, 2004). For the vast majority of postgraduate students, thesis by far is the most challenging piece of academic work. Clewes' (1996) noted carrying out a master's thesis project can become equivalent to a full-time job, with no obvious immediate benefits and can take several years to complete.

A thesis project should grasp more consideration and attention than an exam or assignment and setting postgraduate's research on the back burner can deter their advancement in the field. Maintaining steady progress will help them avoid the unfortunate circumstance of having an incomplete research project after they have finished their coursework. Thesis, on the other hand, is a new kind of academic project, unlike anything else they done. The academic project marks their transition from student to researcher or intellectual (Knight & Sutton, 2004). Therefore, there is unrelenting pressure on the university sector to provide adequate research training both in the field of expertise and in the associated product by which postgraduate students will need to demonstrate a significant and original contribution to knowledge (Clewes', 1996). For many master students, the product that will show their contribution to knowledge is an accomplishment of thesis project.

Owing to it complexities, academic scholars extensively regard thesis as the last safeguard for students in accomplishing their studies (Abel, 2002; Paltridge, 1997). Many postgraduates' students reported of failing to submit their thesis work on time. In Canada, for instance, the completion rates are varying with 40% in arts, 60% in humanities and life sciences whereas in UK the completion rates is between 51% to 64% in humanities and sciences (Wright & Cochrane, 2000). It seemed that accomplishing thesis or research project is one of the most daunting challenges facing by the postgraduate students.

In line with this notion, the attrition and low completion rate among the postgraduate students is also a major problem facing by the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, University Technology Mara, Shah Alam. Report from the Faculty revealed that

those low graduation rates are owing to the failure of students in completing their final thesis or research project although passing through all other coursework both full time and part time students. Out of 70 students enrolled in the program approximately only 30-40 percent graduated on time. This phenomenon lifts up significant argument what are the underlying reasons or cause of that causation. With all the resources supports, many postgraduate students are believed struggling in understanding, integrating, applying the literature, theory, writing and other factors. The underlying reasons of the highlighting issue are still under investigation.

REFERENCES

- Abel, C. F. 2002 Academic success and the international student: research and recommendations. *New Directions for Higher Education* 117, 13–20.
- Ary, D., Jacobs L. C., Sorensen C. K. 2010. *Introduction to Research in Education*. Eighth Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Barras, R. 1991. *Scientist Must Write: A Guide To a better for Scientist, Engineers and Students*. Chapman & Hall, London, UK.
- Brown, G., & Atkins, M. 1988. *Effective Teaching in Higher Education*. London Methuen.
- Bruning, R. H., Schraw, G. J., Norby, M. M., & Ronning, R. R. 2004. *Cognitive psychology and instruction* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Burns, R.B. 2000. *Realizing the university in an age of supercomplexity*. Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.
- Clewes', D. 1996 Multiple perspectives on the undergraduate project experience. *Innovations – The Learning and Teaching Journal of Nottingham Trent University*, 27–35.
- Creswell, J.W. 2003. *Research design. Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Institute of Graduate Studies (IPSIS), 2011. *Postgraduate Handbook*. Universiti Teknologi Mara Malaysia. (On-line) Available [http://: www.ipsis.uitm.edu.my](http://www.ipsis.uitm.edu.my)
- Jacobs, L. J. 1994. Die rol van die studieleier of promoter. *Progressio*, 16(2): 29–34.
- Kaur, S. 2009. *A Qualitative Study of Postgraduate Students' Learning Experiences in Malaysia*. English Studies Section School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia.
- Kaur, S. & Abdul Manan, S. 2008. The Learning Experiences of postgraduate students: Emergent themes. In Z. Moris, H. Abdul Rahim & S. Abdul Manan (Eds.). *Higher Education in the Asia Pacific: Emerging trends in teaching and learning* (pp. 14–33). Penang: IPPTN and Universiti Sains Malaysia Press.
- Knight, C. C. & Sutton, R. E. 2004. Neo-Piagetian theory and research: Enhancing pedagogical practice for educators of adults. *London Review of Education*, 2(1), 47–60.
- Kuhlthau, C. C. 1991. Inside the search process: Information seeking from the users' perspective. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 42(5), 361–371.
- Kuhn, D., Schauble, L., & Garcia-Mila, M. 1992. Cross-domain development of scientific reasoning. *Cognition and Instruction*, 9, 285–327.
- Lessing, A. C. and Schulze, S. 2002. Graduate supervision and academic support: students' perceptions. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 16(2): 139–149.
- Ministry of Higher Education 2011. *Strategic Plan for Higher Education: Laying the Foundation Beyond 2020*". (On-line) [http://:www.mohe.gov.my](http://www.mohe.gov.my)
- Nyawaranda V. A. 2005. *Supervising Research Projects/ Dissertations*. A Paper delivered at the ZOU, Bindura: Mashonaland Central Regional Centre, 12 November 2005.
- Phillips, E.M. and Pugh, D.S. 2000. *How to Get a PhD- A Handbook for Students and Their Supervisors*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Shavelson, R. J. 1988. *Statistical reasoning for the behavioral sciences* (second edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Patricia M. Shields and Tajalli, H. 2006. "Intermediate Theory: The Missing Link in Successful Student Scholarship." *Journal of Public Affairs Education* 12(3): 313–334.
- Rizvi, F., Engel, L., Nandyala, A., Rutkowski, D. & Sparks, J. 2005. *Globalisation and Recent Shifts in Educational Policy in the Asia Pacific: An Overview of Some Critical Issues*. APEID, UNESCO Bangkok Occasional Paper Series, Paper No. 4.
- Smith, R. 2000. Done is better than perfect: The current crisis in US higher education, its multiple consequences, and the universities' unwillingness to fund a possible solution. *IMP Magazine*, 5–9.
- Shaw, M. E and Wright, J. M. 1967. *Scales for the Measurement of attitudes*. NY: McGraw Hill.
- Wilson, L. A. 2001. Information literacy: fluency across and beyond the university, In: *Library user education: powerful learning, powerful partnership*, edited by B. I. Dewey. (pp. 1–17).
- Wright, T. and Cochrane, R. 2000. Factors influencing successful submission of PhD theses. *Studies in Higher Education*, 25(2): 181–195.
- Zainal, A.N, Ismail. A. 2009. Identification of Resource Needs in Postgraduate Studies. *Research Journal of Social Sciences*, 4: 33–44.

Organization and management

This page intentionally left blank

Achieving corporate social responsibility based on HR: Porto Marina Resort, Egypt

R.Y. Zoweil

Department of Hotels and Tourism, Arab Academy for Science and Technology, Alexandria, Egypt

M.G. Montasser

Marketing and Hospitality Management and Operations, Oman Tourism College, Oman

ABSTRACT: The research purpose is to examine the responsible role and strategies that could be preferably adopted by the hotel management towards its human resources to retain and enhance the professionalism of its labour force and to mitigate some of the negative impacts associated by their hotel business. The methodology used is a case study approach using a series of semi-structured interview and assessing some relative techniques applied on Porto Marina Resort in the Northern Coast of Egypt; as tourism business is one of the essential and vibrant growth sectors for the development of this area. The research appraises to what extent the resort management is adopting the concept of responsible tourism in the human resources department.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Human Resources Management, Hotel

1 INTRODUCTION

Today, hotel organizations are increasingly called upon to evolve beyond focusing on the financial bottom line and consider the social and environmental impact of their business decisions, particularly as globalization continues. As a result, hotel executives face entirely new decisions and must manage an intricate new set of trade-offs.

The focus on corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been in the media within the US since the 1990s, and has become a mainstay in many corporations' public relations campaign. In an ideal world, a common assumption is that companies will act in a socially responsible manner as the result of ethical obligations that are either internally or externally motivated.

This notion is supported by academic and trade literature that suggest there are various reasons for engaging in socially responsible behavior (Juholin 2004, McIntosh *et al.* 2003). These reasons range from increased economic profits, employee organizational commitment, public scrutiny, improved investor relations, the good of society as a whole, up to including the general view that CSR is the "right thing to do" (Gan 2006).

This paper proposes a brief literature review emphasizing on the global adoption of CSR strategies particularly in hospitality business. Then, the research methodology is explained. Next, the research results are discussed. The paper concludes by proposing suggestions for hospitality practices.

2 LITERTURE REVIEW

In the past few years, hotel organizations worldwide have begun to embrace corporate social responsibility both as a social responsibility and as a competitive tool. As Human resources HR leaders continue to take greater responsibility and initiative regarding CSR policies and practices, it is useful to reflect upon the drivers of such policies and HR's leadership role in implementing these policies. These drivers are potential benefits to the society and the hotel cooperation as well as creating the power to face fierce global competition. However, there is no 'single way', 'right way' or 'best way' to move forward with CSR for all hotel organizations and communities (McElhaney 2008). Consequently, the motivation toward CSR is likely to differ from hotel property to another and from community to another.

This discussion requires thoughtful consideration of not only the primary reasons hotel organization in many countries now are beginning to view CSR strategy as a vital part of their overall business strategy but also a solid understanding of the link between the benefits of CSR and HR's role.

CSR includes a broad range of practices and activities, from charitable donations, events volunteerism, participating in community welfare, environment conservation, cause marketing and branding to business strategies addressing human rights and labour issues. Corporate sustainability leaders achieve long-term shareholder value by gearing their strategies and

management to harness the market's potential for sustainability products and services while at the same time successfully reducing and avoiding sustainability costs and risks.

The Dow Jones Sustainability Index (2005) defines corporate sustainability as follows "Corporate sustainability is a business approach that creates long-term shareholder value by embracing opportunities and managing risks deriving from economic, environmental and social developments".

One of the more cited definitions of CSR is proposed by Carroll (1979). He states that businesses that practice social responsibility attend to "economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time". In doing so, Carroll takes the perspective that businesses are responsible to society.

On the other hand, Clarkson (1995), Donaldson and Preston (1995) believe that businesses are not responsible to society but responsible to their stakeholders. The commonality among these different definitions of social responsibility is that corporations should engage in socially responsible behaviour as part of their organizational strategy.

The outcome of embracing social responsibility as an organizational strategy is that it offers the host organization a competitive advantage within the immediate marketplace (Porter and Kramer 2006). For instance, according to a report published by Business for Social Responsibility (2008), 67 percent of executives strongly agree that implementation of CSR initiatives provide a competitive advantage for their organization. Paul (2008) ascertains that "CSR influence a company's competitive advantage through two key value drivers company reputation and brand; and human capital".

In an effort to determine what CSR practices apply to the hotel industry, categories from several research articles as well as social responsible web sites (Clarkson 1995, BSR 2006, Jenkins & Yakovelva 2005, Alnajjar 2000, Esrock & Leichty 1998, BITC 2005) were analyzed. The authors determine five categories that best fit the hotels activity. Those categories are community, environment, marketplace, vision and values, and workforce.

Since 1992, the trend in the hospitality and tourism industry has been to focus on environmental concerns, use of technology, and efficient use of energy (Kalisch 2002). This emphasis was escalated to an international scale through the implementation of agenda 21. Agenda 21 as forwarded by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the World Tourism Organization (WTO), and the Earth Council set international guidelines relative to sustainable tourism (WTO 2005). The WTO went on to establish the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET), which is a "comprehensive set of ten principles whose purpose is to guide stakeholders in tourism development and social responsibility" (WTO 2005). These ten principles are not legally binding but do serve as guidelines to

governments, communities, tourism operators, and tourists.

In the European arena two prominent European hospitality organizations have established the initiative for improving CSR in hospitality. In reference to this initiative the European Federation of Food and Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions and Hotels, Restaurants and Cafe's in Europe drafted compliance parameters concerning equal opportunity, non-discrimination, working conditions, fair pay, vocational training and life-long learning, health and safety, and the relationship between employers and employees at all levels. This proactive stance is important to note because these unified actions are reflective of industry association adoption and engagement in socially responsible behaviour as opposed to externally derived governmental compliance directives.

Another initiative is that of "Green Hotels", an initiative of the Green Hotels Association which focuses on programs that are designed to save water, save energy and reduce solid waste. This initiative has gained a foothold in lodging operators' contribution to society's concern for the environment (Green Hotels Association 2005). Another example, the Green Hotelier (2005), a publication of the International Tourism Partnership, is a magazine whose readership cares about environmentally and socially responsible hotel behaviour focusing on positive sustainable tourism development.

It is time for the hospitality industry to be proactive and live up to their reputation of being "hospitable" not only to their guests but to their employees and society as well. Michael Woodley, vice president of distribution and marketing services of Independent Hotel Corporation states that "CSR activities are more than simply a nice thing to do; it can assist in establishing the human face to your hotel to the outside world, as well as a good way of improving employee morale" (Webster 2004).

Moreover, researches done by SHRM (2009) and Strandberg (2005) reveal that CSR practices are seen important to employees' morals, loyalty, retention, recruitment and productivity. Due to the fact that tourism is an intangible product depending on goodwill, reputation and trust, CSR policies are an increasingly important consideration for employees' satisfaction to achieve hotel cooperation credibility.

The general perception from this hospitality and tourism literature review ensures that behaving in a socially responsible manner has received increased attention over the past decade by hospitality and tourism organizations, has received increased attention via public domain media outlets, and hospitality social responsibility programs are strongly related to the broader CSR initiatives that are occurring worldwide and are codified.

It is apparent that many dimensions make up CSR from environmental aspects to the responsible treatment of employees. Moreover, the importance of CSR policies for HR is ensured although it is labeled differently depending upon the source. For example it is

referred to as “workforce” (BITC 2005), “employees” (Clarkson 1995), “employee wellbeing” (Jenkins & Yakovelva 2005), and “human resources” Alnajjar (2000).

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The case study chosen is Porto Marina resort, Alamen in the Northern Coast of Egypt. Porto Marina is a five star luxurious resort with a wide range of recreational services, spa and health activities. The object of the research is a luxurious resort, which can be considered a provider of “best practice” in the destination. In addition to that, the area surrounding the resort is an essential and vibrant growth destination for future tourism investments, with local community suffering from marginalization. Therefore, the research appraised to what extent the hotel management is committed to the notion of corporate social responsibility respecting the human resources dimension, particularly the local human resources development.

Several qualitative methods are selected to guide this exploratory case study; semi-structured interviews, participant observation and desk study are combined and used in a single case to achieve method and data triangulation.

Interviews were conducted during working hours, notes taken and analyzed. Questions order and content are varied depending on the department of an interviewee. The interviews were conducted during the low-season period (December 2011) with the heads of the following departments: human resources, food and beverage, front office manager and the general manager.

Participants’ observation (June 2011) is done as a prerequisite for semi-structured interviewing. Moreover, the resort’s website is examined to estimate the commitment of the hotel management to the notion of corporate social responsibility.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The semi-structured interviewing and participant observation methods reveal the following key points related to human resources management:

- Turnover problem;
- Failure to recruit from surrounding area;
- Deficiencies in employees training and development programmes;
- Deficiency in accountability and employee communication;
- Unfair and inequitable benefits;
- Good employees’ involvement in social and voluntary activities.

Turnover is a very common problem in the resort but its severity varies from department to the other. The staff turnover is considered to be higher in the

food and beverage (F&B) and housekeeping departments (40%) than front and back offices (20%). This is due to several reasons, in F&B and Housekeeping departments there are fewer benefits, low educational level, lower wages leading to attitude degradation due to bad working conditions and then leaving the resort. Moreover, their educational background is not directly related to tourism field, therefore there is no intension in building career in hospitality as the employees consider this job a temporary one until they find a better job with better financial outcomes.

On the other hand, the front and back offices are represented by smaller number of employees; they are hospitality related education seeking for career opportunities, better salaries and benefits. Therefore the turnover is less than F&B and Housekeeping departments. The percentage of turnover is considered high, providing a constant challenge as it limits the ability of the resort to maintain skilled workforce and results in enhanced efforts and costs, indicating the need for more efforts to attract the labour market.

Despite the improvement of working conditions in the resort for permanent employees by introducing social insurance and healthcare privileges in their contacts without adding any financial burdens. The real pressure in the resort working environment generates from unfair working conditions and inequitable benefits. Issues ranging from wage levels to, the recruitment of seasonal staff, discrimination, illegal labour to lack of trade union recognition, prolonged shifts with no over-time policy to be applied; moreover employees are not treated fairly regarding bonuses and incentives. Again this leads to difficulty to retain skilled and trained employees due to the resort’s management non- responsible attitude.

Although the resort is facing problems in recruitment because it is located far from urban and rural areas despite the offering of accommodation and meals for employees especially in labour intense departments such as F&B and Housekeeping (in addition to the previously mentioned disadvantage which is unfair working conditions), recruiting employees from the surrounding area is not proposed in the resort management plan for human resources development. The resort management considers that local community is poor with low education level, not acquainted with the tourism business. On the other side local people think that hotel jobs are non- prestigious jobs. What is notable is that the resort managers are not familiar with the theory and the benefits of recruiting from local surroundings.

The research reveals that the importance of training employees and developing programmes is widely recognized by the interviewed resort managers due to increasing competition and the desire to achieve high standards in their services. One of the research consistent findings is that training programmes comprise “on – job training” concentrating on delivering basic skills for different departments and not paying attention to their management development and training for hotel’s culture change or corporate social

responsibility policies for up grading different levels of employees relationships.

Moreover, in terms of training and development techniques, most of the contemporary training methods are not new. Despite the appearance of increased variety of training methods the resort still relied on convention training delivering methods such as lectures and apprenticeship.

The study revealed that the practice of publishing the CSR reports has not been recognized yet. This leads to lack of providing accurate and transparent information. The result is often uncoordinated CSR activities, disconnected from the hotel strategy, not strengthening the resort's long term competitiveness and miscommunication with employees. Moreover, the hotel's web site was evaluated by the researchers revealing no reference what so ever on the hotel's responsible activities.

The study reveals that the social responsibility concept is highly recognized by all interviewees in the form of charity donation and environmental preservation. This is well reflected in the hotel's responsible agenda and the existence of an environmental team, in addition to the commitment of the human resource manager in accomplishing the charity activities set by the resort management. The resort believes in the importance of the effective employee engagement in voluntary activities to increase levels of trust and to earn internal support from employees through building a good image for the employer, thus enhancing employees' retention.

The resort is evaluated to be remarkably modest in the way it engages and supports its employees, as a significant number of positive CSR initiatives remain unachieved that should be implemented to make the working environment in the Porto Marina resort more agreeable to achieve employees retention. Moreover, the research revealed the existence of a gap between management and employees, as implemented strategies and actions taken by the resort is not considered satisfactory for the majority of the employees reflected in high turnover percentage. The findings suggest that new human resources management practices should be used in order to make the employment more sustainable and enhance internal relationships.

5 SUGGESTIONS ON ENHANCING CSR STRATEGIES TOWARDS HUMAN RESOURCES

The resort management must set targets to increase the number of local people employed and a percentage of the resorts profit and charity donations should go to people living in the surrounding area to enhance their image to hotelier business and understand the benefits that can be returned on them. This will help the resort to build a good relationship with localities that will lead to long term workforce benefits.

In order to determine employees' satisfaction and retention, the management has to establish a better

communication channel with employees. The human resources management communicates with employees in case of serious problems facing them. This is not enough to fill in the gap between management values and employees values. The idea of creating "employee relations" helps to bring critical labour issues to the attention of senior management, to provide a suitable work-life balance, in addition to create an alignment between the resort's and employees' different culture values through conducting worker's surveys.

Moreover, this "employee relations" can conduct surveys on local people surrounding the resort to suggest ways to develop them into effective hotelier working force. In order to overcome the turnover problem and increase the employees retention rate, the resort top management must consider employees as valued as shareholders and guests, with the right for fair labour practices, competitive wages and benefits, family and friendly working environment, uphold human rights and provide staff with incentives and bonuses linked to performance or service levels.

To increase resort's accountability, it is highly recommended that the resort should redesign its website, putting more corporate social responsibility reports available -on regular basis- addressing all resort stakeholders, in particularly employees on different levels.

The training and development programmes and techniques need to be regularly upgraded to consider future requirements that may arise. Moreover, employees should be connected with their community in a meaningful way to create loyalty through community programmes and voluntary days.

6 CONCLUSIONS

According to the survey, it can be concluded that the concept of CSR is closely associated with the concepts of best practice and sustainability in tourism, but it integrates the idea of achieving a competitive advantage through using differently the available resources and turning threats into opportunities. Therefore, the concept of CSR is essential for luxurious hotels for long-term competitive position, as it cannot compete on traditional techniques of low prices or heavy expenditure on promotion.

As HR becomes more of a strategic partner in hospitality business, the research confirms that HR professionals will play a larger role in CSR strategy from conception to application. HR can engage hotel employees CSR through educating them about the CSR strategy. Furthermore, an "employee relation team" should be established to help localize global CSR strategies to ensure employees' satisfaction and solicit employees' ideas and concerns to increase their retention and support the organization's CSR mission.

Although there is no standard for measuring the success of the hotel organization's CSR efforts, it is arguably partially dependent upon how well the hotel

organization communicates its CSR policies and practices to its stakeholders, the local community and society at large.

REFERENCES

- Alnajjar, F. 2000. Determinants of SR disclosures of US Fortune 500 firms: an application of content analysis. *Advances in Environmental Accounting and Management* 1: 163–200.
- BITC Business in the Community. 2005. www.bitc.org.uk/resources/jargon_buster/cr.html
- BSR Business for Social Responsibility 2006. Taking the temperature of CSR leaders. www.bsr.org/BSRleaders_survey.pdf
- Carroll, A. 1979. A three-dimensional conceptual model of corporate performance. *Academy of Management Review* 4(4): 497–505.
- Clarkson, M. 1995. A stakeholder framework for analyzing and evaluating corporations. *The Academy of Management Review* 20(1): 92–118.
- Donaldson, T. & Preston, L. 1995. The stakeholder theory of the corporation: concepts, evidence, and implications. *Academy of Management Review* 20(1): 65–91.
- Dow Jones Sustainability Index. 2005. www.sustainability-indexes.com/html/indexes/overview.html
- Esrock, S. & Leichty, G. 1998. Social responsibility and corporate web pages: self-presentation or agenda-setting?. *Public Relations Review* 24(3): 305–26.
- Gan, A. 2006. The impact of public scrutiny on corporate philanthropy. *Journal of Business Ethics* 69(3): 217–36.
- Green Hotelier. 2005. www.greenhotelier.com
- Green Hotels Association. 2005. www.greenhotels.com/whatare.htm
- Jenkins, H. & Yakovelva, N. 2005. Corporate social responsibility in the mining industry: exploring trends in social and environmental disclosure. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 14(3/4): 271–84.
- Juholin, E. 2004. For business or for the good of all? A Finnish approach to corporate social responsibility. *Corporate Governance* 4(3): 20–32.
- Kalisch, A. 2002. *Corporate Futures: Social Responsibility in the Tourism Industry*: 73–75. Tourism Concern, London.
- McElhaney, K. 2008. *Just Good Business – The strategic Guide for Aligning Corporate Responsibility and Brand*: 37. Berrett-Koehler Publisher
- McIntosh, M., Thomas, R., Leipziger, T. & Coleman, G. 2003. *Living Corporate Citizenship*: 12–13. Prentice-Hall: London.
- Paul, L.M. 2008. A review of the theories of corporate social responsibility: its evolutionary path and the road ahead. *International journal of management review* 10(1): 53–73.
- Porter, M. & Kramer, M. 2006. Strategy and society: the link between competitive advantage and corporate social responsibility. *Harvard Business Review* 84(12): 78–89.
- SHRM Society for human resource management. 2009. corporate social responsibility: United States, Australia, India, China, Canada, Mexico and Brazil: a pilot study, Virginia US.
- Standberg, C. 2009. the role of human resources management in CSR issue brief and road map, Standberg consulting.
- Webster, J. 2004. It's great to give. *Caterer and Hotelkeeper*, 193 (4331): 31–6.
- WTO World Tourism Organization. 2005. www.world-tourism.org/code_ethics/eng/global.htm

This page intentionally left blank

The moderating effect of employment type on the relationship between service standards and job performance in 4 and 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

N.H. Nazlan & A.Zainal

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This study investigates the role of service standards towards the job performance of hotel employees and how it is moderated by employment type. A survey instrument that included measures of service standards and job performance was administered to 196 hotel employees in Kuala Lumpur. Findings showed that service standards played a significant role as a predictor for job performance, particularly so for full-time employees whom reported higher performance with the presence of service standards as compared to part-time employees. Implications and suggestions for future research are also provided.

Keywords: job performance, employment type, service standards, waiters

1 INTRODUCTION

Realizing the significant contribution of the services sector in a country's development, Malaysia has emphasize on the production of services, with a tourism industry that is expected to contribute a staggering amount of RM104 billion to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2020 (Economic Planning Unit, 2010). The hotel industry in Malaysia contributes to the highest fraction of tourist expenditure and accounts up to 31% out of the total tourist receipts of RM56,493 billion in 2010 alone (Tourism Malaysia, 2011).

The competitive hospitality industry in today's contemporary settings has witness hotel organizations increasingly offers a wide array of services to delight their guests, creating a surge in guests' expectations during service encounters. Due to the boundary spanning role that front line employees play, it is therefore important for the management to ensure that the services provided by these front liners meets guests' expectations during the moment of truth as it often influence guests' perception on the organization as a whole (Battencourt & Brown, 2003).

Human factors further complicate the service delivery process, contributing to the unpredictable service encounters and variability of guests' expectations. Unlike machines, humans, equipped with different personalities and attitudes are susceptible to mood fluctuations, leading to inconsistent service quality (Barrington & Olsen, 1987). As such, management of hotel organizations prefers to have standards that

govern their service orientation, allowing for more control over their employees. Accordingly, employees also welcome standards as it acts as a guide, enabling them to understand what is expected of them, thus reducing the risk of job ambiguity (Sandoff, 2005).

Due to the fluctuating demands and the labor-intensive nature of the hospitality industry, managers have historically depended on part-time workers as flexible source of labor (Inman & Enz, 1995; Cho & Johanson, 2008). Additionally, the high turnover rate that has plagued the service industry has also made part-time employment a necessity for hospitality firms to innovatively manage and maximize employees' work efforts as they play critical roles in the service delivery process (Stamper & Van Dyne, 2001). Notably, the hospitality industry in Malaysia is not exempted from the problem of manpower shortages, especially full-time workers. As such, the country's hospitality business had to also increase their dependency on part-time employees.

As the dependence of part-time employees continues to gradually increase, it is essential to know how organizational environment and employment type of an employee will affect their attitudes and behavior. This is especially critical for organizational success as service employees plays an important role in the service delivery process. Consequently, this study addresses how an element of organizational climate such as service standards will positively predict performance. In addition to that, this study also proposes that employees' employment type will moderate this relationship.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

More and more hospitality organizations are adopting the practice of standardization by having organizational standards that governs the service delivery of their organizations (Sandoff, 2005). Ensuring a consistent fit between an organization's missions, actions, policies, procedures and leadership will contribute to performance improvement (Dickson et al., 2006). Moreover, hospitality operations thrive on a certain degree of standardization, formalization and rules to achieve efficiency. This is worth noting as organizational performance in the hospitality business often begins with a well-defined and appropriate measure and standards in their operations (Boshoff, 2002).

2.1 *Service standards*

The hospitality business consists of intricate organizations in which, the bundle of services that are offered needs to be well integrated and organized, simultaneously allowing space for impromptu problem solving in the ever changing business environment. The intricacy of such organization requires a set of standards that encompasses routines, policies and formal systems enabling task coordination and ensuring organizational goals and business objectives (Øgaard, 2006).

Service features that have been stipulated allow members of the organization to have a common understanding on the elements that contributes to service quality. Such understanding will facilitate in the willing performance of behaviors that is organization-oriented in order to meet or exceed the desired standards that has been set by the organization (George & Tan, 1993). In particular, having standards minimizes risks that are connected with the production process, especially in the service encounters that are highly dependent upon the human factor. This is also in tandem with the primary function of standards, which is to control the output activity and service quality (Ritzer, 1993; Brunsson & Jacobsson, 2000).

2.2 *Standards and job performance*

Babin and Boles (1996) brought up the fact that the absence of standards may increase employees' susceptibility to job ambiguity which can be detrimental to their job performance. It is only expected that employees tend to appreciate rules and routines which constitutes the expectations of the organization in the service delivery process, reducing job ambiguity for service employees and making it more comprehensible (Øgaard et al., 2008). Additionally, Lewis (1989) mentioned that, management's failure to clearly communicate the nature of their organization and explain in detail what is expected of the employee in a service delivery process will result in a poor understanding of their job, thus hindering them from performing. A more recent study in the have also concluded that employees job performance or behaviors

that are organizationally oriented, could be improved if employees accurately perform services in accordance with organizations' standards and procedures that are fairly rewarded by the management. Fairly rewarding employees work-efforts will further encourage their observance of the expected standards and service procedures in relative to both customer service and service excellence (Way et al., 2010).

2.3 *Type of employment*

Most research distinguishing between full-time and part-time employees has provided general focus on job-related attitudes and not work-related behaviours despite the potential differences (Rotchford & Roberts, 1982; Feldman, 1990). With an exception on the study done by Peters et al. (1981), who demonstrated differences in the turnover of employees with different employment type. However, Jackofsky and Peters (1987) found no difference in performance and turnover of employees based on their employment type. Inconsistency in these findings suggests that further research to be conducted in distinguishing employment type and their outcomes.

Based on the review of literatures, the following hypotheses were formulated;

H1: Service standards positively influence job performance

H2: Employment type moderates the relationship between service standards and job performance

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 *Participants and procedures*

The respondents of this study comprised of wait staffs employed in coffee houses of 4 and 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur. The wait staffs were chosen because of the high degree of contact that they encounter with guests and the extent of guidance that they require in order to provide efficient services to guests. The study yielded 78% response rate or 196 usable questionnaires from a total of 21 participating 4 and 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur.

3.2 *Measures*

A 7-item instrument used to measure the service standards variable was adopted from Susskind et al., 2003; 2007). Employees' job performance was measured using 11 items. Seven items were adopted from the works of Liang et al. (2010) and the scale was further enhanced by an additional of four items developed and cross-validated by Vandenabeele (2009). The 11 items were used to measure respondent's view of their own performance in relative to their co-workers and how they perceive themselves to be helpful and customer oriented. All of the items were measured using the 5-point Likert Scale. The questionnaires were worded in English and Bahasa Malaysia to ensure clarity,

precise and to avoid ambiguity since most of the respondents were not well-versed in English.

3.3 Data analyses

Other than employees' type of employment, the demographic information was used to provide an overview of respondents' profile. Regression analyses were conducted to assess the relationship between the independent variable of service standards towards the criterion variable of job performance and how employees' type of employment moderates the relationship.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Profile of sample

59.7% ($N = 117$) of the respondents were male while the remaining 40.3% ($N = 79$) were female with a mean age of 26.6 years. 55.6% of respondents have been with the same organization between 1 to 3 years. Ninety-three (47.4%) of respondents indicated that they have also held the same job for 1 to 3 years. Almost 41% ($N = 80$) of the respondents held skills certificate and 31.6% ($N = 62$) have at least a diploma or degree. Majority of the respondents are full time employees, consisting of almost 84% ($N = 164$) of the total respondents. Eighty-one (41.2%) of the respondents aged between 26 and 30, while 76 (38.8%) of them are those aged between 21 and 25.

4.2 Hypotheses testing

Table 1 provides the result of the hierarchical regression analyses to test the moderating effects of employment type in the relationship between service standards and job performance. The control variables reported significant relation to the criterion variable. The inclusion of service standards and employment type in Step 2 significantly increased the explained variance of the dependent variable (from 6% to 18%). Service standards also appeared to be a positively significant predictor for job performance ($\beta = .37$, $p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 1. The inclusion of the interaction terms between service standards and

Table 1. Results of hierarchical regression analyses for testing moderating effects of employment type.

Step	Variable	Job Performance		
		β	R ²	R ² Δ
1	Control variables		.06*	
2	Service standards	.37*	.18*	.12*
	Employment type	-.00		
3	Two-way interaction		.21*	.03*
	Service standards			
	X Employment type	.23*		

* $p < .05$

employment type in Step 3 also reported a significant increase of 3% in the explained variance of the dependent variable. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

5 DISCUSSION

Based on the findings presented, it was observed that service standards recorded a fairly high beta value of $\beta = .37$ ($p < .01$), indicating that service standards is a significant predictor for job performance, thus supporting H1. The findings are similar with previous research, where standards are said to contribute to employees understanding on the hows and whys of their job, thus enabling them to perform well (Lewis, 1989). The results of this study are also consistent with other researchers (Southern, 1999; Ford, 2001; Øgaard, 2006; Øgaard et al., 2008) that standards which provides the employee with a foundation of rules and regulations for their service behaviors, make their job less ambiguous, therefore allowing them to conduct their job more effectively.

The regression analyses also showed that employment type does moderate the relation between service standards and job performance, indicating that full-time employees have the tendency to perform better than part-time employees in the presence of service standards, thus supporting H2. The behavioral differences between full-time and part-time employees are not surprising, given the different exchange relationship that they engage in. Part-time employees spend less working hour, receive less remuneration from the organization as compared to their full-time counterparts, hence it is less likely for them to contribute beyond the minimum job requirement (Stamper & Van Dyne, 2001). This is also in tandem with the exchange theory, which explains that when an organization exert commitments exceeding employees expectations, employees will reciprocate with stronger commitments to the organization. In addition, part-time employees often expect less from the organization (remuneration, benefits, training, recognition, etc.) as compared to their full-time counterparts; therefore they express stronger commitment if they feel they are being valued by the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Cho & Johanson, 2008).

6 IMPLICATIONS

Findings of this study are able to further bridge the gap found in previous studies pertaining to organizational behavior, particularly in distinguishing the outcome of employees with different work status or employment type and how they are treated by the organization. This study also shed more light on the standardization practice that is widely accepted in the service industry as compared to the practice of service customization.

The findings also provide implications for the management of the hotel industry. The conceptual link

observed between elements in hospitality organizational climate serves as determinants of employees' performance. This provides hospitality organizations with an association between their organization's standards, procedures and behavioral expectations that are able to stimulate or frustrates employees' work effort. Managers of the hotel business that manages both full-time and part-time employees should also be aware that organizations that tend to employ part-time employees because of cost savings benefits might indirectly offset the overall productivity of the organization, particularly in service organizations where extra effort are required to provide services that will delight guests.

7 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study only obtained data from coffee house wait staffs from the 4 and 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur, thus restricting the ability to generalise the findings. While conducting a study in a single industry enables researcher to control for cross-industry variations (Jayawardhena et al., 2007), it is recommended for future research to conduct a replication of this study using a larger sample size from within and across multiple service industry to provide a more extensive understanding, allowing the findings to be generalized better.

The study is also susceptible to common method variance (Campbell & Fiske, 1959) as all measures of the variables are obtained from a single source—the frontline employees. Due to the fact that all responses are gathered from the same source, any defects or inflated ratings by the respondents contaminates all measures in the same manner (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Although no response defects are recorded in the present study, it is recommended for any replication of this study to attempt in acquiring responses from multiple sources in order to avoid the potential pitfalls of the common method variance.

Several directions for future research have also been identified based on the findings of this study. Firstly, the validity of the theorized model can be further tested using additional employee-outcomes such as affiliation towards organization, organizational commitment, and absenteeism. Correspondingly, although it may be intricate, using guest-outcome measures such as guest satisfaction and measures of organizational-outcome such as organizational performance and that matches with employees' performance will also shed some light on the connection between employee performance, guest satisfaction and organizational performance.

8 CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that employees' outcome were influenced by their employment type, where job commitment among full-time employees were

seen to be better with the presence of service standards as compared to their part-time counterparts. This research will consequently serve as an avenue for future researchers to contribute in further theoretical development and formulation of new and unexplored research questions, especially pertaining to organizational environment that promotes employees work-related outcomes. This is because service employees play an important role in influencing customer perception towards the organization. Given the dynamic nature of the hospitality business, a comprehensive understanding on the determinants that influences employees' performance can be rewarding for the management as it is one of the means to achieve operational and organizational goals.

REFERENCES

- Babin, B. J., & Boles, J. S. 1996. The effects of perceived co-worker involvement and supervisor support on service provider role stress, performance and job satisfaction. *Journal of Retailing*, 72(1), 57–75.
- Barrington, M., & Olsen, M. D. 1987. Concept of service in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 6(3), 131–138.
- Bettencourt, L., & Brown, S. 2003. Role Stressors and Customer-Oriented Boundary-Spanning Behaviors in Service Organizations, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 32(4), 394–408.
- Boshoff, C. 2002. Service advertising: an exploratory study of risk perceptions. *Journal of Service Research*, 4(4), 290–298.
- Brunsson, N., & Jacobsson, B. 2000. Following standards, in N. Brunsson and B. Jacobsson (eds), *The World of Standards*, (pp. 125-138). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Campbell, D. T., & Fiske, D. W. 1959. Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix. *Psychological Bulletin*, 56, 81–105.
- Cho, S., & Johanson, M. M. 2008. Organizational citizenship behaviour and employee performance: A moderating effect of work status in restaurant employees. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 32(3), 307–326.
- Dickson, D.R., Ford, R.C., & Upchurch, R. 2006. A case study in hotel organizational alignment. *Hospitality Management*, 25, 463–477.
- Economic Planning Unit (EPU). 2010. Tenth Malaysia Plan. Retrieved May 20, 2011 from <http://www.epu.gov.my>
- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived Organizational Support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(3), 500–507.
- Feldman, D. 1990. Reconceptualization the nature and consequences of part-time work. *Academy of Management Review*, 15: 103–112.
- Ford, W. S. Z. 2001. Customer expectations for interactions with service providers: Relationship versus encounter orientation and personalized service communication. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 29, 1–29.
- George, T. R., & Tan, Y. F. 1993. A comparison of the importance of selected service related factors as perceived by restaurant employees and managers. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 12(3), 289–298.
- Inman, C., & Enz, C. 1995. Shattering the myths of the part-time worker. *Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 36(5), 70–73.

- Jackofsky, E. F., & Peters, L. H. 1987. Part-time versus full-time employment status differences: A replication and extension. *Journal of Occupational Behavior*, 8, 1–9.
- Jayawardhena, C., Souchon, A. L., Farrell, A. M., & Glanville, K. 2007. Outcomes of service encounter quality in a business-to-business context. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 36(5), 575–588.
- Lewis, R. C. 1989. *Hospitality Marketing: The Internal Approach*. Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, 30, 41–45.
- Liang, R. D, Tseng, H. C., & Lee, Y. C. 2010. Impact of Service Orientation on Frontline Employee Service Performance and Consumer Response. *Journal of Marketing*, 2(2), 67–75.
- Øgaard, T. 2006. Do organizational practices matter for hotel industry employees' jobs? A study of organizational practice archetypical configurations and job outcomes. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 25(4), 647–661.
- Øgaard, T., Marnburg, E., & Larsen, S. 2008. Perceptions of organizational structure in the hospitality industry: Consequences for commitment, job satisfaction and perceived performance. *Tourism Management*, 29(4), 661–671.
- Peters, L. H., Jackofsky, E. F., & Salter, J. R. 1981. Predicting Turnover: A Comparison of Part-Time and Full-Time Employees. *Journal of Occupational Behavior*, 2 (2), 89–98.
- Podsakoff, P.M., & Organ, D. W. 1986. Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects. *Journal of Management*, 12(2): 531–544.
- Ritzer, G. 1993, *The MacDonalidization of Society*, Thousand Oaks, Pine Forge.
- Rotchford, N., & Roberts, K. 1982. Part-time workers as missing persons in organizational research. *Academy of Management Review*, 7(2) 228–234.
- Sandoff, M. 2005. Customization and standardization in hotels – a paradox or not? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(6), 529–535.
- Southern, G. 1999. A systems approach to performance measurement in hospitality. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 11(7), 366–376.
- Stamper, C. L., & Van Dyne, L. 2001. Work status and organizational citizenship behavior: A field study of restaurant employees. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 22: 517–535.
- Susskind, A. M., Kacmar, K. M., & Borchgrevink, C. P. 2003. Customer service providers' attitudes relating to customer service and customer satisfaction in the customer-server exchange. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88, 179–187.
- Susskind, A. M., Kacmar, K. M., & Borchgrevink, C. P. 2007. How Organizational Standards and Coworker Support Improve Restaurant Service. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 48(4), 370–379.
- Tourism Malaysia. 2010. *Tourist Arrivals to Malaysia*. Retrieved June 20, 2011 from <http://corporate.tourism.gov.my>
- Vandenabeele, W. 2009. The mediating effect of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on self-reported performance: more robust evidence of the PSM–performance relationship. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 75(1), 11–34.
- Way, S. A., Sturman, M. C., & Raab, C. 2010. What Matters More?: Contrasting the Effects of Job Satisfaction and Service Climate on Hotel Food and Beverage Managers' Job Performance. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 51(3), 379–397.

This page intentionally left blank

The influence of ethical responsibility initiatives on perceived tour program quality and tour booking intention

W. Marchoo & K. Butcher

Griffith Business School, Griffith University, Australia

ABSTRACT: This study aims to investigate the influence of ethical responsibility initiatives on customers' perceptions of tour program quality and tour booking intention. Ethical responsibility is defined as one domain of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and refers to a company's ethical behaviours towards its key stakeholders. A factorial experiment was employed to investigate the impact of the provision of an accreditation logo and codes of ethics on an online tour brochure for potential tourists planning to visit Thailand. The results highlight significant main and interaction effects of both ethical initiatives on all dependent variables. Interestingly, the main effects of the codes of ethics appeared to have a stronger effect on perceived tour program quality and booking intention than accreditation and the main effects of the codes of ethics were relatively large.

Keywords: tourism accreditation, codes of ethics, perceived tour quality, tour booking intention, experimental design

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a pronounced increase in interest in corporate social responsibility (CSR) by the business community. Similarly, public and private organizations in the tourism and hospitality industry have paid attention to CSR activities. Tourism business owners/managers are aware of the benefits of CSR activities and have implemented activities, such as green practices and local community support (Dodds & Kuehnel 2010, Sheldon & Park 2011). Moreover, it is argued that CSR is a worth-implementation activity as it creates benefits not only to business performance, but also to the community (Nicolau 2008). Further, tourism operators in many countries have been practicing a range of responsible initiatives (Tour Operator Initiatives 2003). Importantly, the World Travel & Tourism Council has suggested that the new standard of tourism businesses is to exercise CSR and CSR activities should be based not only on charitable contributions, but also ethical values (www.wttc.org).

In addition to the evidence from a business perspective, there is also a positive trend of ethical and responsible tourism (Goodwin & Francis 2003; Center for Responsible Travel 2010). As a result of tourist demand, corporate social responsibility has been applied into tourism businesses as a marketing and management tool to maintain their images and reputations as well as reduce the risks and pressures of both the consumer and labour markets (Tepelus 2005). Evidence has been shown that tourists have positive

attitudes about responsible tourism companies (Fairweather et al. 2005). However, little is known about whether tourists will have positive perceptions about a tour and the positive likelihood of buying a tour from an ethically responsible tour company. Accordingly, this study aims to investigate the influence of ethical-CSR initiatives on customers' perceptions about tour program quality and tour booking intention.

2 ETHICAL-CSR INITIATIVES AND CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS, TOUR BOOKING INTENTION

According to Carroll (1979), CSR comprises four key domains: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic where ethical responsibility refers to a company's ethical behaviours towards key stakeholders. In general, many authors support the positive association between ethical behaviour and favourable consumer responses. For instance, customers have positive perceptions about the service quality of a bank when it is practicing CSR (Poolthong & Mandhachitara 2009). Similarly, Du et al. (2010) has conceptually argued that there is a positive relationship between a company's communication about CSR initiatives and the purchase of products. In this current study, tourism accreditation and codes of ethics are the focus of the investigation. They are referred to as ethical-CSR activities practiced by tourism operators. Buckley (2002) has noted

that accreditation/certification and voluntary codes are influential for choice evaluation of tourism products. Accordingly, this current study investigates the effects of tourism accreditation and codes of ethics on tourists' evaluations of perceived tour program quality, perceived ethical performance of a company, and tour booking intention.

Tourism accreditation refers to a logo or label a tour company employs to inform a customer that a company is accredited by a certifying organization. Such tourism accreditations have also been termed and are in use at international, regional, national, and also sub-national levels (Sasidharan et al. 2002). It is suggested that certifications/accreditations provide tourist empowerment to select tourism products because these schemes can assure tourists of good quality and professional tourism products and services (Cristiana 2008, Hjalager 2001). Also, Bergin-Seers & Mair (2008) reported that consumers perceive benefits from accredited tourism products. Survey results have shown that around 16% of Australian tourists used an accredited operator (155 respondents) because of high standards, professionalism, and overall quality (Foster 2000). Accordingly, this study hypothesizes:

H1a: Tourists will have more positive perceptions about tour quality when a tour is offered by an accredited company than when it is offered by a non-accredited company.

H1b: Tourists will be more likely to book a tour offered by an accredited company than a tour offered by a non-accredited company.

Further, based on Stevens (1994), codes of ethics refer to the messages written as guidelines to shape the ethical behaviour of a tour company. Codes of ethics have been widely discussed in the tourism literature (e.g., Payne & Dimanche 1996, Smagulova et al. 2009). Implementation of codes of ethics has also been supported by international tourism organization, such as UNWTO, who launched the global code of ethics for tourism aiming to promote responsible and sustainable tourism in the late 1990s. However, previous studies have focused more on the codes practiced among tourism operators; rather than consumers' responses to the codes (e.g., Coles 2007). Also, tourism studies investigating the impact of codes of ethics on customers' perceptions and purchase intention seem to be limited when compared to studies exploring the impact of tourism accreditation. Similarly studies exploring the effect of codes of ethics on perceived quality are limited. This is despite the argument from authors, such as Fleckenstein & Huebsch (1999) who have stated that "ethics and quality can be equated since the production of goods and services is *prima facie* ethical treatment of the consumer" (p. 140). While, Fleckenstein and Huebsch (1999) have highlighted the ethical treatment of consumers, we argue that for tour products, ethical treatment of the environment, local community and employee are also associated with tour quality. Accordingly, this present study investigates

whether tourists will associate codes of ethics regarding the environment, local community, and employee with tour quality. In addition to tour quality, it is also evident that travellers in the developed countries, such as the UK preferred to book a holiday with a company that has a written code of ethics. Accordingly, this study hypothesizes:

H2a: Tourists will have more positive perceptions about tour quality when a company practices codes of ethics than when it does not.

H2b: Tourists will be more likely to book a tour offered by a company that has codes of ethics than a tour offered by a company that does not have codes of ethics.

H3: Tourists' perceptions about tour quality and tour booking intention will be higher when a company is both accredited and has ethical codes than when a company is either accredited or has ethical codes, or does not practice ethical initiatives at all.

3 METHOD

This study seeks to extend current knowledge by combining two factors, tourism accreditation and codes of ethics, in an experimental study and investigates main and interaction effects. Experimental designs are used when aiming to generalize about theoretical effects of variables (Sparks & Browning 2011). As the purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of selected factors, the experimental designs were employed using a 2 (tourism accreditation: presence or absence) \times 2 (codes of ethics: presence or absence) between subject design. According to the research design, the experiment involved four different conditions. Tour brochures used as stimulus materials were designed to allow the manipulations of tourism accreditation and codes of ethics within a reasonably realistic setting. See Appendix A for a sample of the stimulus material. While accreditation was operationalized by using the Green Globe 21, the codes of ethics were operationalized by a set of written short messages.

Two independent variables were measured with three items each for the manipulation checks. Two dependent variables were also measured by multiple items with 7-point Likert type scales (Strongly disagree to Strongly agree). Firstly, perceived tour program quality was measured by four items based on the work of Geva and Goldman (1989, 1991) and Petrick (2004). Tour booking intention was measured by three items based on Chiang & Jang (2006). See Appendix B for the list of items for each construct and construct reliability. An online survey involved 897 subjects. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of four conditions represented by different combinations of the two independent variables. ANOVAs were used to analyse the data.

4 RESULTS

Before the two manipulations were tested for their effectiveness, manipulation check procedure (Perdue & Summers 1986) was first conducted. ANOVAs were used for the analysis and the results confirmed convergent validity for the manipulations tested [F (1,893) = 475.194, $p < 0.001$ for accreditation and F (1,893) = 607.145, $p < 0.001$ for codes of ethics]. This means that the subjects perceived a tour with the GG21 logo on the brochure as accredited tour. At the same time, they perceived a tour promoted on the brochure is a tour that operated under ethical codes of conduct. Also, the subject viewed that accreditation is different from codes of ethics.

Further, ANOVAs results showed significant and positive main and interaction effects of the two initiatives on all dependent variables. Firstly, there was a significant and positive main effect of the tourism accreditation on perceived tour program quality [F (1,893) = 12.50, $p < 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.014$] and tour booking intention [F (1,893) = 5.743, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.006$]. Similarly, codes of ethics positively influenced perceived tour program quality [F (1,893) = 41.698, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.045$] and tour booking intention [F (1,893) = 35.138, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.038$]. Table 1 below shows the differences in mean scores between groups of subjects. According to the results, hypotheses H1a, H1b, H2a, and H2b are supported. Interestingly, codes of ethics appeared to have stronger effect than accreditation as indicated by the partial eta square (η^2). According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), while effect sizes of accreditation on the two dependent variables are considered relatively small, effect sizes of codes of ethics are reasonably moderate.

Table 1. Means for significant main and interaction effects.

Manipulations	Dependent variables			
	Tour program quality		Booking intention	
	M	SD	M	SD
<i>Main effects</i>				
<i>Accreditation</i>				
Presence	5.29	0.89	5.13	1.24
Absence	5.06	1.07	4.92	1.38
<i>Codes of ethics</i>				
Presence	5.38	0.85	5.28	1.15
Absence	4.97	1.08	4.77	1.42
<i>Interaction effects</i>				
Accreditation & code presence	5.42	0.81	5.28	1.16
Accreditation presence; codes absence	5.16	0.95	4.97	1.30
Codes presence; accreditation absence	5.35	0.88	5.28	1.14
Accreditation & Code absence	4.78	1.17	4.56	1.52

Moreover, the results indicated significant, positive and small interaction effects of the two ethical-CSR initiatives on customers' perceptions and tour booking intention. The effects on perceived tour program quality [F (1,893) = 5.728, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.006$] and tour booking intention [F (1,893) = 5.501, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.006$] are relatively equal. According to the mean scores as shown in Table 1, it can be concluded that tourists are likely to have the highest positive perceptions about the quality of a tour when a company is implementing both accreditation and codes of ethics ($M = 5.42$). In contrast for tour booking intention, the mean scores between the group of subjects in the first condition (presence of both accreditation and codes of ethics) and the group in the third condition (Presence codes, but absence accreditation) are not significantly different ($M = 5.28$). This means that tourists are likely to book a tour not only when a company has practicing the two initiatives, but also when a company is only practicing codes of ethics. Accordingly, hypothesize H3 is partially supported.

5 DISCUSSION

The empirical findings of this study confirm an increasing trend of ethical consumerism in the tourism industry (Center for Responsible Travel 2010, Goodwin & Francis 2003). More importantly, the study adds to the growing literature concerned with CSR in the tourism business context, particularly, the proposition about the influences of CSR communication on customer variables (Du et al. 2010). For tourism products, it is common in today's market place that tourism businesses promote their CSR activities. Ethical-CSR activities, such as tourism accreditation and codes of ethics have appeared to be the most common forms of CSR promotion. While there are previous studies about tourists' responses to accreditation programs or ecolabels (Bergins-Seers & Mair 2008, Reiser & Simmons 2005), little is known about how tourists respond to a provision of codes of ethics in marketing campaigns. Findings of this study have revealed separate effects of each initiative, compared their effects, as well as highlighted more complicated effects with tourism accreditation interacting with codes of ethics.

In general, it is concluded that tourists are likely to have more positive perceptions about tour program quality and more likely to book a tour when a company either adopts accreditation or practices codes of ethics. In particular, the results indicating positive effect of tourism accreditation are consistent with previous studies observing the positive link between accreditation and quality (Bergin-Seers & Mair 2008, Cristiana 2008, Foster 2000; Hjalager 2001). However, this current study shows the empirical findings that are more generalized due to a substantially larger sample used. One key contribution of this current study is the extended knowledge about the impacts of codes of ethics. This study is the first study finding that codes of ethics can also enhance tourists' perceptions about

the quality of a tour and influence booking intention. These results can be partly explained through Fleckenstein & Huebsch's (1999) statement that ethics seems to be important in the production of quality goods and services. Even though Fleckenstein & Huebsch (1999) have focused on ethical treatment of customers, this current study argues that customers also perceived the importance of ethical treatment of other stakeholders addressed in ethical codes, such as the environment. While Goodwin (2005) has reported that British travellers preferred to book a holiday with a company that has a written code of ethics, this study shows that codes of ethics also appeared to be important for Australian tourists when selecting a tour. In brief, this study extends on the knowledge that in some cases the initiatives that are seen as more reliable due to a complicated process and standard-guarantee, such as accreditation are not as influential as the initiatives, such as codes of ethics, which a company can establish on their own.

Even though each initiative has positive influences on tourists' perceptions or tour quality and intention to book a tour, it is significant to point out stronger and more complicated effects when accreditation and codes of ethics are interacted. This is also the first study comparing the effects of accreditation and codes of ethics. These overall results support Buckley (2002), who has noted that accreditation and voluntary codes could enhance customers' choice evaluations. However, it is interesting that the findings highlighted a stronger effect of codes of ethics, especially on tour booking intention. That is because it was found that tourists are still likely to book a tour no matter whether a company practices both initiatives or only codes of ethics.

6 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Previous studies have proposed a conceptual link between CSR communication about initiatives and consumers' responses (Du et al. 2010). Also, it is argued that an initiative, such as accreditation program is perceived as a symbol of quality (Font 2002). As a source of information about CSR, it is noted that accreditation programs influence customer choice (Buckley 2002). The empirical findings of this current study confirmed these previous arguments about the impact of accreditation programs on tourists' perceived quality of a tour and tour booking intention. Accordingly, it is suggested for tour operators to adopt an accreditation program. However, it is argued that adopting accreditation involves complicated processes and requires large resources (Font 2002); therefore, adopting an accreditation program might not be the right start for tour operators, especially small-to-medium companies, to practice CSR. In addition, an important finding of this study is that an ethical initiative of codes of ethics appeared to play a key role in CSR communication. Codes of ethics had a positive influence on both perceived tour program quality and tour booking intention. More importantly, it has a

stronger impact than accreditation. It is possible to say, according to the current findings and Goodwin (2005), that tourists from developed countries care about a company's ethical codes of conduct. Accordingly, it is highly recommended for all types and all scales of tour companies to implement codes of ethics when communicating tour features to potential customers.

7 APENNDIX A

A sample of stimulus material

Discovery Thai Tour

1 Day Trip
Elephant Trekking & Authentic Hill Tribe Village

Activity Highlights:

Morning

- Elephant trek in a green rainforest
- Feed the elephants
- Authentic bamboo raft river crossing

Afternoon

- Visit Karen hill tribe
- Experience traditional hill tribe food for lunch
- Interact with exotic tribal culture

Hot Deal!! Only \$60 AUD/person (half price for kids)

Company's Code of Ethics

- We conduct tours with low impact on the environment and local cultures.
- We educate and raise an awareness of socio-cultural issues of the local community.
- We care about elephant welfare.
- We care about our employee welfare

GREEN GLOBE 21

www.discoverythaitour.com

8 APPENDIX B

Factor loading of scale items and construct reliability of the manipulations and dependent variables.

Construct/ Item scale	Loading* Factor	Reliability (α)
The manipulations		
<i>Tourism accreditation</i>		0.83
1. This company appears to be certified to conduct responsible tours.	0.77	
2. This company has been endorsed by international accreditation program, such as Green Globe 21.	0.90	
3. This company seems to be accredited by a recognized eco-label.	0.92	

<i>Codes of ethics</i>		0.87
1. This company appears to conduct tours under a code of ethics.	0.87	
2. The company displays a code of ethics on its brochure.	0.91	
3. This company has a code of ethics.	0.92	
The dependent variables		
<i>Perceived tour program quality</i>		0.87
1. This tour seems to be high in quality.	0.82	
2. This tour seems to be well designed.	0.89	
3. This tour seems to provide a rich experience.	0.88	
4. This tour comprises a range of things to see and do	0.79	
<i>Tour Booking Intention</i>		
1. If I were in the area, my likelihood of booking this tour would be high.	0.92	0.92
2. If I were in Northern Thailand, I would consider booking this tour from this company.	0.94	
3. Overall, if travelling to Thailand, I would consider booking this tour.	0.94	

*Principle component analysis with Varimax rotation.

REFERENCES

- Bergin-Seers, S., & Mair, J. 2008. Sustainability Practices and Awards and Accreditation programs in the tourism industry: Impacts on consumer Purchasing Behaviour. Queensland: Sustainable Tourism CSR: Griffith University.
- Buckley, R. 2002. Tourism Ecolables. *Annals of Tourism Research* 29(1): 183–208.
- Carroll, A.B. 1979. A Three-Dimension conceptual model of corporate performance. *Academy of Management Review* 4(4): 479–505.
- Center for Responsible Travel. 2005. New study shows strength of Responsible Tourism Market, Despite Global Economic Recession. Washington, DC.
- Chiang, C.-F., & Jang, S. S. 2006. The Effects of Perceived Price and Brand Image on Value and Purchase Intention: Leisure Travelers' Attitudes Toward Online Hotel Booking. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing* 15(3): 49–69.
- Cole, S. 2007. Implementing and evaluation a code of conduct for visitors. *Tourism Management* 28: 443–451.
- Cristiana, P.I. 2008. The importance of certification schemes in sustainable development of tourism. *Universitatea Romano Americana*.
- Dodds, R. & Kuehnle, J. 2010. CSR among Canadian mass tour operators: good awareness but little action. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 22(2): 221–244.
- Du, S., Bhattacharya, C.B., & Sen, S. 2010. Maximizing Business Returns to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): The Role of CSR communication. *International Journal of Management Reviews*: 8–19.
- Fairweather, J.R., Maslin, C., & Simmons, D.G. 2005. Environmental Values and Response to Ecolabels Among International visitors to New Zealand. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 13(1): 82–98.
- Fleckenstein, M., & Huebsch, P. 1999. Ethics in Tourism-Reality or Hallucination. *Journal of Business Ethics* 19(1): 137–142.
- Font, X. 2002. Environmental certification in tourism and hospitality: progress, process and prospects. *Tourism Management* 23: 197–205.
- Foster, D.J. 2000. The Customer's Perception of Tourism Accreditation. *The 8th International Research Conference on Quality and Innovation Management*. New Deli.
- Geva, A., & Goldman, A. 1989. Changes in the Perception of a Service during its consumption: A Case of Organized Tours. *European Journal of Marketing* 23(12): 44–52.
- Geva, A., & Goldman, A. 1991. Satisfaction Measurement in Guided Tours. *Annals of Tourism Research* 18: 177–185.
- Goodwin, H. 2005. Responsible Tourism and the Market (Occasional paper No. 4). UK: University of Greenwich, International Centre for Responsible Tourism.
- Goodwin, H., & Francis, J. 2003. Ethical and responsible tourism: Consumer trends in the UK. *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 9: 271–284.
- Hjalager, A.-M. 2001. Quality in tourism through the empowerment of tourists. *Managing Service Quality* 11(4): 287–295.
- Nicolau, J.L. 2008. Corporate Social Responsibility Worth-Creating Activities. *Annals of Tourism Research* 35(4): 990–1006.
- Payne, D. & Dimanche, F. 1996. Towards a code of conduct for the tourism industry: An ethics model. *Journal of Business Ethics* 15: 997–1007.
- Perdue, B.C., & Summers, J. O. 1986. Checking the success of Manipulations in Marketing Experiments. *Journal of Marketing Research* 23(November): 317–326.
- Petrick, J.F. (2004). The Roles of Quality, Value, and Satisfaction in Predicting Cruise passengers' Behavioral Intentions. *Journal of Travel Research* 42(May): 397–407.
- Poolthong, Y. & Mandhachitara, R. 2009. Customer expectations of CSR, perceived service quality and brand effect in Thai retail banking. *International Journal of Bank Marketing* 27(6): 408–427.
- Reiser, A., & Simmons, D.G. 2005. A Quasi-experimental Method for Testing the Effectiveness of Ecolabel Promotion. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 13(6): 590–616.
- Sasidharan, V., Sirakaya, E., & Kerstetter, D. 2002. Developing countries and tourism ecolabels. *Tourism Management* 23: 161–174.
- Sheldon, P.J., & Park, S.-Y. 2011. An Exploratory Study of Corporate Social Responsibility in the U.S. Travel Industry. *Journal of Travel Research* 50(4): 394–407.
- Smagulova, A., Shegebayev, M., Garkavenko, V., & Boolaky, M. 2009. Ethical Practices & Social Responsibility of Kazakhstani Tourism Business: A pilot Study in the Tour Operator Sector. *Central Asia Business Journal* 2(November): 12–23.
- Sparks, B.A., & Browning, V. 2011. The impact of online reviews on hotel booking intentions and perception of trust. *Tourism Management* 30: 1–14.
- Stevens, B. 1994. An Analysis of Corporate Ethical Code Studies: "Where Do We Go From Here?" *Journal of Business Ethics* 13: 63–69.
- Tabachnick, B.G., & Fidell, L.S. 2007. *Using Multivariate Statistics*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Tepepus, C.M. 2005. Aiming for sustainability in tour operating business. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 13: 99–107.
- Tour Operator Initiative. 2003. Sustainable Tourism: The Tour Operators' Contribution. Retrieved October 2008, from http://www.toinitiative.org/fileadmin/docs/publications/sustainable_tourism.pdf

This page intentionally left blank

The role of cultural familiarity on customer satisfaction in the context of hotel service failure

Trianasari, B. Sparks & K. Butcher
Griffith University, Gold Coast, Australia

ABSTRACT: This paper reports the findings of a study that investigates the effects of severity of service failure and cultural familiarity on customer satisfaction. The study also examines the interaction effect between these two independent variables. An exploratory study using six focus groups was undertaken to elicit insights into the potential influences of the proposed variables on customer satisfaction. The findings from the focus groups were used to develop the stimulus material for an experimental research design. Ultimately, a 3 (cultural familiarity: low, medium, high) \times 3 (severity of failure: low, medium, high) experimental design was employed. Using an online survey method, 740 respondents were randomly assigned to various scenario conditions and were asked to rate their satisfaction levels (measured using a multi-item scale). Significant results were found from the analysis of the data using ANOVA. Theoretical and practical contributions of the study, limitation and suggestions for future studies are discussed.

Keywords: satisfaction, cultural familiarity, severity of failure, service failure, service encounter.

1 INTRODUCTION

Being the ultimate goal of any service firm, customer satisfaction has long been a central topic in the marketing field, whereby large amounts of research has been conducted. However, despite the huge body of literature on this topic, scholars continue to be attracted to conduct research on customer satisfaction for both theoretical advancement purposes and practical implications (e.g., Bowen & Chen, 2001; Furrer, Liu, & Sudharsan, 2000; Sabharwal, Soch, & Kaur, 2010; Wu, 2011). In the tourism and hospitality sector, this topic has often been linked to the cultural background of the customer and the service provider (e.g., Reisinger & Turner, 2001; Smith, Bolton, & Wagner, 1999; Weiermar, 2000). Indeed, incorporating cultural aspects into tourism customer satisfaction studies are deemed important due to the increasing global opportunities for international travel and interaction. Therefore, people from different cultures engage in service interactions. Furthermore, the cultural interaction between customers and service providers during service encounters might lead to different interpretations, perceptions and evaluations toward the service performance in the minds of both the customers and the service provider (Strauss & Mang, 1999). Consequently, service performance variations might be regarded by certain customers as a failure due to cultural differences.

The link between cultural differences and customer satisfaction in the context of service failure has also

been extensively studied (eg., Patterson & Mattila, 2008; Patterson, Cowley, Prasongsukarn, 2006). However, the majority of these studies have focused on the national cultural background that an individual (either the customer or the service provider) possesses. Whilst it is critical to understand cultural differences/similarities between customers and service providers in the tourism field (Weaver & Lawton, 2010), customers' familiarity with the culture of the destination might also play an important role toward satisfaction. For example, familiarity with the way the service is delivered in various countries may have an impact on how a customer evaluates the service standards. This is particularly true when service failures occur, whereby customers may weight the same failure differently depending on their familiarity toward the culture of the destination.

Thus, understanding customers' evaluation toward service performance from the perspective of cultural familiarity is also considered essential. However, there are limited studies which have addressed this issue. Therefore, this study extends the limited literature by investigating the role of cultural familiarity on customer satisfaction by incorporating different levels of service failure severity. The study also examined the interaction effect between the two independent variables of cultural familiarity and severity of service failure.

Following this introduction, the paper presents the literature review, research methods, results, discussion and finally the conclusion.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides a brief overview of the literature supporting this study: customer satisfaction, service failure, and cultural familiarity respectively.

2.1 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has occupied a central position in the service and marketing literature. Customers evaluate service performance before, during and after service consumption. Based on their evaluations, customers develop feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Bitner, Broome, & Mohr, 1994). More specifically, satisfaction or dissatisfaction results from the comparison of customers' prior expectations and the actual service performance (Oliver, 1980). When a service performance does not meet the customer's expectations, the customer will be dissatisfied. On the other hand, when a service performance meets the customer's expectations, the service is considered satisfactory.

Customer satisfaction is thus used to measure the level of the service performance. This evaluation is seen from the eyes of the customer, and even though service providers have performed to their best, the outcome may still be regarded as dissatisfying by customers. Thus, customers are the true judges of service quality however, their judgments are relatively subjective. This subjectivity might arise from the different experiences that each customer possesses. Accordingly, the subjectivity of customers' evaluations might also result from the level of their familiarity with the culture of the destination. That is, their previous experiences or current knowledge of this destination context. However, despite being heavily researched within the context of the hospitality sector, where cultural interactions between customers and service providers from different backgrounds often occur, customer satisfaction has rarely been integrated with cultural familiarity. For this reason, this study enhances the understanding of customer (dis)satisfaction toward service failure by incorporating cultural familiarity. Before discussing cultural familiarity in depth, a brief review of what constitutes a service failure is presented.

2.2 Service failure

Being performed by humans instead of machines, service encounters may not be 100% standardized and error free. Thus, during any service encounter, service failure is a common phenomenon and is to some extent unavoidable, even in well organized and well established service firms (Mattila, 2001). Service failure is defined as a mistake or error while services are being delivered to customer(s) (Lewis & Spyropoulos, 2001). This error might be caused by the manner of the staff (interpersonal failure) or the system (functional failure) (Smith et al., 1999) and, might trigger customer dissatisfaction (Sparks & McColl-Kennedy, 2001).

As we might logically expect, research in the area of service failure has found that customer dissatisfaction toward service failure might depend upon the magnitude of the failure (Smith et al, 1999). While this statement is fairly obvious at first glance, we suggest that different levels of failure severity might elicit different levels of responses and more importantly interact with cultural familiarity as a precursor to customer satisfaction (see hypothesis 3). As such, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 1

There are differences in the levels of customer's satisfaction based on the level of the severity of service failure.

2.3 Cultural familiarity

Culture is identified as a broad, complex, unique, multidimensional, and abstract concept (Donthu & Yoo, 1998; Patterson & Mattila, 2008; Reisinger & Turner, 2001) that is manifested in many aspects of human life. Amongst other things, culture forms people's behaviour, habits, attitudes, and beliefs. In the service oriented marketing literature, culture has been often linked to customer satisfaction. However, the attention has mainly focused on the cultural differences between customers and service providers (Reisinger & Turner, 1997; Patterson & Mattila, 2008). In contrast, the present research focuses on familiarity, which refers to the levels of awareness or knowledge about an object such as a product, either service or good. This product or service awareness might be obtained from information search, previous experience, or a third party's recommendation, such as friends, relatives, or travel agencies. Thus, cultural familiarity in this study refers to the awareness of culture, language, food, communication, and service standards of the destination.

Much research has reported the role of product familiarity on customer evaluation (e.g., Rao & Monroe, 1988). That is, the more familiar a customer is with the product/focal service provider, the higher the customer's evaluation will be (e.g., Patterson & Mattila, 2008). However, customers might become more demanding when they are familiar with the product. Thus, the opposite result might be obtained, whereby the more familiar customers are toward a product, the lower their evaluation will be. Similarly, in the context of familiarity with the culture of a destination, the more familiar are customers; the lower their evaluation will be. However, while there have been a number of studies that link the concept of product familiarity to customer satisfaction, little has been done using the aspect of familiarity with the culture of a destination. Therefore, this study answered whether or not cultural familiarity is able to explain the variations in customer satisfaction levels. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 2

Customer's satisfaction differs based on the level of cultural familiarity.

Whilst the severity of failure and cultural familiarity have been proposed to influence customer satisfaction, it is essential to understand whether customer satisfaction toward high failure severity is the same whether or not the customer is familiar or unfamiliar with the culture of the location of the service failure. Thus, it is arguable that there is an interaction effect between these two independent variables. Therefore, in addition to the previous hypotheses, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 3

An interaction effect exists between the severity of failure and cultural familiarity leading to customer satisfaction.

3 RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a sequential mixed-methods approach. First, an exploratory study using focus groups was undertaken to elicit insights into the potential influences of the proposed variables on customer satisfaction (Trianasari, Sparks, & Butcher, 2011). Twenty nine Australians were recruited in six separate group discussions. The findings from the focus group were used to develop the stimulus material for the present study. A 3 (cultural familiarity: low/Russia, medium/Indonesia, high/Australia) × 3 (severity of failure: low, medium, high) experimental design was employed. Data were collected from 740 Australians via an online based survey method. The respondents were randomly assigned to various scenario conditions and were asked to rate their level of satisfaction (measured using a multi-item scale). Prior to the main data analysis, realism and manipulation checks were performed in order to ensure that the manipulations worked as intended (Perdue & Summer, 1986). Next, a series of ANOVA were conducted to test the hypotheses.

4 RESULTS

This section presents the results of the two preliminary tests of the credibility and manipulation effectiveness of the stimulus material and the hypotheses testing.

4.1 Credibility and manipulation checks

A number of measures were included to test the credibility of the treatments and the manipulations of the independent variables. The results of these tests which used a 7-point scale were satisfactory. For the credibility checks, four items were used to represent realism of the scenario (eg., 1 = very unrealistic, 7 = very realistic) and the ease of the participants to imagine the scenario (eg., 1 = very easy, 7 = very difficult). The respondents found the service conditions were realistic and were able to play the role as a hotel guest (the lowest M = 5.5). For the manipulation tests, it can

be explained briefly that the respondents viewed the description of severity of failure and cultural familiarity to be different in the predicted directions. Hence, the manipulations of the factors in each of the independent variable were deemed valid ($M_{low} = 3.40$, $SD = 1.56$; $M_{medium} = 4.13$, $SD = 1.41$; $M_{high} = 4.48$, $SD = 1.41$ for severity of failure and $M_{low} = 2.55$, $SD = 1.30$; $M_{medium} = 3.61$, $SD = 1.43$; $M_{high} = 6.34$, $SD = .81$ for cultural familiarity). The next step was to test the hypotheses which are discussed in the next sub-section.

4.2 Hypotheses testing

The results show significant main effects for severity of failure and cultural familiarity on customer satisfaction $F(2,730) = 15.44$, $p = .000$, $\eta^2 = .04$ and $F(2,730) = 3.49$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .01$ respectively. These findings suggest statistical support for hypotheses 1 and 2. The respondents reported different levels of satisfaction in different conditions of severity of failure and cultural familiarity. Further analysis was conducted to understand which groups differ by performing a post hoc test using Tukey’s technique. This test revealed that dissatisfaction was greater for those in the medium/high failure severity conditions compared to the low severity conditions. Furthermore, a similar test was performed to understand which of the cultural familiarity groups differed. However, no difference in the dissatisfaction levels of low, medium and high familiarity was found.

More importantly, these main effects were qualified by an interaction effect between cultural familiarity and severity of failure, $F(4,730) = 3.24$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$, which suggests that hypothesis 3 is supported. The mean scores of the simple effect of failure severity within cultural familiarity on satisfaction are shown in Table 1. The univariate F tests of the simple effect of the severity of failure within each level of cultural familiarity were found significant ($F_{low}(2,730) = 6.55$, $p < .01$; $F_{medium}(2,730) = 4.20$, $p < .05$; $F_{high}(2,730) = 10.30$, $p < .05$). However, the simple effect of cultural familiarity within each level of severity of failure was only significant for high level of severity ($F(2,730) = 5.63$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, the simple effects analyses show that the main source

Table 1. Mean scores of failure severity and cultural familiarity on satisfaction.

	Cultural familiarity		Severity of failure	
	Low	Med	High	Average
Severity of failure				
Low	3.12	2.89	2.69	2.90
Medium	2.54	2.32	2.66	2.51
High	2.46	2.45	1.86	2.66
Cultural familiarity				
Average	2.71	2.55	2.40	

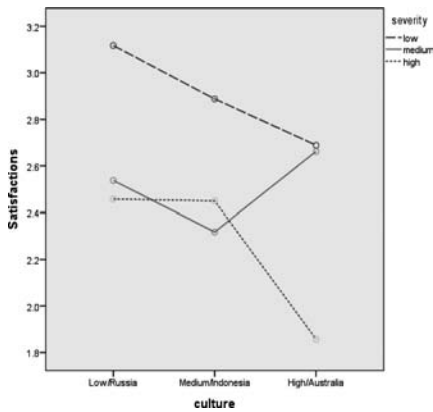


Figure 1. The effects of severity of failure and cultural familiarity on customer satisfaction.

of the interaction effect occurs in the highest level of cultural familiarity. That is, the level of dissatisfaction is substantially greater when cultural familiarity is high for the high severity of failure condition, suggesting greater levels of satisfaction when the customer is unfamiliar with the culture. In other words, within the high familiarity condition, respondents displayed lower satisfaction when the severity of failure was high versus low or medium; whereas within the medium or low familiarity condition, respondents expressed a lower level of satisfaction for medium or high severity of failure compared to low severity. Whereas, within the low level of severity, respondents showed lower satisfaction for the medium/high familiarity compared to the low level of familiarity. This interaction effect is demonstrated in Figure 1.

5 DISCUSSION

The finding of this study confirmed the results of the existing literature that failure severity is an important determinant of customer satisfaction (eg., Smith et al., 1999). That is, the more severe the service problem, the less satisfied the customer will be. This study also supported its key hypothesis that cultural familiarity affects customer satisfaction significantly. That is, differences in customer satisfaction.

5.1 Practical contributions

For business practices, whilst it is hard to perform a 100% failure free service performance at all times, it is important to consistently make a considerable effort to minimize service failures in terms of number and severity. Keeping failures at minimum levels could be achieved through continued training programs, particularly for employees who have direct contact with hotel guests. Moreover, attention should be paid to the cultural interaction skills and the knowledge of customers' levels of cultural familiarity with

the destination. This program would help employees to anticipate customers' responses when failures occur. However, this does not imply that customers who have a low level of cultural familiarity and who tend to have higher satisfaction should be neglected and the service failures should be left unsolved. Employees should treat customers equally and at the same time should be able to anticipate and respond when customers, who have either a low or high cultural familiarity, experience service failure. In addition, segmentation can also be made in term of levels of cultural familiarity, thus, service performance can be tailor-made, based on this segmentation. With this strategy, service failure can be minimized.

5.2 Limitation and future study

Whilst the use of experimental design which includes a realistic scenario enhances the internal validity, it reduces the external validity. Therefore, the results of this study are not readily generalizable. In other words, caution should be taken to view the results of this study. To improve the generalizability, future study might want to duplicate this study and extend it to other service contexts, such as airlines or banks or using other methods.

6 CONCLUSION

This study was undertaken to examine the effect of cultural familiarity and severity of service failure on customer satisfaction. A sequential mixed method approach was adopted to conduct the study. Initially, the results of six focus groups were used to develop the quantitative study. Next, data from 740 Australian respondents were gathered via online survey. Significant results of the main and interaction effects of the severity of service failure and cultural familiarity on customer satisfaction were found in the hypotheses tests using ANOVA. These findings offer a new insight into the literature, particularly into the role of cultural familiarity on customer satisfaction; as well as provide considerable business implications.

REFERENCES

- Bitner, M. J., Booms, B. H., & Mohr, L. A. 1994. Critical service encounters: The employee's viewpoint. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(4), 95–105
- Bowen, J.T. & Chen, Shiang-Lih. 2001. The relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13(5), 213–217
- Donthu, N. & Yoo, B. 1998. Cultural Influences on Service Quality Expectations. *Journal of Service Research*, 1(2), 178–186
- Furrer, O., Liu, B., & Sudharshan, D. 2000. The Relationships between Culture and Service Quality Perceptions: Basis for Cross-Cultural Market Segmentation and Resource Allocation. *Journal of Service Research*, 2(4), 355–371

- Lewis, B. R., & Spyropoulos, S. 2001. Service failures and recovery in retail banking: the customers' perspective. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 19(1), 37–47
- Mattila, A.S. 2001. The impact of relationship type on customer loyalty in a context of service failures. *Journal of Service Research*, 4(2), 91–101
- Olivier, R.L. 1980. A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 17(4), 460–469
- Patterson P.G., Cowley, E., & Prasongsukarn, K. 2006. Service failure recovery: The moderating impact of individual-level cultural value orientation on perceptions of justice. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 23, 263–277
- Patterson P.G. & Mattila, A.S. 2008. An examination of the impact of cultural orientation and familiarity in service encounter evaluations. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 19(5), 662–681
- Perdue, B. C. & Summers, J. O. 1986. Checking the success of manipulations in marketing experiments. *Journal of Marketing Research*, XXIII, 317–326
- Rao, A.R. & Monroe, K.B. 1988. The moderating effect of prior knowledge on cue utilization in product evaluations. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15, 253–264
- Reisinger, L.W. & Turner, Y. 1997. Cross-cultural differences in tourism: Indonesian tourist in Australian. *Journal of Tourism Management*, 18(3), 139–147
- Reisinger, L.W. & Turner, Y. 2001. Shopping satisfaction for domestic tourists. *Journal of retailing and Consumer Service*, 8, 15–27
- Sabharwal, N., Soch, H., Kaur, H. 2010. Are we satisfied with incompetent service? A scale development approach for service recovery. *Journal of Service Research*, 10(1), 125–142
- Smith, A.K., Bolton, R.N., & Wagner, J. 1999. A model of customer satisfaction with service encounters involving failure and recovery. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36(3), 356–372
- Sparks, B.A. & McColl-Kennedy. 2001. Justice strategy and options for increased customer satisfactions in a service-recovery setting. *Journal of Business Research*, 54(3), 209–218
- Strauss, B. and P. Mang. 1999. “‘Culture Shocks’ in Intercultural Service Encounters?” *Journal of Service Marketing*, 13 (3/4), 329–346
- Trianasari, Sparks, B.A., & Butcher, K. 2011. *Proc. CAUTHE National Conference '11: Exploring the concept of the zone of tolerance in service failure context*. Adelaide, South Australia: CAUTHE
- Weaver, D., & Lawton, L. 2010. *Tourism Management*. Australia: John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd.
- Weiermair, Klaus. 2000. Tourists' perceptions towards and satisfaction with service quality in the cross-cultural service encounter: implications for hospitality and tourism management. *Managing Service Quality*, 10(6), 397–409
- Wu, Li-Wei. 2011. Satisfaction, inertia, and customer loyalty in the varying levels of the zone of tolerance and alternative attractiveness. *Journal of Service Marketing*, 25(5), 310–322

This page intentionally left blank

Impact of service guarantee on empowerment, employee responsiveness in service recovery and service quality in the Malaysian upscale hotels

Aslinda Mohd Shahril

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

Yuhanis Abdul Aziz, Mohhidin Othman & Jamil Bojei

Universiti Putra, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Despite the numerous benefits of the implementation of service guarantee in service organization, there is dearth of studies that explored relationship between service guarantee, empowerment and employee responsiveness in service recovery. The literature on the impact of service guarantee on empowerment and employee role is still very limited. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the role of service guarantee and its impact on employee empowerment and their responsiveness in service recovery effort. The study will survey the frontline managers and front line employees in four and five star hotels in Malaysia. The employee's role and attitude during service breakdown and the remedial action taken will influence customer evaluation to the service quality. The paper is expected to provide empirical evidence on the importance of service guarantee, particularly in four and five star hotels in Malaysia which largely offers intangible product prior customer consumption. The study is anticipated to contribute to an understanding that service providers need to manage the service delivery and foster the service quality culture in the organization. The potential results of the proposed framework are hopefully able to provide some guidelines for both academics and managers of the hotels in managing the service and meet customer expectation.

Keywords: service guarantee, empowerment, service recovery, service quality

1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Increasingly, there has been growing body of knowledge that emphasizes on importance of service guarantee in service industry. Industries like health care, airlines, banking and hotels are among the service organizations that offer service guarantee to its customers (Tucci & Talaga, 1997). The presence of service guarantee is to ensure customer needs and expectations are met while company superior service quality is achieved through dedicated and knowledgeable employees (Hart, 1988). Research on service guarantee previously has mostly focused on the conceptual models which suggest more empirical evidence to be done.

Empirical findings on the impact of service guarantee on organization performance and consumer perceived quality has been very limited where from extensive literature search, only very few related studies can be found. Therefore, this study wishes to fill the gap and provide clear understanding on the impact of service guarantee to employee role which contribute to the service quality delivered by the hotel.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Service guarantee*

There are no single definitions of service guarantee that can be found in the literature. Some researchers view it as policy and some say that it is a firm promise. To start with, it is wise to understand the meaning of guarantee itself. Service guarantee is initially viewed by Hart (1988) as service promised made by the organization to provide customer the service at its standard and compensate customers for its failure. Hart (1988) contends that a good guarantee constitutes customer satisfaction *unconditional* without any strings attached. On the other hand, Kashyap (2001, p. 3) defined service guarantee as '(1) a service promise or pledge that convey the firm's willingness to engage in behaviors considered desirable by its customers (2) compensate them in case of service failure'.

In general, by screening the definition of service guarantee, it can be said that a service guarantee is the firm commitment on the service outcome and customer is insured against service failure during the service consumption. It also acts as promises to deliver

reliable services to consumer and reduce their perceived risk in purchasing the service/product. It is evident that service guarantees are useful tool for the service organization as a signal to highlight service quality and as performance measure (Kashyap, 2001). On the same line of thought, service guarantee serves as firms internal marketing program to quality improvement (Hays & Hill, 2006b).

2.2 *The relationship of service guarantee and empowerment*

This study will look at one facet of service guarantee, that is to organizational service performance which has increasingly gaining attention, theoretically and practically, from scholars that highlighted the importance of delivering quality service to customers. Additionally, the study focused on *unconditional guarantee* that promises performance on all service processes rather than specific guarantee that concentrate on one particular aspect of service delivery.

The link of service guarantee and empowerment was initially highlighted by Wirtz (1998), where he theoretically suggested that empowerment is necessary for the organization to run their service guarantee. Wirtz argues that empowered employees will deliver more satisfying service rather than non empowered employees. In service guarantee context, empowerment plays a significant role and impacts on customer perceived service quality. Accordingly, Ray Schultz, Chief Executive Officer of Hampton Inn states that service guarantee is a mechanism to improve guest service and build loyalty, and the key to make it work is by giving the employee power to execute it (Sowder, 1996)

Examples from past research has showed that service guarantee has positive effect to employee motivation and participation and foster positive service culture in the organization (Hays & Hill, 2006a, 2006b). In relation to this, Kashyap (2001) argued that employees will be more enthusiastic in performing their job if they are given chance to deliver service with some sense of own authority in order to satisfy customer and enhance the service transaction. Additionally, Kashyap argues that to implement successful service guarantee, the organizations need to give higher authority of contact staff to perform. Ritz Carlton Hotel employees, for example, are empowered to take necessary action to satisfy its customers need.

Lashley (1995) argues that if the organization's business strategy is to improved service quality, firm need to consider the benefits of empowerment. The literature uses terms like employee commitment, employee participation, employee's involvement and employee empowerment interchangeably. However, according to Lashley (1995), empowerment is different in that it identifies employee need of individual effectiveness and as main attribute to improve service performance to the organization.

Recent empirical findings suggest that empowered employees has higher job satisfaction and have

significant impact to customer perception of service quality (Gazzoli, et al., 2010). Gazzoli et al. (2010) conducted study and examined the answers from 474 restaurant contact employees and viewed response from over 1000 of customers to determine the link of empowerment to service quality. The results showed that empowered employees has higher job satisfaction and contribute to customer positive perception to service quality.

Based on the above discussion, it could be argued that employee empowerment has significant contribution to organizations in gaining competitive advantage through service quality. Accordingly, the nature of unconditional service guarantee that associated chiefly with organizations aim for delivering superior service quality has suggest the importance of empowering service employees who render the services to customer. Therefore, based on the above discussion, it could be argued that empowerment of employees will have positive relationship with service guarantee and results to better service quality.

Hypothesis 1: Service guarantee will result in higher level of empowerment.

2.3 *Responsiveness in service recovery effort*

In service industry, production and consumption occurred at the same time where minimum supervision exists before service delivery. Even though the organization try to deliver consistent service, to avoid service failure at all time will not be possible. According to Maxham (2001), service failures are any dissatisfied moment experienced by consumers during the service encounter. Shostack (1985) highlighted that service encounter is the moment customer physically involved with the service. Shostack definition does not limit to customer interaction with service personnel but it include the interaction between premise physical facilities and other visible elements, for example, the hotel rooms and its interior. Thus, service failure happen not only between customer and employee interaction but also with all the tangible elements around customer.

Service failure could occur during the process of service delivery or during the later performance (Lewis & McCann, 2004). Most service suppliers experience service failure when delivering their services to customer during some moments (Metters, Metters, Pullman, & Walton, 2006). Service failure happen based on a factor or the integration of technical and system faulty, service delays, uncontrollable factors such as weather or disaster and human carelessness which will affect service seriously (Metters, et al., 2006). Service failure can occur within any dimension of service and as identified by Bitner, Boom and Tetrault (1990), it has few categories. It includes employee behavior when dealing with mistakes either the core or supplementary services and unexpected employees response, while Bailey (1994) focused on problem customers and the act of waiting (McDougall & Levesque, 1999).

Service guarantees provide firms opportunities to identify the fail point in service delivery and assist service recovery (Tax & Brown, 1998). In addition, customer complaint during service failure serves as incentive for firm to identify the root of failure and as an effective medium for listening to customer feedback (Kashyap, 2001). In line with this, Hart et al. (1990) argue that crucial to the service recovery effort are front line employees. The front line employees must be empowered in order for them to respond fast to customer problem. Employees must know that they are allowed to use their judgment to solve customer problem such as apologize, giving free night stay, free meal, send flowers and room discount.

Customers expect the company to be responsible for the failure and solve it quickly (Andreassen, 2000). Consequently, quick recovery and employee prompt respond when things go wrong is crucial (Bell & Zemke, 1987). By responding quickly, a firm communicates a sense of urgency and demonstrates that customer's concern is the company's important matter (Berry et al., 1994). This implies that service employees' especially front line workers must be empowered to take necessary action that perceive as right or fair given the situation and customer difficulties.

Employees that deal directly with customers generally are in the best position to respond and solve customers' problems that may occur during service encounter (Hocutt & Stone, 1998). In particular, empowering service employees is the best ingredient in efficient recovery effort (Hart, et al., 1990). Based upon these ideas, the next formulated hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 2: Higher level of empowerment will result in higher level of employee responsiveness in service recovery effort.

2.4 Service quality

Establishing service quality in manufacturing industry has been far ahead compared to measuring quality in service industry. Measuring service quality in manufacturing sector is different from quality in service context (Hays & Hill, 2001; Kathawala & Elmuti, 1991) due to distinct characters of these two industries. Most manufacturing products are tangible and visible, capital intensive and require less presence of customer. Unlike products, services is intangible, more labor intensive and require the presence of both employees and customers at the same time to perform service.

Service quality is an important contributor to customer satisfaction (Metters, et al., 2006). Customer's perception on service excellent has been found to increase satisfaction which leads to customer retention and purchase intention (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2003; Kivelä & Chu, 2001; Söderlund, 1998). Additionally, it has been well recognized about the significant of customer satisfaction, service quality and their willingness to return and become loyal (Jones & Sasser, 1995). In relation to this, review of literature highlights the important

dimensions of service quality. Zeithaml et al. (1988) found five key dimensions of service quality; reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness. Service guarantee has positive effect on customer satisfaction by displaying responsiveness; which is one of critical SERVQUAL dimensions.

According to Hays and Hill (2001), service guarantee is one means for firms to improve service quality. The promises of service guarantee that will offer service at its standard and compensate customer in some way during service failure communicate to employees the desired service to deliver to customers. In line with this, Hart (1988) posits that service guarantee introduce by firm can foster positive service culture. Hays and Hill (2001) argue that service guarantee motivate firm to improve service quality by stressing the economic benefits which result from the continual improvements in service quality.

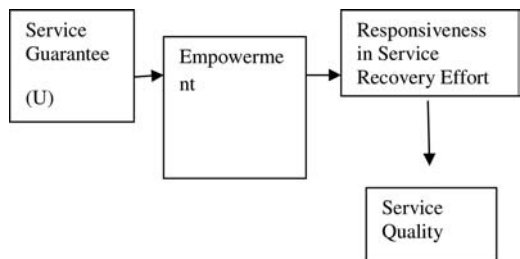
Empowerment is one of the firm key strategies to achieve competitive advantage through service quality (Lashley, 1995). A well known service credo, Ritz Carlton, is a classic example of firm that highly committed for its service quality. The service credo "Ladies and Gentlemen Serving Ladies and Gentlemen" reflects the firm commitment to attain high standards of guest service in all areas and departments without exception. Another good example is Hampton Inn where it improved its quality service after the service guarantees introduction and empowered its employees to meet the guarantee standard (Sowder, 1996).

Based on the above discussion, it could be argued that empowerment of employees will have positive relationship with service guarantee and results to better service quality. Therefore, the next hypotheses will be:

Hypothesis 3: Higher level of empowerment will result in higher level of service quality

3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the reviewed literature, the proposed conceptual framework of the present paper shown below. The following illustrates the proposed model:



The result will show on the impact of service guarantee on empowerment and employee responsiveness in service recovery which contributes to the perceived

quality by customers. The proposed model will contribute significantly to an understanding of a theory in several ways. First, it emphasizes on the importance of having service guarantee and its relationship with empowered employees. Next, it emphasizes on the importance of handling complaint efficiently by taking appropriate service recovery procedures.

4 PROPOSED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research method refers to tool that will be used to collect data and analyze it (Nardi, 2003). This study is will use quantitative method in order to investigate the proposed hypotheses. In achieving this objective, survey method will be employed. Questionnaire as research tool will be distributed to respondents and this method is considered to be the most appropriate as it is not easy to categorize the opinions given by different respondents (Ngai, Heung, Wong, & Chan, 2006). The self-administered questionnaire is considered to be the most appropriate method as this will categorize the opinion given by different respondent in the survey. According to Nardi (2003), this method is widely used to study human behavior that is difficult to evaluate.

4.1 Study population

The sampling frame of this study consisted of The Tourism Malaysia's Accommodation Directory 2010-2011, which is used to identify hotel organizations to be used in the study. The hotels with rating of four and five star in Wilayah Persekutuan, Putrajaya and Selangor will be solicited for participation. Hotel below four star will be excluded. Particularly, the study employs purposive sampling as it has some traits that suit to the need of study. Purposive or judgmental sampling involves pointing particular group which the study believe that it have certain attributes that is anticipated to provide information to the study (Nardi, 2003). The decision of selecting four and five star hotels is guided by Boulding & Kirmani (1993) that argue good reputation and high operating standard organization will have higher commitment and offer meaningful and credible service guarantee compared to lower rank organization. In terms of the regionality of hotel, central region is selected as it supplied almost half of the four star and five star hotels throughout Peninsular Malaysia.

4.2 Suggestion for future research

This paper is expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on service guarantee, empowerment and service recovery, specifically in hotel industry. This study hopes to share current knowledge on the importance of delivering quality service among employees and maximizing customers' satisfaction during the service interaction with both practitioner and researcher in the industry. It is expected that

this study will provide an empirical analysis on these relationships. The results of the study should provide empirical evidence on the importance of service guarantee and its related consequences.

REFERENCES

- Andreassen, T. (2000). Antecedents to satisfaction with service recovery. *European Journal of Marketing*, 34(1), 156–175.
- Bell, C. R., & Zemke, R. E. (1987). Service breakdown: The road to recovery. *Management Review*, 32–35.
- Berry, L., Parasuraman, A., & Zeithaml, V. (1994). Improving Service Quality in America: Lessons Learned *The Academy of Management Executive* 8(2), 32–52.
- Boulding, W., & Kirmani, A. (1993). A Consumer-Side Experimental Examination of Signaling Theory: Do Consumers Perceive Warranties as Signals of Quality? *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(1), 111–123.
- Bitner, M. J., Booms, B. H., & Tetrault, M. S. (1990). The service encounter: diagnosing favorable and unfavorable incidents. *The Journal of Marketing*, 54(1), 71–84.
- Bailey, D. (1994). Recovery from customer service shortfalls. *Managing Service Quality*, 4(6), 25–28.
- Conger, J. A., & Kanungo, R. B. (1988). the Empowerment Process: Integrating Theory and Practice. *Academy of Management Review*, 13, 471–482.
- Cronin, J. J., & Taylor, S. A. (1992). Measuring service quality: A reexamination and extension. *Journal of Marketing*, 56(July), 55–68.
- Enz, C. A., & Siguaw, J. A. (2000). Best Practices in Service Quality. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 41(20), 20–29.
- Gazzoli, G., Hancer, M., & Park, Y. (2010). The Role and Effect of Job Satisfaction and Empowerment On Customers' Perception of Service Quality: a Study in the Restaurant Industry. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 34(1), 56–77.
- Hocutt, M. A., & Stone, T. H. (1998). The impact of employee empowerment on the quality of a service recovery effort. *journal of Quality Management*, 3(1), 117–132.
- Hart, C. (1988). The power of unconditional service guarantees. *Harvard Business Review*(July-August), 54–62.
- Hays, J. M., & Hill, A. V. (2006a). An extended longitudinal study of the effects of a service guarantee. *Production and Operations Management*, 15(5), 117–131.
- Hart, C., Heskett, J. L., & Sasser, W. E. (1990). The profitable art of service recovery. *Harvard Business Review* (July-August), 148–156.
- Hays, J. M., & Hill, A. V. (2006b). Service guarantee strength: The key to service quality. *Journal of Operations Management*, 24, 753–764.
- Jones, T. O., & Sasser, W. E. (1995). Why satisfied customers defects. *Harvard Business Review*, 73(6), 88–99.
- Kandampully, J., & Suhartanto, D. (2003). The role of customer satisfaction and image in gaining customer loyalty in the Hotel Industry. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 10(1), 3–25.
- Kathawala, Y., & Elmuti, D. (1991). Quality in the service industry. *Management Research News*, 14(3), 13–16.
- Kashyap, R. (2001). The effects of service guarantees on external and internal markets. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, 5(8), 1–19.
- Kivelä, J. J., & Chu, C. Y. H. (2001). Delivering quality service: Diagnosing favorable and unfavorable service encounters in restaurants. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 25(3), 251–271.

- Lashley, C. (1995). Towards an understanding of employee empowerment in hospitality services. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 7(1), 27–32.
- Lewis, B., & McCann, P. (2004). Service failure and recovery: evidence from the hotel industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 16(1), 6–17.
- Maxham, J. (2001). Service recovery's influence on consumer satisfaction, positive word-of-mouth, and purchase intentions. *Journal of Business Research*, 54(1), 11–24.
- Metters, R., Metters, K. K., Pullman, M., & Walton, S. (2006). *Successful Service Operations Management* (Second ed.). South-Western: Thomson.
- McDougall, G. H. G., & Levesque, T. J. (1999). Waiting for service: the effectiveness of recovery strategies. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 11(1), 6–15.
- Ngai, E. W. T., Heung, V. C. S., Wong, Y. H., & Chan, F. K. Y. (2006). Consumer complaint behaviour of Asians and non-Asians about hotel services. *European Journal of Marketing*, 41(11), 1375–1391.
- Nardi, P. M. (2003). *Doing Survey Research: A guide to quantitative methods*: Pearson education, Inc.
- Söderlund, M. (1998). Customer satisfaction and its consequences on customer behaviour revisited. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 9(2), 169–188.
- Shostack, G. (1985). *Planning the service encounter*: Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Sowder, J. (1996). The 100% satisfaction guarantee: Ensuring quality at Hampton Inn. *National Productivity Review*, Spring, 53–66.
- Tucci, L. A., & Talaga, J. (1997). Service guarantees and consumers' evaluation of services. *The Journal of Services Marketing*, 11(1), 10–18.
- Tax, S. S., & Brown, S. W. (1998). Recovering and learning from service failure. *Sloan Management Review*, 40(Fall), 75–88.
- Wirtz, J. (1998). Development of a service guarantee model. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 15, 51–75.
- Wirtz, J. (1998). Development of a service guarantee model. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 15, 51–75.
- Zeithaml, V., Bitner, M. J., & Gremler, D. D. (2009). *Services Marketing: Integrating Customer Focus Across The Firm* (Fifth ed.). New York: McGrawHill.

This page intentionally left blank

Emotional intelligence and turnover intention: The case of front office frontliners in Kuala Lumpur's 5-star hotels

Raja Iskandar Putera Raja Mustapha, Wan Ahmad Nasroun Wan Salman & Salleh Mohd Radzi
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: One of the issues that are prevalent in the hospitality industry is employee turnover. If not handled it could lead to loss of valuable human capital. This current study was developed with the assumption that the turnover issue lies at the emotional level of the employees, therefore the objective was to identify the relationship between the emotional intelligence of front office front liner and their turnover intention in Kuala Lumpur's 5-star hotels.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, turnover, frontliners

1 INTRODUCTION

The Malaysian services sector accounts for 58% gross domestic product (GDP) and is expected to produce growth rates of 7.2% annually until 2015, increasing its contribution to GDP to 61% by the end of that very same year (Economic Planning Unit, 2010). In addition, out of approximately 11.6 million employed workers in 2009, 53.5% were in the services sector and out of that figure; 1.7 million were employed in the hospitality and tourism industry.

In the current climate of the hospitality and tourism industry, especially in the accommodation sector, employee turnover remains a problem for organizations due to the fact that the industry has a poor image of offering long working hours, repetitive work and low pay (Littlejohn & Watson 2004). Other authors (O'Leary & Deegan, 2005) also concur, stating the three main factors that results in high turnover in the service industry which are namely: 1) long hours, 2) poor remuneration and 3) demanding nature of the job or task at hand.

Another reason for the high turnover rates in the industry is employees are being poached by competitors. According to the article "Staff Shortage Hurts Asia 2007" the crisis has been further exacerbated by the huge staffing demands now being fuelled by major hotel developments across the region. This prompted stop-gap measures by the government such as relying on the inflow of foreign talent. This is really counter-productive to the development of the local talent pool.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESES

2.1 *Employee turnover*

A review of the literature showed that employee turnover had been covered by many authors (Ongori,

2007; Simon & Kristian, 2007; Abassi & Hollman, 2000; Igbaria, 1991; Argote & Epple 1990; Abelson & Baysinger 1984; Bluedorn 1982; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Nelson & Winter 1982; Staw 1980; Dalton & Todor 1979; Price, 1977; Polanyi 1966) in the past. Previous researchers (Ongori, 2007; Abassi & Hollman, 2000) defined employee turnover as the rotation of workers around the labour market; between firms, jobs and occupations; and between the states of employment and unemployment.

Previous researches have presented different conclusions on how employees' turnover will effect on the operational performance, based on both theoretical and empirical analysis. Many have argued that turnover has negative effects on the operational performance due to the disruption of existing routines (Dalton & Todor 1979; Bluedorn 1982) or the loss of an employee's accumulated experience (Argote & Epple 1990; Nelson & Winter 1982; Polanyi 1966). According to Flamholtz (1973), employee turnover also causes fiscal impact which sometimes also refers to the positional replacement costs. These impacts include the costs incurred when an individual leaves, costs of advertising the position and recruiting and selecting a replacement, costs of new employee orientation and training, costs of equipment underutilization, and costs of lost production and productivity. Others (Abelson & Baysinger 1984; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Staw 1980) suggested that organisations may benefit from the innovative thinking or increased motivation that new workers bring to a job.

2.2 *Emotional intelligence*

Emotional Intelligence is defined as one's ability to perceive emotions, manage them and to reflectively regulate emotions in order to promote both better emotion and thought (Stewart, 2008; Mayer & Salovey,

1997). The study of emotional intelligence came to prominence from the works of previous authors (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). It stemmed out from the idea that one intelligence i.e. Intelligence Quotient (IQ) does not solely explain or best represents the potential of individuals (Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts, 2009). Goleman (1995) added that IQ is a factor that is important in achieving success but it also has the least power in predicting that very success. This is in line with the notion made by the previous authors (Stewart, 2008; Stein & Book, 2006; Goleman, 1995, 1998; Bar-On, 1997) that the emotional intelligence of an individual is more significant as compared to their IQ in defining one's capacity to be professionally and personally successful.

2.3 Emotional intelligence and turnover intention

A review of the past literatures presents a number of studies (Jordan & Troth, 2011; Stephens, 2011; Miller, 2011; Ohrberg, 2010; Hall, 2010) on the relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover. Unfortunately, to date, no study was found pertaining to the emotional intelligence and turnover intent in the hospitality industry. The studies' sample varied ranging from Information Technology (IT) employees, staff of Aerospace companies to correctional staff.

Jordan and Troth (2011) conducted a study on the emotional intelligence and leader member exchange towards employee job satisfaction and turnover intent. The researcher found that emotional intelligence showed a positive relationship with all of the variables, where emotional intelligence relates to employee's turnover intention, relates to a higher job satisfaction and is also related to higher quality levels of leader member exchange. The relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intention also was recorded in the study conducted by Carmeli (2003). The study concluded that there is a significant and direct relationship between emotional intelligence and the employee's turnover intention.

However, three studies (Miller, 2011; Stephens, 2011; Ohrberg, 2010) produced results that were the total opposite. All of the studies concluded through statistical means that the association between the two variables were not significant. In the study by Ohrberg (2010) all four hypotheses or assumption pertaining to the relationship of both variables were rejected.

H: Employee's emotional intelligence relates negatively to their turnover intent.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participants and respondents

For the purpose of this study, the targeted respondents were the front office front liners of the 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur. Based on preliminary study, there was an average of 15 frontliner front office staff in one

5-star hotel. Therefore, it was estimated that there were a total number of 315 front office staff in all the hotels. A response rate of 86% or 181 questionnaires were gathered from the all the 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur.

3.2 Measures

The data collection instrument i.e. the questionnaire for the study was adapted from the instruments constructed by Wong and Law (2002) and Jackofsky and Slocum (1987) for emotional intelligence and turnover intention respectively. For the emotional intelligence instrument, a modified 7 point Likert scale was used and for the turnover intention, a 5 point Likert scale was utilized. The 16 items of emotional intelligence describes four attributes which were namely: 1) self-emotion appraisal, 2) others' emotion appraisal, 3) use of emotion and 4) regulation of emotion. While there were 4 items describing the turnover intention of the employees.

3.3 Data analyses

The data was analysed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of the gathered data. In terms of the demographic analysis, descriptive statistics were used. The relationship between the two variables was analysed using linear regression as the method enables the researcher to answer the questions and hypotheses of the study.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Profile of sample

Male respondents made up a total of 132, representing 72.9% of the total respondents. The number of female respondents on the other hand is 49, which translates to 27.1%. Most of the respondents are those within the age range of 21–24 years old with a total of 82 which translates to 45.3%. This is followed by those who are below the age of 20 with a total of 50 which represents 27.6%. Next are those under the age range of 25–30 years that amounts to a total of 31 respondents, which translates to 17.1%. Lastly, are those who are within the age range of 31–34 years of age that represents 9.9% of the total respondents. Majority of the respondents are in the category of less than a year, amounting to a total of 99 respondents which translates to 54.7%. Followed by those who are at the organization for 1–2 years, with 58 respondents and represents 32.0%. Next are those under the category of 2–3 years at the organization with 21 respondents, which represents 11.6%. Lastly, only three respondents were with the organization for 3–4 years, which is 1.7% of the total respondents.

4.2 Hypothesis testing

Table 1 shows that 35% of the variance in turnover intention were collectively explained by the emotional

Table 1. Results of hierarchical regression for emotional intelligence and turnover intention.

Predictor	Std. β
<i>Emotional Intelligence</i>	
Self-emotion appraisal	-.379*
Others' emotion appraisal	.067
Use of emotion	.121
Regulation of emotion	-.408*
R ²	.354
Adj. R ²	.324
R ² Change	.340
F Change	22.658

* $p < .01$.

intelligence variable ($R^2 = .356$, F Change = 22.658, $p < .05$), with the four demographic variables controlled. Two dimensions of emotional intelligence, self-emotion appraisal ($\beta = -.379$, $p < .01$) and regulation of emotion ($\beta = -.408$, $p < .01$) significantly predicts employee's turnover intention. While the two other dimensions does not, others' emotion appraisal ($\beta = .067$, $p = .407$) and use of emotion ($\beta = .121$, $p = .083$) both shows that they do not significantly predict employee's turnover intention. Thus indicates that the hypothesis is partially supported.

5 DISCUSSION

The hypothesis strives to identify the relationship between the emotional intelligence of front office staff of 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur and their turnover intention and whether it has a negative association. This assumption has been verified through the findings of the regression analysis conducted on the two variables. Based on Table 4.9, two out of the four dimensions of emotional intelligence, namely: 1) self-emotion appraisal and 2) regulation of emotion, recorded negative significant influence on turnover intention with beta scores of, $\beta = -.379$ and $\beta = -.408$ respectively, both having $p < .01$.

Jordan and Troth (2011) noted similar results to the findings. Where the awareness or assessment of own emotion significantly relates negatively to turnover intention. In relation to regulation of emotion, the result is consistent with the findings of Borys (2005), which it was reported that regulation of emotion is negatively associated to turnover intention.

From the statistical figure it is noted that the two dimensions, others' emotion appraisal and use of emotion ($\beta = .067$, $p = .407$) and ($\beta = .121$, $p = .083$) respectively, does not significantly predict turnover intention of employees nor does it show negative relationship as postulated by the hypothesis. The findings are rather dissimilar to the findings of Borys (2005) where both dimensions were significant and were negatively associated to turnover intention.

After reviewing previous studies it was established that there were authors who noted similar results. Wong and Law (2002) in their study of the effects of leader and follower emotional intelligence on performance and attitude documented that dimensions, others' emotion appraisal and use of emotion did not have a significant negative relationship with turnover intention. In rationalizing the findings of Wong and Law (2002), the author Borys (2005) concluded that the reason of the difference in findings could be due to the fact that both studies were conducted to differing cultures therefore bearing results. As a general note the study conducted by Borys (2005) was done in America and Wong and Law's (2002) was set in China. Thus it could be construed that the findings of this current study is different due to factors such as culture, industry and etc. Thus, by having two sub-hypotheses accepted and the other two rejected, the hypothesis is seen to be partially supported.

6 IMPLICATIONS

This study adds to the body of knowledge by improving or increasing the understanding of emotional intelligence as a whole and the study also deepens the model proposed by Wong and Law (2002), the WLEIS. The study also closes the gap in the study of emotional intelligence somewhat by expanding into a different scenario or industry, in this case is the hospitality industry specifically the accommodation sector which ultimately helps in providing certain credibility to the study.

Another implication of the study is that the findings basically help the managers in identifying factors that may lead to the turnover of their employees. In this case, it deals with the emotional intelligence of the employees. By having a clear understanding on how different or unique their employees are and knowing how they are emotionally, managers or leaders would be able to be tactful in managing them. Thus, this emphasizes the importance of having a good relationship between leaders and their employees. This does not mean that the leader's assertiveness or disciplinarian nature should give way, a certain balance is needed and this knowledge enables them to hopefully achieve that balance. As stated by Yukl (2006), a successful leader needs to possess emotional intelligence as opposed to just having technical and theoretical knowledge.

7 LIMITATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was conducted by employing a cross-sectional method, where all the data was gathered at a specific period or point of time. This limits the data analysis to that certain point of time, thus presenting the researcher and the readers a depiction that is constrained specifically only to that moment,

whereas one might obtain results or data that are completely different at another point of time. However, the cross-sectional method is appropriate for this study due to the fact that it is economical both terms of time and money. Therefore, in order to acquire a more “complete” understanding on the association of both emotional intelligence and turnover, it is suggested that for future research, a longitudinal approach should be utilized to address any changes of data through the shift of time.

Another limitation to the study is the fact that the issue at hand revolves around the issue of employee’s turnover intent. The truth might have been held back due to concerns or fears that their employers might be made known of the information that they provided and that there would be repercussions. Thus, providing answers that would seem neutral or amicable instead of providing information on what they really feel. It is worth noting that the study was conducted with the utmost confidentiality and that the respondents were notified that their answers were strictly confidential and were not disclosed to any other party.

Another noteworthy recommendation is that future research should compare the emotional intelligence of employees and their employers and whether it would relate to any work related outcomes because this study only focuses on the emotional intelligence of the employees. Perhaps the act of capturing emotional intelligence of leaders is as vital as the emotional intelligence of their employees and that it could also be a factor in issues such as employee turnover.

8 CONCLUSION

This study generally tries to uncover the association of emotional intelligence to the dreaded issue of employee turnover faced by every organization but in this study’s case, turnover faced in the hospitality industry. It is hoped that this study would be significant to both the academicians and industrial leaders alike in provide more insight the subject at hand thus facilitating them in expanding into the deeper depths of emotional intelligence and ultimately developing it further, such as developing new questions, new assumptions that would only help to enrich the body of knowledge.

It is also important to note that the study of emotional intelligence is hoped to be of use in the development of new policies in any organizations that values their human capital. Industrial players, managers and leaders alike would profit in the expansion of their knowledge in everything human. Organizations are not run by machines; therefore it is important to further our understanding of every facets of the human nature.

REFERENCES

Abassi, S. M. & Hollman, K. W. 2000. Turnover: the real bottom line. *Public Personnel Management*, 2(3), 333–342.

Abelson, M. & Baysinger, B. 1984. Optimal and dysfunctional turnover: Toward an organizational level model. *Academic Management Review*, 9(2) 331–341.

Argote, L. & Epple, D. 1990. Learning curves in manufacturing. *Journal of Science* 247, 920–924 employees. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(1), 144–162.

Bar-On, R. 1997. *The Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i): Technical manual*. Toronto, Canada: Multi-Health Systems.

Bluedorn, A. 1982. The theories of turnover: Causes, effects, and meaning. *Research in the Sociology of Organization*, 1, 75–128.

Borys, J. N. 2005. Emotional intelligence and low-wage labor ???

Constanti, P., and P. Gibbs. 2005. Emotional labor and surplus value: The case of holiday “reps.” *Service Industries Journal* 25(1): 103–16.

Dalton, D. & Todor, W. 1979. Turnover turned over: An expanded and positive perspective. *Academic Management Review*, 4(2) 225–235.

Flamholtz, E. G. 1973. Human resources accounting: Measuring positional replacement costs. *Human Resource Management*, 22(Spring), 8–16.

Goleman, D. 1995. *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York: Bantam Books.

Igbaria, M. 1991. Career orientations of MIS: An empirical analysis. *MIS Quarterly*, June, pp. 151–169.

Jackofsky, E. & Slocum, J. 1987. A causal analysis of the impact of job performance on the voluntary turnover process. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, 8: 263–270.

Jordan, P.J. & Troth, A.C. 2011 Emotional intelligence and leader member exchange: the relationship with employee turnover intentions and job satisfaction. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 38, 260–280.

Law, K. S., Wong, C. S., & Song, L. J. 2004. The construct and criterion validity of emotional intelligence and its potential utility for management studies. *The Journal of applied psychology*, 89(3), 483–96.

Littlejohn, D., & Watson, S. 2004. Developing graduate managers for hospitality and tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 16(7), 408–414.

Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R. 2004. Emotional Intelligence: Theory, Findings, and Implications. *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(3), 197–215.

Morris, J. A., & Feldman, D. C. 1996. The dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of emotional labor. *Academy of Management Review*, 21, 986–1010.

Mowday, R., Porter, L. & Steers, R. 1982. *Employee-Organization Linkages: The Psychology of Commitment, Absenteeism, and Turnover*. Academic Press, New York.

Nelson, R. & Winter, S. 1982. *An Evolutionary Theory of Economic Change*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

O’Leary, S., & Deegan, J. 2005. Career progression of Irish tourism and hospitality management graduates. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(5), 421–32.

Ongori, H. 2007. A review of the literature on employee turnover. *African Journal of Business Management*, 49–54.

Price, J. L. 1977. *The study of turnover*. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press. University of Michigan. Exit interview form from University of Michigan Libraries.

Polanyi, M. (1966). *The Tacit Dimension*. New York: Anchor Day Books.

Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. 1990. Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality*, 9, 185–211.

- Simon, B. & Kristian, H. 2007. Labour turnover in the retail industry. *The International Journal of Retail Distribution Management*. 35(4), 289–307.
- Staff shortage hurts Asia. 2007. *Travel Weekly Australia*, (53), 3. Retrieved March 15, 2011 from EBSCOhost.
- Staw, B. 1980. The consequences of turnover. *Journal of Occupational Behavior*. 1(4) 253–273.
- Stein, S., & Book, H. 2006. *The EQ edge*. Hoboken, NJ : John Wiley & Sons.
- Stewart, G. L. 2008. The relationship of emotional intelligence to job satisfaction and organization commitment. Regent University). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304818773?accountid=42518>
- Wong, C. S., & Law, K. S. 2002. The effects of leader and follower emotional intelligence on performance and attitude: An exploratory study. *Leadership* (Vol. 13, pp. 243–274).
- Yukl, G. 2006. *Leadership in organizations* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Zeidner, M., Matthews, G., & Roberts, R. D. 2009. *What We Know About Emotional Intelligence: How It Affects Learning, Work, Relationships, and Our Mental Health*. MIT Press.
- Economic Planning Unit, 2010. Tenth Malaysia Plan. Retrieved May 20, 2011 from <http://www.epu.gov.my>

This page intentionally left blank

Customer satisfaction towards service quality in the hotel industry in Melaka

Yeo Sook Fern, Stany Wee Lian Fong, Goh Mei Ling, Jason Lam Mun Soon,
Tan Seng Huat & Tan An Choon

Faculty of Business and Law, Multimedia University, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: One of the major income generators to Malaysia's economy is the hotel industry. Due to the offerings of a hotel, which is service, it is significant for hoteliers to emphasize on customer satisfaction towards service quality and prevention of low customer satisfaction to maintain the hotel's reputation. The purpose of this study is to assess the customer satisfaction towards service quality provided by hotels in Melaka as well as pointing out the issues in service quality that hoteliers need to be aware of to reach and exceed customer expectations. Services performed in a hotel may not be visible but can bring great threat to the hotel by imprinting negative perception and bad customer satisfaction on the overall service quality of the hotel. Therefore, this research is to find out the connections between several important areas of hotel's operation with the effect it will bring to service quality and customers' experience. A total of 200 respondents consisting of Malaysian and foreigners have been interviewed. SPSS has been employed for data analysis with all the Cronbach alphas above 0.7 and all the assumptions of multiple regressions have been fulfilled. The results showed that restaurant services and front desk services are found to have positive influence towards the service quality of hotels in Melaka. In conclusion, this study provides empirical evidence of restaurant services and front desk services offered by the hotels will lead to the building of good service quality.

Keywords: service quality, room service, hotel, Melaka

1 INTRODUCTION

Melaka is a famous historical state in Malaysia and which eventually shapes into service markets to promote the growth of the tourism industry. The numbers of tourists entering Melaka increase every year. Inns and hotels have been built due to several conditions and they are trying to improve their service quality in order to satisfy their customers.

Developing this sector is a significant issue because UNESCO has included Melaka as a World Heritage. It is predictable that the tourism and hotel industry will be having rapid growth. This will likely to be accurate because Melaka is being maintained and preserved as a unique cultural heritage, art and historical places.

Figure 1 shows the arrivals of tourists in the Melaka's hotel as at March 2012. Melaka hotel industry has reached an impressive chance in amount of

tourists. This shows that every year, the hotel guests that visits to Melaka is increasing and this prove that has hotel industry in Melaka will have a Melaka great potential to enhance the country's economy.

2 DETERMINANTS OF SERVICE QUALITY

The concept of service quality is wide and varied. Many investigations and development have been done in past studies. For example, service quality is viewed as meeting customers' expectations (Parasuraman et al., 1985), value (Feizenbaum, 1951), conformance to requirements (Crosby, 1979) and fitness for use (Juran et al., 1974) as cited in the research of Vijayadurai J. (2008). In the citation of Asyura N. (2010), Oliver (1980) has also stated that customers perceive the service quality level by judging whether the service performed is good or bad based on their expectations. Hence, if a bad event takes place in the experience of the customer, it will influence the overall customers' perception towards the service quality offered by the particular firm (Ford & Heaton, 2000). In addition, Carlos et al. (2007) believe that the level of service quality is determined and evaluated through customers' opinions.

2010		2011	
Malaysians	Foreigners	Malaysians	Foreigners
1,799,832	2,089,161	1,811,799	2,091,249

[Source: Tourism Malaysia 2011].

Figure 1. Hotel guests by state for 2010/2011.

The major profit contribution is the guestrooms. Hence, there is a need for hotel management to continuously evaluate the purpose and functions of their main product, the hotel rooms. Nobles (1999) stated that the five senses of human which is sight, auditory, taste, olfactory and tactile as well as ambience which refers to the room's architecture, decorations and furnishings should be the guide for improving and upgrading of guestrooms. Walker (2002) has also added another sense, the 'sixth sense' which refers to intangibles such as emotion, atmosphere and fantasy, influencing the perception of guests towards the hotel rooms. Therefore, this leads to the establishment of the first proposed hypothesis for this study to assist hotels in Melaka in deciding whether to or not to focus on room service to enhance service quality:

H1: Room services is positively related to service quality.

According to Kattara *et al.*, (2008), employee attitudes and behaviours varies in a workplace. It is stated as various sequences of actions performed by employees within a company. Particularly for hotel industry, which is a service sector and involves mainly interaction of employees and customers need to take note on this element. According to King (2004), negative employee attitudes has destroyed many businesses and cost the employers millions of dollars daily. It also results in driving customers away, low customer satisfaction and low employees morale. Employees' attitudes are thus significant to hotel organizations as they play the role of a 'string' between the companies with their customers. Hence, the level of customer satisfaction and service quality lies heavily on the attitudes and behaviours of employees (Saad & Amy, 2007). Therefore, this leads to the establishment of the second proposed hypothesis:

H2: Employees' attitude is positively related to service quality.

Restaurant is referred to the foods and beverages offered in the hotel operations. It is also one of the significant factors to a hotel's success. According to the Restaurant & Foodservice Market Research Handbook (2006), the main role of hotel restaurant is to fulfil the customers' needs of food and providing a positive dining experience for hotel guests. Hoteliers that are aware of the importance of the hotel restaurant and exceeding the expectation of customers in this department will be able to differentiate itself in the tough and competitive hotel industry. Ashton *et al.* (2010) also agrees to this theory and adds in that restaurant is hotel's one of the two main income sources, with the other one is guestrooms. Weiss *et al* (2004) conducted the research about attributes in hotel restaurant experience mainly on food quality, service quality, atmosphere and novelty and how they influence the visitors' intention to buy. It is important for hotels in

Melaka to examine the influence of restaurant on the service quality:

H3: Restaurant is positively related to service quality.

In a hotel, front desk personnel play a very important role as they are the first person where the customers will meet the moment they step into a hotel. According to Vallen and Vallen(2004) as cited by Sriyam (2010), from budget hotel to luxury hotel, front office remains the centre of contact for hotel customers. Not only that, the front desk also resembles the first image of the hotel to the customers. Therefore, being the centre of contact, this mean that the front office contact most with the customers and it is important for them to satisfy the customer's needs and expectations as it will be the first perception of customers towards the hotel (Kunakitkumjorn, 2003 in the citation of Sriyam, 2010). Besides, there are many research conducted on skills needed and human resources in a hotel's front office. Competency is one of the key determinants of a success front office. Front desk personnel needs to be clear of knowledge about the hotel's offering, product and services, promotion and packages, types of rooms and facilities provided. Therefore the fourth hypothesis is developed to help Melaka hotel industry to examine the influence of front desk on service quality:

H4: Front desk is positively related to service quality.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A group of tourists were selected with appropriate guidance of relevant literature to identify the four main independent variables of this study: room service, employees' attitude, restaurant, and front desk. These independent variables were then being further discussed to identify its influence on service quality to the hotels industry in Melaka. A descriptive research was conducted to obtain data for further analysis and to explain the relationships of the four independent variables on service quality. Data collection for this study was through a survey using questionnaires as the tool. 5-point Likert scale was used for each item in the questionnaires. A total of 200 respondents participated in this study as all of them fulfil the condition of staying in hotels in Melaka. As for data analysis, Cronbach's alpha and multiple linear regressions were used to examine the relationships between the four independent variables and service quality.

4 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILING

The target respondents for this study were tourists who have stayed in hotels in various parts of Melaka. The respondents included tourists from oversea and other states in Malaysia. Thus, there were a total of 168 respondents found qualified and included in this study. Among these 200 respondents, only 8 of them

Table 1. Reliability values for variables.

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
Room services	0.785	6
Employee attitude	0.859	6
Restaurant	0.739	6
Front desk	0.717	6

are non-Malaysian and 192 are Malaysians. 95 respondents (47.5%) are males and 105 respondents (52.5%) are females. Majority of the respondents fall in the age group of 20 to 25 years old (66.5%), followed by 26–30 years old (13.0%) and below 20 years old (11.5%). There are only 9.0% or 18 respondents fall in the age group of above 30 years old. 168 of the respondents are single, followed by 30 of them are married and both divorced and widower have one respondent. As for the highest level of education, majority of the respondents are Degree holders (71.5%), 26.0% are Diploma holders or lower and only 2.5% are Master Degree or higher qualification. Majority of them are students (78.0%), followed by businessman (10.0%) and the balance of 15.0% is those in other category of occupations. The results also show that majority of the respondents' household income is in below RM2000 (74.0%), followed by those in the range of RM2001 to RM 3000 (13.5%), RM3001-4000 (9.0%) and RM4001 and above (3.5%).

5 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The variables were measured based on multi-item scales where each variable consists of more than 6 items. All the items then combined to measure the 4 independent variables in a consistent manner. The 5-point Likert ranging from strong disagree (point-1) to strongly agree (point-5) was applied to avoid neutral opinion given by respondents. Table 1 shows the reliability values for all the 4 independent variables in this study. As table show, the coefficient alpha of room services (0.785), employee attitude (0.859), restaurant (0.739) and front desk (0.717) is more than 0.7. Among the independent variables, employee attitude with 0.859 is the highest value.

6 HYPOTHESES TESTING

The dependent variable service quality was regressed on all the independent variables. The four independent variables fulfil the independence assumption which these variables were statistically independent and uncorrelated with one another. The probability level was set at $p < 0.05$ indicating 95% confidence in explaining the dependent variable.

Hypothesis H1 and H2 were found not supported by the result and it concluded that there is no relationship between room service, employees' attitude and

Table 2. Model summary.

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.589(a)	.347	.333	.42626

Table 3. ANOVA.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	18.815	4	4.704	25.888	.000(a)
Residual	35.430	195	.182		
Total	54.245	199			

service quality of hotels in Melaka among the tourists. According to Table 3, the F value is 25.89 with a significant value of 0.000. The R square reveals how well the straight model fits the scatter of points, and the higher the R square value the better is the straight line fits to the elliptical scatter points. Thus, the 0.347 R square values is considered moderate, and it shows that 34.7% of the overall factors that might impact service quality explained by the room service, employees' attitude, restaurant and front desk.

Hypotheses H3 and H4 were found supported with the result in Table 4. It shows that significant values for restaurant ($p=0.001$) and front desk ($p = 0.000$) are all lower than the probability level which was set at $p < 0.05$. Hence this explains that there are relationships between the independent variables (perceived value, prior experience, and promotion) with the dependent variable- intention to revisit to Melaka among Melaka's university students. Front Desk ($\beta = 0.455$, $p < 0.05$) emerged as the most important determinant on the service quality with the largest absolute value of standardized beta coefficient. Besides that, correlations for all variables are found to be positively correlated with the dependent variable. A concise predictive model is found with the values for constant (dependent variable) is 1.621, restaurant's beta 0.302, and front desk's beta 0.317. Therefore, the regression equation is created:

$$\text{Intention to revisit} = 1.621 + 0.302 (\text{restaurant}) + 0.488 (\text{front desk})$$

7 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Room service is the major product of a hotel and has the purpose to accommodate. Ogle (2009) has stated that room service plays the role of fulfilling the needs of every guest. The first aim of this research is to identify the significance of room services in affecting service quality provided by hotels. From the analysis in Chapter 4, it is found out that room services

Table 4. Coefficients.

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients Beta	t B	Sig.	Correlation
	B	Std. Error				
(Constant)	1.621	0.280		5.785	0.629	0.000
Mean for room services	-0.105	0.094	-0.104	-1.115	0.633	0.320
Mean for employee attitude	-0.008	0.074	-0.010	-0.110	0.674	0.313
Mean for restaurant	0.302	0.091	0.276	3.322	0.001	0.471
Mean for front desk	0.488	0.080	0.455	6.069	0.000	0.555

are not significant to service quality. It means that room services do not influence service quality. The customers feel that room services is not an important element affecting their satisfaction towards hotel's services. Although as stated in the literature that room services is the utmost important factor, the guests who have stayed in Malacca hotels do not think the same way. This is due to the purpose of customers travelling to Malacca is for vacation as Malacca is a well-know city for its heritage and as stated in the descriptive analysis of Chapter 4, vacation/honeymoon has the most respondents. The visitors are likely to be having outdoor activities rather than relaxing in the hotel room. Thus, their expectation towards room services is at the most basic level, which is, a place to stay for the night. This is the main reason of their thoughts on room services. Thus, it is suggested that hoteliers in Malacca should focus on other factors rather than room services. However, this factor should not be neglected totally but kept up to the basic requirement to maintain customer satisfaction in this aspect of service.

Employee attitude refers to behaviours and sequence of actions performed by the employees. According Saad & Amy (2007), employees is an important factor in service quality as they are the ones to represent the hotel in delivering services to customers. Based the findings of Chapter 4, the hypothesis testing is concluded that there is no significant relationship between employee attitude and service quality. Due to these different views, the reasons are investigated. It is found out that the visitors do not have high expectations in employee attitude due to the time spared in the hotel is less. As stated above, the visitors prefer outdoor activities and spend less time in the hotel. This causes less interaction of the employee and customers. Thus, it is recommended that management can put more focus on other factors but maintain the employee attitude at the basic level such as having manners, tidy, ability to explain products, cheerful and much more. There is also less need on building employee-customer relationship.

According to Ashton et al. (2010), restaurant is referred to the second most important product offerings of a hotel after room services. It includes the management of the hotel's food and beverages related matters such as food quality, food delivery to rooms, food complaints and much more. Based on the findings of Chapter 4, the relationship of restaurant and

service quality is significant. This means that restaurant is an important factor influencing service quality. This shows that the guests put have certain demand on foods and beverages and hence, have higher expectations towards the food and beverages provided by the hotels. As recommendation, it is suggested that hotels continuously improve their food quality and services of the restaurant to meet the requirements of the customers.

Front desk refers to the reception of the hotel. It has the features of most visible, active and interaction with guests (Sriyam, 2010). In Chapter 4, the result of analysis shows that there are significant relationship between front desk and service quality. The reason for this finding is due to the role played by the front desk. The customers expect to have correct, convenient, easy and quick services in solving their problems such as check in/ out, booking rooms and much more. This reflects to the efficiency of front desk in attending to the customers' needs. Therefore, it is suggested that hotel management should focus on the front desk operations to maintain or increase service quality.

REFERENCES

- Ashton, A.S., Scott, N., Solnet, D. & Breakey, N. 2010. Hotel restaurant dining: The relationship between perceived value and intention to purchase. *Tourism and Hospitality Research* Vol. 10, 3, 206-218.
- Asia Web n.d. *Top 10 Hotels in Malacca*. Retrieved August 28, 2011, from <http://www.malacca-hotels.com/toptenhotels.htm>
- Asyura, N. 2010. *Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry*. (Master's Project, M.A., Business Administration, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia)
- Chang, H 2008. Increasing hotel customer value through service quality cues in Taiwan. *The Service Industries Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 73-84.
- Chun, M.K. 2007. The Importance of Hotel Employee Service Attitude and the Satisfaction of International Tourists. *The Service Industries Journal*, Vol.27, No.8, pp. 1073-108.
- Dominici, G. & Guzzo, R. 2010. Customer Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry: A Case Study from Sicily. *International Journal of Marketing Studies* Vol. 2, No. 2.
- Johnson M.D., Olsen, L.L. & Andreassen, T.W. 2009. Joy and Disappointment in the Hotel Experience: Managing Relationship Segments. *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 19 No. 1, pp. 4-30.

- Heung, Vincent C.S, Wong M.Y and Qu, H. 2000. Airport-restauran Service Quality in Hong-Kong. *Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, v41i13, p86.
- Ivana *et al.* 2010. Consumer satisfaction and quality management in the hospitality industry in South-East Europe. *African Journal of Business Management*, Vol. 5(4), pp. 1388–1396.
- Kandampully, J. & Suhartanto, D. 2000. Customer loyalty in the hotel industry: the roles of customer satisfaction and image. *International Journal Of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 12/6, 346–351.
- Kattara, H.S., Weheba, D. & El-Said, O.A. 2008. The impact of employee behaviour on customers' service quality perceptions and overall satisfaction. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, Vol. 8, 4, 309–32.
- Kong, H.Y. & Baum, T. 2006. Skills and work in the hospitality sector: The case of hotel front office employees in China. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 18 No. 6, pp. 509–518.
- Lau, P.M., Akbar, A.K. & Yong, D.G.F 2005. Service Quality: A Study of the Luxury Hotels in Malaysia. *The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge*, Vol. 7, Num. 2.
- Lee, Y.K., Nam, J.H., Park, D.H & Lee, K.A. 2006. What factors influence customer-oriented prosocial behavior of customer-contact employees? *Journal of Services Marketing* 20/4, 251–264.
- Lim, K. n.d.. *Hatten Group, Through a Management Agreement with Hilton Worldwide, to Manage the 265-room DoubleTree by Hilton, Melaka in Malaysia*. Retrieved August 28, 2011, from http://www.hotelonline.com/News/PR2011_2nd/May11_DoubleTreeMelaka.ht
- Mohsin, A. & Lockyer T. 2009. Customer perceptions of service quality in luxury hotels in New Delhi, India: an exploratory study. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 22 No. 2, pp. 160-173.
- Shahin, A. & Dabestani, R. 2010. Correlation Analysis of Service Quality Gaps in a Four-Star Hotel in Iran. *International Business Research*, Vol. 3, No. 3.
- Shi, J.H. and Qiang, S. 2007. *Evaluation of Hotel Service Quality Based on Customer Satisfaction*. 1-4244-0885-7/07/\$20.00 ©2007 IEEE.
- Sohail, M.S., Roy, M.H., Saeed, M. & Ahmed, Z.U. 2007. Determinants of Service Quality in the Hospitality Industry: The Case of Malaysian Hotels. *Journal of Accounting – Business & Management*, 14, 64–74.
- Solnet, D. 2006. Introducing employee social identification to customer satisfaction research: A hotel industry study. *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 16 No. 6, pp. 575–594.
- Sriyam, A. 2010. *Customer Satisfaction towards Service Quality of Front Office Staff at the Hotel*. (Master's Project, M.A., Business English for International Communication, Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok)
- The Restaurant & Foodservice Market Research Handbook 2006 ed.. (2006)*. Hotel Restaurants. Richard K. Miller & Associates.
- The Restaurant, Food & Beverage Market Research Handbook 2010 ed.. (2010)*. Restaurant & Hotel Food Trends. Richard K. Miller & Associates.
- Tourism Malaysia n.d.. *Tourists Arrivals and Receipts in Malaysia*. Retrieved August 28, 2011, http://corporate.tourism.gov.my/research.asp?page=facts_figures
- Vella, N. 2009. *The History Of Hotels*. Retrieved April 14, 2010, From <Http://Www.Prlog.Org/10418735-The-History-Of-Hotels.Html>
- Vijayadurai, J2008. Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Behavioural Intention in Hotel Industry. *Journal of Marketing & Communication*, Vol. 3 Issue 3.

This page intentionally left blank

Sustainable tourism development practices of MICE venue provider in East Coast Region, Peninsula Malaysia

Maisarah Abd Hamid, Noralisa Ismail, Zatul Iffah Mohd Fuza & Khairun Najiah Ahmad
Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

Khairil Wahidin Awang
Graduate School of Management, Universiti Putra, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The main purpose of the study is to review the venues of MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Convention and Exhibition) industry in East Coast Region, Peninsula Malaysia focusing Hotel. Responding to the importance of sustainable tourism practices, Malaysia is continuously great effort to apply that practices in all tourism products. Malaysia offers a range of MICE venues that are either purposely built or integrated with hotel facilities. As one of the fast emerging MICE tourism destination, the sustainable tourism development practices by MICE venue providers cannot overlook. The implementation of sustainable practices will bring benefits to the industry. However, it requires participation from all the stakeholders. Research shows that, the various types of MICE venues available in the East Coast Region, Peninsula Malaysia. Most of the venues has the potential to apply sustainable tourism development practices in their day to day operation. The result of this study will be used to propose guidelines for sustainable tourism development practices in MICE tourism.

Keywords: East Coast Region, MICE, sustainable tourism development practices, tourism

1 INTRODUCTION

MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Convention and Exhibition) sector consists of related diverse meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions activities including conferences, congresses and trade shows. This sector has been regarded as one of the most dynamic and important sector of the tourism industry that focuses on business activities rather than leisure (McCabe, 2000).

Malaysia is among the fastest emerging country for MICE activities. Ranked in the top forty MICE destinations in the world by International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), the sector is expected to attract more than 100 million business travelers and MICE visitors by 2015.

Responding to this expectation, various MICE stakeholders should play their role to achieve the desirable recognition as MICE sector providers. Many countries that emphasize greatly on tourism industry as a mean of development and economic growth tend to focus on the concept of sustainable tourism development although the present eras are now moving towards a more innovative and challenging concept in providing tourism experience.

According to WCED (1987), sustainable tourism is about a process of change that aims to secure a harmonious relationship between development and the environment (ecological, economics and socio cultural). In this paper, the focus will be on sustainable

development practices from the context of MICE tourism stressing on the venue providers' side.

2 OBJECTIVES

This research aims to achieve two objectives which one to review the venues of MICE industry in East Coast Region, Peninsula Malaysia and to study the sustainable tourism development practices for MICE tourism.

3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.1 MICE tourism in Malaysia

Overview of MICE in Malaysia (2009) showed that 30% of the total revenue from tourism was generated from MICE sector. Their contribution to the tourism revenues occurs when they are visiting the country either as part of a large conference group or a group travelling on incentive trips. According to the industry sources, the MICE travelers spending margin are generally 3 to 5 times more than average leisure travelers, therefore MICE travelers are regarded as a high revenue-generating market. In terms of the length of stay, MICE delegates usually stay longer whereby the minimum are three days. Hence, they

also give “overflow benefits” in the long term for local tourism business once they become repeat tourists of a country.

Year 2003 is the beginning year of MICE industry in Malaysia. According to the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) (2009), Malaysia and Ireland shared the same ranking at 32. Our country holds a total of 87 association meetings with a total of 59,880 numbers of participants in 2008. Kuala Lumpur as one of the city in Malaysia is ranked at 21st in 2008 with the total of 29,102 participants after hosting 61 Association International meetings.

3.2 *Venues of MICE tourism*

Destination refers to the represented areas that can draw peoples’ attention to visit. Whereas, venue refers to individual units within these areas whereby it can be almost any type of building where MICE events take place (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2001), being residential or non-residential (Rogers, 2003). All these infrastructures such as a convention centre, meeting rooms play a vital role in holding MICE activities (Davidson and Rogers, 2006). They provide one or more services to the business tourists while destinations are supposed to deliver all the services that the business tourists need (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2001).

3.3 *Sustainable tourism development practices for MICE tourism*

Business tourism is a significant element in many tourist destinations. From this perspective the “attractiveness” of a place includes intrinsic qualities that draw leisure tourists, and also other elements, specifically, including conference facilities, offices or corporate headquarters, corporate entertainment opportunities and specific hotel or other accommodation for delegates or business travelers (perhaps incorporating the latest information technology facilities).

Where conference centers are required, adaptations of existing buildings may be possible; otherwise new-builds will be necessary, requiring site clearance possibly resulting in controversy over the threatened loss of “heritage” buildings and/or disturbance to residents (Howie, 2003).

4 DISCUSSIONS

4.1 *Tourism in East Coast Region*

The East Coast Region of Peninsula Malaysia, geographically, consists of the states of Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu. However, for the development of the country, the East Coast Economic Region Corridor has been introduced which covers the states of Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang as well as the district of Mersing in the state of Johor.

ECER statistics showed that in 2005, over 1.9 million foreign tourists and 8.3 million domestic tourists visited the ECER states. It is forecasted to grow to 7.4 million foreign tourists while domestic tourism will be a significant contributor to the sector with 21.4 million by year 2020. With the growth of tourist arrival, it will naturally increase demand for room accommodation, better transport, and other tour – related services. In year 2020, the established hotels and rooms in ECER region is estimated to contribute to 15% or 24.5 million of total hotel guest in Malaysia.

4.2 *MICE venues in East Coast Region*

Malaysia offers a range of convention venues. Some of it is integrated with hotel facilities and some of it stand alone. This country offers an impassive choice of convention venues whether in the city, mountain or island locations, which are all backed up by experienced staff and professional services. In addition to purposely built centres, many hotels are also the choice for MICE venues in this country. Hotels that range from 3 stars to 5 stars offered world class convention facilities and services. The Ministry of Tourism of Malaysia has ranked the hotels in Malaysia into star, orchid and apartment ratings differentiated by the facilities and services offered. These places can accommodate hundreds if not thousands number of delegates or provide small and medium sized meeting rooms for smaller scale functions.

According to the statistics from the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia (2011), the total number of the registered hotels in Pahang (215), Kelantan (117) and Terengganu (88) accumulated to 420. Statistics showed there are 73 hotels with star ratings and 78 hotels with the orchid ratings in Pahang. While in Terengganu, statistics showed that this state has 34 hotels with star ratings and 47 hotels with orchid ratings. Finally in Kelantan, there are 23 hotels with star ratings and 39 hotels with orchid ratings.

Based on the registered number, this research is conducted to identify the number of hotels that offer MICE facilities in their hotels. The result showed that in Pahang, 32 hotels with star ratings and 5 hotels with orchid ratings offered MICE facilities. From that number, only 4 are aware and applying the environmentally friendly and green hotel concept. While in Terengganu, there are 19 hotels with the star ratings and 3 hotels with orchid ratings that have MICE facilities with 2 hotels are applying environmental concept and green hotel in their places. Finally in Kelantan, 4 hotels found to have an awareness and apply the concept out of 17 hotels with star ratings and 4 hotels with orchid ratings.

There are about 80 hotels that offer MICE facilities in the East Coast Region. This is about 20% from the total registered hotel in the East Coast Region. Furthermore, the number of hotels that are aware and practice the environment friendly and green hotel are very limited, which are only 10 hotels. It showed that only 12.5% are practicing green hotel from the total hotel that have MICE facilities in the East Coast Region.

4.3 Guidelines for sustainable tourism development practices for MICE tourism

In Malaysia, there are limited researches being conducted on MICE tourism. However, as this research is focusing on the hotels, a few guidelines can be used and some improvements can be done from MICE tourism context. As discussed earlier on the importance of sustainability, the concept of sustainable tourism development has been divided into three namely as economy, social and environment.

4.3.1 Economy

A guideline that can be used to look at the economic sustainability is the Sustainable Tourism Practices Checklist for the Conference and Events Industry from North Carolina that produced by the Centre of Sustainable Tourism at the East Carolina University for the industry professionals. There are 13 elements that have been identified namely:

- Provide information on local attractions and cultural activities for the participants
- To encourage participants to purchase local products and services
- Provide employment opportunities for local community members
- Allow local artists to display and sell their handicrafts at the property
- Form partnerships with locally owned businesses (e.g., transportation and guide services)
- Use local goods and services whenever possible
- Involve the organization in local philanthropic projects and develop a public relations plan that ensures participants, community, interest groups and others to be aware of the community involvement
- Provide volunteer opportunities for participants and staff
- Exceed minimum local standards for employee's wages, salaries and benefits
- Ensure that operational demands for basic services (water, electricity, roads, food, and other resources) do not compete with local needs
- Provide education and training opportunities in the place of business for local community members
- Support training for community members for non-competitive tourism-related activities that complement the business
- Provide promotional information on local services and businesses to participant.

These elements showed the economic sustainability and it required by the MICE venue in order for them to practice the sustainable tourism development. All the elements ensure that the local people will also get the benefit from the tourism industry.

4.3.2 Social

According to Sutter (2003), there are four indicators under these criteria consist of stakeholder participation, improved service availability, equal distribution and capacity development.

The Asean Tourism standard (n.d) has used the collaboration with the community and local as their indicators. They put three elements under this dimension namely:

- Existence of plans/activities to help improve quality of life of the community.
- Existence of awareness raising programs for local community on environmental protection.
- Creation of activities in promoting culture and traditional performance and local ways of life.

In addition, the Sustainable Tourism Development Practice Checklist for the Conference and Event Industry North Carolina (2008) highlights two dimensions under these criteria. The first dimension is preserving the social norms and culture of local and indigenous communities. There are 7 elements under this dimension;

- Develop methods of establishing dialogue with local representatives to determine socio-cultural and economic impacts of the organization and to ensure their concerns are recognized in operational decisions
- Train staff to ensure they are well-informed on local customs
- Develop informative educational materials for participants about the local community and local history
- Use appropriate and authentic cultural elements from the local region
- Make the property available for community events
- Establish policies that restrict commercialization of endangered or protected flora and fauna
- Incorporate traditional local arts and crafts and make information available to participants

The second dimension is training and education for employees and clients that suggests 10 elements;

- Ensure that a formal environment program is in place that includes all staff participation
- Place informational signage about organization's sustainable practices around the property.
- Provide an incentive program for staff and participants to participate in current sustainable practices
- Claims of environmental practices are transparent and verifiable by participants and third party entities.
- Notification about sustainable is provided in publications, advertising, and web site
- Offer feedback or comment cards to get participants and staff input on further sustainable practices
- Educate other businesses about sustainability by speaking at events and conferences and providing tours of facility's sustainable practices
- Provide continuing sustainability training for staff
- Include sustainability as part of staff evaluation
- Participate in an environmental or sustainable tourism certification program Acknowledgment

The elements showed that the sustainable tourism development should involved all including local

communities, staff and customers due to the importance of their involvement for the social sustainability

4.3.3 Environment

Sutter (2003) proposed four items under this elements namely as fossil energy resources, air quality, water quality and land resource.

Taking the consideration that most venues is residential, the Asean Tourism Standard (n.d) was used to look at the environment impact. Accordingly, there are eight elements that used to practice sustainable;

- Use of Green products
- Solid waste management
- Energy efficiency
- Water efficiency
- Air quality management (indoor and outdoor)
- Noise pollution control
- Wastewater treatment
- Toxic and chemical substance disposal management

The elements showed that there are many items in the environment that need to be considered in order to practice the sustainable tourism development. All of the elements should be parallel to each other so that it will create the good environment and to create the sustainable conference.

5 CONCLUSION

Attempts to introduce sustainable development in MICE Tourism require a continuous and undivided attention from various stakeholders such as the governmental bodies, the NGOs, the suppliers as well as the local residence. It also requires an in depth investigation from various perspectives including economical, political, technological, environmental, cultural and sociological.

In Malaysia, the East Coast Region itself was identified to regard sustainable development as an alien, strange and new concept especially in the hotel industry. Hence, this proves that a lot of efforts are required in order to implement this sustainable development concept at this location. Besides that, proper guidelines

by government and other related bodies should be prepared and make into existence. This is to ensure that East Coast Region will be able to put sustainable development concept into practice especially in the tourism products to achieve satisfaction and enhance the quality of life of both locals and visitors. This in the end will resulted to the preservation of its key natural economic, social and cultural assets for the present and future generation to experience.

In order to attract more tourists to come to Malaysia especially for MICE purposes, this sustainable tourism development concept is seen as a good platform to attract environmentally and sustainability concern people.

REFERENCES

- Asean Tourism Standard n.d. Retrieved February 20, 2012 <http://www.aseansec.org/23074.pdf>
- Davidson, R., and Rogers, T. 2006. Marketing Destinations and Venues For Conferences, Conventions and Business Events. Oxford : Butterworth Heinemann.
- Howie F. 2003. Managing Tourist Destination. Cengage Learning EMEA
- ICCA 2009. Statistics Report The International Association Meeting Market 1998–2008.
- McCabe, V., Poole, B., Weeks, P., and Leiper, N. 2000. The Business And Management Of Conventions. Brisbane: Wiley Australia.
- Ministry of Tourism 2011. Hotel registration until November 2011. Retrieved February 15 2012. <http://www.motour.gov.my>.
- Malaysia: Making inroads into MICE 2008. Retrieved May, 15, 2012. <http://www.smibusinessdirectory.com.my>
- Rogers, T. 2003. Conferences and Conventions A Global Industry. Butterworth Heinemann.
- Sustainable Tourism Practices Checklist for the conference and event industry. Retrieved February 23, 2011. <http://www.nccommerce.com>.
- Sutter, C. 2003 Sustainability Check Up For Cdm Project. Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, Berlin.
- Swerbrooke, J. And Horner, S. 2001. Business Travel And Tourism. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.
- World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) 1987. Our Common Future. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Rail services perceptions and satisfaction of foreigners and its impact on their stay in Malaysia

Gudelia C. Saporna & Smitha Geetha

School of Hospitality, Taylor's University, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Rail-based transit is a necessity for modern cities like Kuala Lumpur. Since the Draft Structure Plan Kuala Lumpur 2020 envisions turning KL into world class city and emphasizes the role of rail in its plan, the study is very timely. Since there has been no specific study on the impact of rail services in Kuala Lumpur (Mohamad, 2003), the researchers delve into assessing the foreigners' level of satisfaction on the rail services in Malaysia and to examine the impact in terms of their stay in the country. The respondents of the study consist of 130 randomly selected foreigners. Results of the study showed that the present status of the rail services influenced the level of satisfaction of the foreigners on the rail transport. Likewise, foreigners' satisfaction on the rail services has a positive impact to them in terms of their stay in Malaysia.

Keywords: rail services perceptions, level of satisfaction, foreigners, impact

1 INTRODUCTION

Kuala Lumpur is the capital of Malaysia with an area of 243 km² and a population of 1.4 million. Kuala Lumpur is the center of economic activity in the country with approximately 838,000 employed people and 12.4% contribution to Malaysia's total GDP. With the rapid growth of vehicle approximately 8% per annum, the government embarked on major developments in transportation (Mohamad, 2003). For the last 10 years, developments of new rail-based transport systems like Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM Komuter), Light Rail Transit (LRT) and the Express Rail Link (ERL) for the new International Airport were tangible.

To date, the rail transport in Malaysia comprises heavy rail, light rail transit, monorail and funicular railway line. Heavy rail (including high-speed rail) is mostly used for intercity passenger and freight transport. Light rail transit is used for urban public transport while the High-speed railway line links Kuala Lumpur with the Kuala Lumpur International Airport. The monorail line in the country is used for public transport in Kuala Lumpur only. The Funicular railway line is operational in Penang.

The rail network in Malaysia covers most of its states. In Kuala Lumpur, an extensive rail transport system links the major parts of the city. The rail services available are the Putra and Star Light Rail Transit, KL Monorail, ERL and KTM Komuter. Five transit lines are available in Malaysia that link major cities and places of interest within Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. The LRT is provided by MY Rapid Company while Monorail by KL Monorail Sdn Bhd. On the other hand, the KTM Komuter is a city train under KTM

Company, a corporation owned by the Malaysian government. Lastly, the ERL is operated by Express Rail Link Sdn Bhd. Feeder bus services are available from the train stations to designated tourist destinations. All lines converge at the Kuala Lumpur Sentral Station except the LRT.

The best to get around Kuala Lumpur very fast and avoid traffic is to take Malaysia's rail transport. It is fast, inexpensive and mostly elevated metro system.

Rail-based transit is a necessity for modern cities like Kuala Lumpur. Since the Draft Structure Plan Kuala Lumpur 2020 envisions turning KL into world class city and emphasizes the role of rail in its plan, the study is very timely. The government examines the feasibility of expanding its route by covering Damansara, Cheras, Kepong, Sri Petaling, Bukit Jalil and many more areas.

Since there has been no specific study on the impact of rail services in Kuala Lumpur (Mohamad, 2003), the researchers delved into assessing the perceived status and level of satisfaction of the foreigners on the rail services in Malaysia after which determined the impact of rail services to them in terms of their stay in Malaysia.

1.1 *Research questions*

This research paper assessed the perceived status and level of satisfaction of the foreigners on the rail services of Malaysia. Specifically, it answered the following research questions:

1. What is the status of the rail services in Malaysia as perceived by the foreigners?

2. What is the level of satisfaction of the foreigners on the rail services of Malaysia?
3. What is the impact of the rail services in Malaysia to the foreigners measured in terms of their stay in the country?
4. Is there a relationship between the status of rail services (KTM, LRT, ERL, and Monorail) and level of foreigners' satisfaction?
5. Is there a relationship between the level of foreigners' satisfaction on the rail services and its impact in terms of their stay in Malaysia?

2 RELATED LITERATURE

The researchers, in the process of their quest for the related literature, jumped across national boundaries after finding limited studies in Malaysia using books and internet. The literature review conducted provides a sound foundation to this research.

Feifer (1985) describes what some people thought about the advent of rail travel as "*the railway burst upon the 19th century which revolutionized ideas about where and how humanity can travel. Thundering, massive, belching smoke and hurtling along at unprecedented speeds, the train was a monstrous apparition across the gentle hills of England*".

The railways grew so fast in Britain. In 1835, the first express route was developed "Great Western Railway (GWR) linking London with the Seaport of Bristol. In 1841, the first rail tour was introduced by Thomas Cook who chartered train that run from Loughborough to Leicester in England. Because of the long distance involved, US and Russia used train sleeping car in 1859 "The Delmonico" in US. In Europe, the Orient Express was introduced and ran from Paris to Istanbul. It was a sumptuous train with silk-walled carriages, mosaic-tiled bathrooms etc. Likewise, a popular low-cost method of rail travel in Europe is the Eurailpass which provides the holder with unlimited first class rail travel without any fast train surcharges in sixteen European countries. In Japan, super trains known as "bullet trains" travel at speed of 300 kilometer per hour. On the other hand, Britain is using a unique form of transportation known as the rail bus, a highway bus body on a railway frame and is powered by a turbo-charged bus engine (Coltman, 1989).

In the early 1970s, the US Government established a private corporation known as Amtrak and the Canadian Government a similar one known as Via Rail, to rent the tracks from the railway owners and run passenger trains on them. According to McIntosh and Goeldner (1984) Amtrak not only strive for profit but aims to provide modern efficient intercity rail passenger service within the nation's basic rail system and employ innovative operating and marketing concepts to develop the potential of modern rail service in meeting intercity needs.

Amtrak offers services to practically every major city in the United States. What is so special in their services are the names of the some of their special routes

like that of: Twilight Shore Liner, Lake Shore Limited, Sunset Limited and California Zephyr, which evoke romantic rail adventures coast to coast to every corner of the land. Amtrak has the following routes: The Northeast Corridor between Boston and Washington DC is served by ACELA, Amtrak's latest technology, a High Speed Train that has a speed of 150 mph which run on overhead electric cables. Many business travelers prefer to take the trip by high-speed rail because of the high-speed service, spacious work tables and business amenities on board such as phones and laptop outlets at each seat. The Sunset Limited follows Amtrak's southern and sunny route, from sea to shining sea in which the terminal points are in balmy southern California and palm-lined beaches in Florida. The Coast Starlight is Amtrak's exploration of some of the best West coast destinations in which the scenic trip combines gorgeous beaches and coastline panoramas and mountainous terrains. The California Zephyr on the other hand, takes the passengers to Chicago and Oakland to see the canyons and western mountains. In 1998, Amtrak and Via Rail Canada joined forces and developed a rail pass (North America Rail Pass) for domestic and international visitors in USA and Canada (Purzycki, 2000).

In Korea, the Korean Train Express, a high speed rail system, started its commercial service in April 1, 2004, with 300 kilometers per hour speed. Its goal is to provide additional rail capacity in Seoul and Busan corridor and acquire technology for high speed rail system. With the commission of the KTX, both project goals were satisfied, they solved the problem of congestion due to lack of transport capacity between Seoul and Busan corridor which is said to be the backbone of the Korean economy (Suh et al., 2005).

Several studies were undertaken to determine the impact of rail services. One is the paper of Mohamad (2003) which shows a positive impact of rail services in Malaysia. Road congestion has not worsened significantly, suggesting that the introduction of KTM, LRT and ERL have contributed towards encouraging more people to use public transport. The urban rail services also created a new image for public transport. The increasing number of commuters is attributed to punctuality, comfort and cleanliness of rail transport.

In this regard, Kuala Lumpur is undertaking feasibility studies on a high-speed rail connecting Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. Public Land Transport Commission (SPAD) chief development officer Azmi Abdul Aziz said that the feasibility studies would take about eight weeks to complete and they have done some comparisons with other similar high-speed rail links around the world such as the Paris-Brussels link and it is feasible to connect Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, spanning around 400 km. Likewise, the high-speed rail is expected to have a positive impact on the country's tourism industry, have a time-saving factor and further unlock the property values in Kuala Lumpur. But, although it is feasible, still there are other considerations to look at such as the impact on

other parallel transportation as well as the demand and supply. (Ali, 2011).

Moreover, the Malaysian government has approved a project to build a direct railway connection between KL Sentral and Subang Airport/Subang Skypark within 2 years (Transitmy, 2011).

In an analysis of the operation of Orient-Express, one of the world's premier travel brands, owned by the American Company Sea Containers, and operating four exclusive tourist train services in Europe and Asia, it shows that its operation has a positive to the tourists translated in the significant increase in the earnings of the company from US\$40.9 million in 2001 to US\$45.3 million in 2002 and US\$48.7 million in 2003. (Page, 2005).

Similarly, in an investigation of the performance of Great North Eastern Railways (GNER), a company owned by Sea Containers Ltd, and operating a high-speed train services over London-Scotland routes, it shows that the company has been consistently ranked as one of the UK's best long-distance train operating companies. Furthermore in 2003, results of survey indicate that about 82% of the GNER passengers were either satisfied (45%) or very satisfied (36%) with their journey. The satisfaction of the passengers is attributed on the facilities provided by the operator which include better wheelchair access, new toilet compartments, improved luggage storage, ground coffee machines and bar areas. Likewise, punctuality on its services about 84% compared to domestic air services can be observed. (Page, 2005).

Prideaux (1997) as cited in Page (2005), identified areas that are appealing to the tourists when traveling by train such as speed, comfort, amenities and sociability. He pointed out that infrequent service, lack of reliability in keeping to the published schedules, slow nature of train travel led to a downward trend in the number of passengers taking trains in Australia. In an investigation of the success of Queensland Rail by Prideaux (1997) it shows that the development of promotional themes to sell individual services, where a number of segments were carefully nurtured, contributed to the customers satisfaction, which made the company received high customer satisfaction scores. He pointed out also that due to the desire of the Queensland Rail to reposition itself in the tourism sector through pricing structure, problems did occur. Services often fail to reach 60% cost recovery on operations.

In a study conducted by Edge Tourism Solutions (2008), the following factors have contributed to the success of rail tourism services operation in the world: high facility and service standards; importance of advertising media; innovation in the use of marketing channels; the appeal and market position of rail transport and the different price points in order to attract both the economy and premium passengers.

Another study conducted by Tennyson (1989) shows that rail transit attracts higher ridership than bus when other factors are about equal. Likewise, the expanded use of public transit can sharply reduce the use of

automobiles and resulting pollution. Case studies on the impact of new high-speed rail lines confirm that new travelers are attracted to it. Moreso, EU Commissioner has sketched vision for 2050 in which rail is the dominant mode for long-distance transport and has also a strong position in regional passenger transport (Boer, et.al., 2011).

Given the related literature, this research paper aims to answer the following hypotheses:

- H₁ No relationship exists between the status of rail services (KTM, LRT, ERL, and Monorail) and level of foreigners' satisfaction.
- H₂ No relationship exists between the level of foreigners' satisfaction on the rail services and its impact in terms of their stay in Malaysia.

3 METHODOLOGY

The main objective of the study is to determine the status of the rail services in Malaysia as perceived by the foreigners. Thereafter, correlate the perceived status with the level of satisfaction of foreign travelers on the rail services of Malaysia. Likewise, the impact of rail services to the foreigners in terms of their stay in Malaysia is also determined.

The study make used of the descriptive-correlational research design since the researchers believe that this method will yield data sufficient enough to give a clear picture of the level of satisfaction on rail services and its impact to foreigners. The descriptive method was used to answer research problems 1, 2 and 3 while the correlational research was utilized to explain the relationship among variables. Descriptive–correlational according to Ariola (2006), is used to determine whether or not there is a relationship that exists between two or more quantifiable variables, and if there is, to what extent is the degree of relationship.

The researchers made use of 130 randomly selected foreigners in Subang Jaya, Petaling Jaya, Sha Alam and Kuala Lumpur as their respondents. According to Gay (1976), for a correlational research a minimum of 30 subjects is an acceptable sample size. The researchers prepared a two-page survey questionnaire to gather the information needed to achieve the desired objectives of the study. The questionnaire was structured into four parts. Part 1 focused on the profile of the respondents. Part 2 dealt with the status of the rail services as perceived by the foreigners. Part 3 was designed to determine the level of satisfaction on the rail services of Malaysia. Lastly, Part 4 centered on the impact of rail services to the foreigners in terms of their stay in Malaysia.

The five-point Likert numerical scale (Burns & Burns, 2008) with 5 as the highest and 1 as lowest was used. Each numerical scale had its corresponding statistical limits and verbal descriptions as shown in table 1. Test-re-test was conducted over a week interval to determine the reliability of the questionnaire.

Table 1. Numerical scale, statistical limits and verbal description.

Numerical scale	Statistical limits	Verbal description
5	4.50–5.00	Very high extent
4	3.50–4.49	High extent
3	2.50–3.49	Moderate extent
2	1.50–2.49	Low extent
1	1.00–1.49	Very low extent

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Respondents' profile

To address the issue, the researchers made use of 130 randomly selected respondents. From the 150 survey questionnaires distributed, only 130 were considered valid. Results of survey showed that majority of the respondents (87%) are in Malaysia for study purposes; five percent (5%) of them are employed; four percent (4%) are in Malaysia to visit their family and another four percent (4%) come to Malaysia for business and leisure purposes.

Since most of the respondents are in Malaysia to study, results of survey indicate that 87% of them stay in Malaysia for more than six months; five percent (5%) ranged from 4 to 6 months, they are the employed foreigners and the remaining eight (8%) are in Malaysia for not more than three months. Basically, those who stay in Malaysia for not more than three months are the tourists.

In terms of nationality, forty percent (40%) of the respondents are Chinese; seventeen percent (17%) Indonesian; ten percent (10%) Koreans; seven percent (7%) Europeans; five percent (5%) are Africans; four percent (4%) Pakistani; four percent (4%) Maldivians; while the remaining respondents about thirteen percent (13%) are from the rest of Asia and Middle East.

When respondents were grouped according to their frequency of taking the rail transport, on the average, the respondents often take the KTM; seldom have they taken LRT, ERL and Monorail.

4.2 Status of rail services in Malaysia

Table 2 shows the perception of the foreigners on the rail services of Malaysia. Based on the data presented, the four rail transport stations were perceived to be moderately accessible by the respondents as revealed by the mean scores of KTM (3.15); LRT (3.14); ERL (3.20) and Monorail (3.11). In terms of schedule, KTM and ERL both got mean scores of 2.71 while monorail was rated the lowest (2.56). It only shows that the schedule of trips is not that regular. Facility wise, all rail transport were rated to a "moderate extent" which means that facilities in terms of cleanliness and safety are not that excellent yet. Among the four rail transport, ERL was given the highest rating (3.01) by the foreigners. Lastly, in terms of price structure, all rail transport got a moderate rating.

Table 2. Mean perception profile of the respondents on the status of rail services in Malaysia.

Status of rail services	Level of satisfaction			
	KTM Mean	LRT Mean	ERL Mean	Monorail Mean
Accessibility of stations	3.00	3.23	3.32	3.47
Schedule	2.74	3.29	3.25	3.48
Facilities	2.60	3.31	3.22	3.45
Price Structure	3.12	3.25	3.32	3.26
Overall Mean	2.87	3.27	3.28	3.42

Table 3. Level of satisfaction of foreigners on the rail services of Malaysia.

Status of rail services	KTM Mean	LRT Mean	ERL Mean	Monorail Mean
	Accessibility of stations	3.15	3.14	3.20
Schedule	2.71	2.70	2.71	2.56
Facilities	2.91	2.92	3.01	2.86
Price Structure	3.46	3.45	3.38	3.36
Overall Mean	3.06	3.05	3.08	2.97

4.3 Level of satisfaction of foreigners on the rail services of Malaysia

Table 3 presents the level of satisfaction of the foreigners on the rail services of Malaysia. In terms of accessibility, though the four rail transports got a moderately satisfying rating, the respondents gave monorail the highest mean score (3.47) and KTM with the lowest mean (3.00). Further, the respondents are also moderately satisfied with the schedule of trips. However, the foreigners are more satisfied with monorail's schedule as evidenced by a mean score of 3.48. Figures also indicate that, facility wise, the respondents are more satisfied with monorail (3.45) though it is to a moderate degree only. The table reveals also that among the four rail transports, the respondents are more satisfied with the price structure of ERL as manifested in the mean score of 3.32. The overall mean suggests that foreigners are moderately satisfied with the rail services of Malaysia. It clearly shows that monorail garnered the highest mean score (3.42) while KTM got the lowest mean (2.87).

4.4 Rail services impact to foreigners in terms of stay in Malaysia

Table 4 describes the impact of rail services to foreigners' stay in Malaysia. It is evident that it is only to a moderate extent that the rail services have influenced the foreigners' stay in Malaysia as manifested in the overall mean score of 3.16. To a moderate extent,

Table 4. Rail services impact to foreigners in terms of stay in Malaysia.

	Impact in terms of stay in Malaysia
1. It is convenient to travel in Malaysia because of the rail transport	3.07
2. It is safe and fast to travel in Malaysia because of the availability of rail transport	2.85
3. Rail transport is an effective means of promoting tourism in Malaysia	3.29
4. It is cheaper to travel in Malaysia because of the availability of rail transport	3.35
5. Overall, I am satisfied with my stay in Malaysia	3.23
Overall Mean	3.16

Table 5. Table of r and r².

IV	DV: Level of satisfaction							
	KTM		LRT		ERL		Monorail	
	r	r ²	r	r ²	r	r ²	r	r ²
status of rail svc	.46	.21	.17	.03	-0.0373	1.39 ⁻⁰³	.20	.04

Level of significance = .05

df = 128 78 63 86

Critical p-values .195 .232 .250 .217.

the respondents find it cheaper (3.35) and convenient (3.07) to travel in Malaysia because of the availability of rail transport. Likewise, it is also to a moderate extent (3.29) that they find rail transport an effective means of promoting tourism in Malaysia. Overall assessment shows that foreigners are satisfied with their stay in Malaysia as revealed by the mean score of 3.23.

4.5 Relationship between status of rail services and level of satisfaction of foreigners

Table 5 shows the r and r² values. As reflected in the table, there is a moderate degree of relationship between status of rail services and level of satisfaction in KTM. This is indicated by the computed r-value of .46 which exceeded the critical p-value of .195 using the .05 level of significance with 128 degree of freedom. It only implies that the level of satisfaction with KTM is influenced by the status of rail services. On the other hand, no relationship can be observed for LRT, ERL and Monorail as indicated by the computed r-values of .17, -0.0379 and .20 respectively which are below the critical p-values of .232, .250 and .217 using the .05 level of significance. With this, the null hypotheses are accepted.

Table 6. Table of r and r².

IV: Level of satisfaction	DV: Impact in terms of stay	
	r	r ²
KTM	.39	.152
LRT	.0894	7.99 ⁻³
ERL	-0.05042	2.54 ⁻³
Monorail	.30	.09

4.6 Level of satisfaction of foreigners on rail services and its impact on their stay in Malaysia

Table 6 shows the table of r and r² for level of satisfaction of foreigners on rail services and its impact on their stay in Malaysia. It can be noted that there is a low to moderate degree of relationship between level of satisfaction on KTM and Monorail services and its impact on their stay in Malaysia. This is indicated by the computed r-values of KTM (.39) and Monorail (.30) which exceeded the critical p-values of .195 and .217 respectively. Figures imply that the foreigners' stay in Malaysia is moderately affected by their level of satisfaction with the rail services. The results of the study partially support the observations of Mohamad (2003). On the other hand, no relationship can be observed between level of satisfaction in LRT and ERL and its impact on their stay in Malaysia as manifested in the computed r-values of .0894 and -0.05042 respectively.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the current study clearly showed that the foreigners are moderately satisfied with the rail services in Malaysia in terms of accessibility of stations, schedule, facilities and price structure. Likewise, it is also evident that foreigners' stay in Malaysia is moderately influenced by the rail services. The correlation analysis indicates that there is a moderate degree of relationship between the status of rail services and the level of satisfaction of foreigners in KTM. No relationship can be observed with LRT, ERL and Monorail. It can be noted also that there is low to moderate degree of relationship between level of satisfaction on KTM and Monorail and its impact on their stay in Malaysia. On the other hand, no relationship between the two variables can be noted in the case of LRT and ERL.

Though a moderate degree of relationship can be seen, there is still a need to improve the present condition of the rail transport services particularly in terms of regularity and punctuality in schedules. It is also suggested to have frequent trips during peak hours. Policies should be enhanced in terms of security like providing more space or a separate coach for the disabled and elders or having an on-board security for every trip. To maintain the cleanliness, cooperation of the general public should be encouraged. Likewise,

there is also a need to review the price structure to make it more attractive and affordable not only to the foreigners but to all commuters. The government should also consider pursuing their development plan in extending their lines.

REFERENCES

- Ali, Sharidan 2011. "Feasibility studies on high-speed Kuala-Lumpur-Singapore rail". Available at: biz.thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2011/3/8/business/8208623&sec. [Accessed 10th December, 2011]
- Ariola, Mariano M., 2006, Principles and methods of research. Manila: Rex Book Store, Inc.
- Boer, E., Essen, H., Brouwer, F., Pastori, E., & Moizo, A. 2011, "A study on the projected effects on ghg emissions and transport volumes" Available at: www.cedelft.eu. [Accessed 19th December 2011]
- Burns, Alvin & Burns, Ronald 2008. Basic marketing research (2nd edition). New Jersey: Pearson Education, p. 250.
- Coltman, Michael M. 1989. Introduction to travel and tourism: An international approach. USA: International Thomson Publishing, Inc.
- _____. 2011. Draft Structure Plan Kuala Lumpur 2020. Available at www.dbkl.gov.my/psk/2020. [Accessed 28th September 2011].
- Edge Tourism Solutions 2008. ECDC rail tourism study final report 2008.
- Feifer, Maxine 1985. Going places: The ways of the tourist from imperial Rome to the present day. London: Macmillan.
- Gay, L.R. 1976. Educational research. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.
- McIntosh, Robert W and Goeldner, Charles R. 1984. Tourism: Principles, practices, philosophies. New York: Wiley
- Mohamad, Hilmi, 2003. "Rail transportation in Kuala Lumpur". Japan Railway and Transport Review No. 35 pp. 21-27. Available at: www/jrtr.net/jrtr35/f21-moh.pdf. [Accessed 28th September 2011]
- Page, Stephen J. 2005. Transport and tourism: Global perspective, 2nd edition. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Prideaux, B. 1997. "Tracks to Tourism: Queensland Rail Joins the Tourism Industry". Progress in Tourism and Hospitality Research.
- Prideaux, B. 1997. as cited in Page (2005) Transport and tourism: Global Perspective, (2nd edition). Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Purzycki, Jeanne S. 2000. Travel vision: A practical guide for the travel tourism and hospitality industry. N.J: Prentice Hall.
- Suh, S., Lee, J., Yang, K., Ahn, B., & Kim, J.H. 2005. "Effects of Korean Train Express (KTX) operation on the national transport system". Proceedings of the Eastern Asia Society for Transportation Studies, Vol. 5, pp. 175-189
- Tennyson, Edson 1989. "Impact on transit patronage of cessation or inauguration of Rail Service" Transportation Research Record 1221, National Research Council, Washington, DC. Available at: www.heritagetrolley.org/articleTennyson.htm
- Transitmy 2011. "Rail Link to Subang SkyPark on the way". Available at: transitmy.org/category/on-transit/high-speed-rail/. [Accessed 15th December 2011]

Identifying job satisfaction dimensions among rank and file employees in selected budget hotels as correlates of organizational commitment and turnover intentions

Gudelia C. Saporna & Smitha Geetha

School of Hospitality Management, Taylor's University, Malaysia

Ryan A. Claveria

College of Business Administration

Divine Word College of Calapan, Philippines

ABSTRACT: For any organization to have competitive advantage, it needs a highly committed, dedicated, focused and well-engaged workforce. Manpower is very instrumental in the success of any service industry. However, with today's baby boomer generation beginning to retire from the labor market, many companies are finding it increasingly difficult to retain employees. Turnover can be a serious problem in today's corporate environment as it is now relatively common to change jobs every few years. It is in this context that this research was conducted to determine job satisfaction dimensions among rank and file employees in selected budget hotels in Oriental Mindoro, Philippines, thereafter correlate it with organizational commitment and turnover intentions. The study made use of descriptive-correlational research design with fifty rank and file randomly selected respondents from five budget hotels in Oriental Mindoro. A four-page survey questionnaire was used to gather the relevant information. The results of the study showed that the five job satisfaction dimensions are all very important to the respondents. As regards the level of commitment, normative commitment got the highest mean score while continuous commitment got the lowest rating. Results of the study also indicate that compensation is negatively related to continuous commitment while career development is positively related to affective commitment. On the other hand, only two job satisfaction dimensions such as career development and job nature are negatively related to turnover intentions. Lastly, the study revealed that no relationship exists between organizational commitment and turnover intentions.

Keywords: job satisfaction dimensions, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, budget hotels, rank and file employees

1 INTRODUCTION

For any organization to have competitive advantage, it needs a highly committed, dedicated, focused and well-engaged workforce. Manpower is very instrumental in the success of any service industry. Higher productivity and excellent performance cannot be realized without the support of the employees. Hence, developing and retaining them in the organization will now be the biggest challenge particularly in the hotel industry where labor turnover is very high. Employers today are finding that employees remain for approximately 23 to 24 months only in a company according to the 2006 US Bureau of Labor Statistics. High labor turnover causes problems for business. Employees' turnover is very costly especially if it is among the highly skilled employees (Niederman and Summer, 2003) and tends to get worse if not dealt with. Likewise, Andrews (2010) stressed that "staff turnover blew for

Gulf firms" which resulted to millions of dollars loss due to volatile turnover.

Recently, many firms outperform competition by attracting, developing and retaining people with business-required talent (Joo & McLean, 2006). Turnover has been a critical issue because it affects the financial performance (Lambert et.al. 2001). Turnover may result in the shortage of staff for a project or leave the remaining staff unprepared to absorb the job left (Philips, 2003). Turnover rate varies significantly by industry. The private sector average turnover for twelve months ending August 2004 was 25.1% with leisure and hospitality, 46.4% and retail trade, 33.2% (EPF Newsletter, 2004). Though, many researchers have conducted studies using job satisfaction, commitment and turnover intention as variables, much of these used only affective as a single measure of organizational commitment (Lee and Bruvold, 2003; Feather and Rauter, 2004; Joo and Park, 2010). Hence, the

purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship of job satisfaction and organizational commitment to turnover intentions among the rank and file employees in the hotel industry in Oriental Mindoro, Philippines.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Job satisfaction*

Job Satisfaction is a collection of numerous attitudes of individuals toward various aspects of jobs which represent the general attitude (Gibson et al., 1994; Hellriegel and Slocum, 2004; Robins, 2005; Boles, et al., 2007; Sangroengrob and Techachaicherdchoo, 2010). For Demir (2002), job satisfaction of employees refers to the “feel of contentment and discontentment for a job”. It is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job (Locke (1976) cited in Brief & Weiss (2002) and an affective reaction to one’s job or job experiences (Cranny, et al. (1992) cited in Weiss (2002).

2.2 *Organizational commitment*

With the current trend in the hotel industry, there is a necessity then to look into the context of employees’ job satisfaction and levels of commitment so as to combat the challenges posed by turnover intentions. Since the development of the three-component model, commitment is now a well-recognized multidimensional construct (Meyer et al., 2002) and a leading model in various organizational commitment researches like that of Cohen, (2003); Bentein, Vandenberg, Vandenberghe & Stinglhamber, (2005) & Bergman, (2006). Meyer & Herscovitch (2002), broadly defined commitment as a force that guides a course of action towards one or more targets. It has been theorized that commitment is multidimensional construct and that the antecedents, correlates and consequences of commitment vary across dimension. The three component model focuses on normative commitment (employee’s perception of their obligation to the organization); continuous (employee’s perception of the cost associated with leaving the organization); and affective (emotional attachment to or identification with their organization) (Meyer et al., 2002).

Other researchers defined organizational commitment as “an attitude that reflects the strength of the linkage between an employee and an organization” (Johns & Saks, 2001). On the other hand, Boles et al., (2007) defined organizational commitment as the feeling towards organization and its values. It is the individual’s feelings about the organization as a whole, the psychological bond that an employee has with an organization (Mowday et.al. (1982) cited in Joo & Park (2010).

2.3 *Turnover intentions*

The cost of turnover to an organization can be very high especially to service-intensive business like that

of hotel industry. Cost of learning, reduced morale, pressure on the existing employees and loss of social capital are the indirect cost of an organization due to high turnover (Des and Shaw, 2001; Ali, 2008). Tett and Meyer (1993) as cited in Samad (2006) defined turnover intentions as conscious willfulness to seek for other alternatives in other organization. Price (2001) suggested turnover intentions construct as an alternative in measuring actual turnover. This is because study shows that there is a significant relationship between these variables (Lambert et al., 2001).

2.4 *Job satisfaction and organizational commitment*

A study on the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment of employees at a national restaurant chain in Southern Nevada was conducted by Feinstein and Harrah (2000). Results of the study indicate that tenure had a significant ($\alpha = .05$) effect on several of the component scores for satisfaction. Further, satisfaction with policies, compensation, work conditions, and advancement were found to have a significant relationship to organizational commitment. The study of Klaus et al., (2003) cited in Sangroengrob and Techachaicherdchoo (2010), found out that a challenging work has an impact on affective commitment but employees with continuance commitment partially stay with the organization. Job satisfaction has been found out to be associated with organizational commitment (Pool and Pool, 2007; Boles et al., 2007).

2.5 *Job satisfaction and turnover intention*

Studies showed that job satisfaction is one of the reasons for employees’ intentions to leave the organization (Price 2001). Many studies were conducted in different settings to support the claim of Price. Meland et al., (2005) pointed out that there is a relationship between employees’ job satisfaction and turnover. Khatri and Fern (2001) concluded that a modest relationship existed between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Likewise, Samad (2006) cited in Ali (2008) found a moderate relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Korunka et al., (2005) and Rahman et al., (2008) cited in Ali (2008) found a negative association between job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

2.6 *Organizational commitment and turnover intention*

A study on the effects of job satisfaction and organizational commitment to turnover intentions among the flight attendants of a Taiwanese Airline Company was conducted by Ching-Fu Chen (2006). Results of analysis showed that two aspects of organizational commitment, the normative and continuance, as well as the job-itself satisfaction were found to have significantly negative impact on the flight attendants’

turnover intentions. On the other hand, Lacity et al., (2008) concluded that organization commitment is one of the significant factors which has an impact on turnover intentions.

3 STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

Keeping in view the above discussion of variables, the following hypotheses are generated.

H₁: There is a relationship between job satisfaction dimension and organizational commitment.

In a study conducted by Nielsen & Smyth (2006) from 10,000 Chinese urban workforces, the three top ranked incentives that employees considered when choosing a job were stability, high income and professional development. Over 40% of the sample considered job stability to be in the top. Workplace and immediate professional status were the least important.

Other researchers identified job satisfaction dimensions and emerged on similar findings. Souza-Poza (2000) identified pay as a predictor of job satisfaction, that monetary compensation is positively associated with job satisfaction. Tutuncu and Kozak (2006) research study of Turkish Hotels identified that factors contributing to job satisfaction were: work itself, supervision and recognition through promotion. Onu, Madukwe & Agwu (2005) identified job content, work environment as key factors that affect job satisfaction. Lastly, De Vaney & Chen (2003) found that co-workers' relation was a strong determinant of job satisfaction.

On the other hand, of the five major job satisfaction facets (work itself, pay, advancement opportunities, supervision, and co-workers) enjoying the work is almost always the most strongly correlated with high levels of overall job satisfaction. Interesting jobs that provide training, variety, independence and control satisfy most employees (Barling, Kelloway & Iverson (2003). In an exploratory study made by Selvarajan (2005) among temporary employees, results revealed that there was a positive association between job satisfaction and organization commitment.

H₂: There is a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and labor turnover intentions.

A negative association exists between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. (Selvarajan (2005). Another study on job satisfaction and intent to turnover was conducted by Choi & Sneed (2006) among part-time student employees in University Dining Services. Results indicate that job satisfaction is inversely related to intent to turnover.

The researcher is interested to know if the results of the previous studies also apply to the rank and file employees of selected budget hotels in Oriental Mindoro.

H₃: There is a significant negative relationship between organizational commitment and labor turnover intentions.

In a study steered by Joo & Park (2010) among Korean employees, results indicate that career/job satisfaction and organizational commitment turn out to be the predictors of turnover intention. The study of Sangroengrob and Techachaicherdchoo (2010) showed that job satisfaction and organizational commitment has no direct effect on turnover intention. Meanwhile, work commitment was found to have significant effect on the turnover intentions of IT professional. The study of Baotham, Hongkhuntod & Rattanajun (2010) investigated the relationships between job satisfaction and organizational commitments on voluntary turnover intentions of the Thai employees in the New University. The results showed that job satisfaction and organizational commitment have a direct negative influence on voluntary turnover intentions.

The present study is an attempt to find out the correlation between organizational commitment and turnover intentions among budget hotels' rank and file employees in Oriental Mindoro.

4 METHODOLOGY

The main objective of the study is to determine the job satisfaction dimensions and level of organizational commitment of the rank and file employees in five selected budget hotels in Oriental Mindoro. Thereafter, correlate the variables to turnover intentions to find out if job satisfaction and organizational commitment are predictors of turnover intentions.

The study made use of the descriptive-correlational research design. The researcher made use of fifty rank and file employees who are already permanent and full time in the hotels to be able to get a more plausible response and minimize biases for the company. Random sampling was used in the selection of samples. The researcher made use of a four-page survey questionnaire to gather the information needed to achieve the desired objectives of the study. To determine the level of organizational commitment, the researcher adapted the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire developed by Meyer & Allens (1997) cited in Brown (2003). The questionnaire was structured into four parts. The five-point Likert numerical scale (Burns & Burns, 2008) with 5 as the highest and 1 as lowest was used. The reliability of the scale was assessed using the Cronbach's Alpha method.

5 FINDINGS

5.1 Respondents' profile

To address the issue, the researchers made use of 50 randomly selected respondents. From the 60 survey questionnaires distributed, only 50 were considered valid. Results of survey showed that majority of the

Table 1. Mean perception profile of the respondents on job satisfaction dimensions.

Job satisfaction dimensions	Mean
Compensation	4.94
Recognition	3.52
Career Development	3.66
Job Nature	3.66
Job Relationship	3.60
Overall Mean	3.88

respondents are from 25–35 years of age. As regards length of service, about 53% of them are in the organization for 1–5 years; 35% for 6–10 years and only 12% employed for 11–15 years. About 57% of the respondents are females.

5.2 Job satisfaction dimensions

It can be noted that compensation seems to be of utmost importance to them as evidenced by mean score of 4.94; it was followed by career development and job nature obtaining the same mean scores of 3.66. Recognition got the lowest mean rating (3.52). Given a very young group of respondents, about 25–35 years of age, basically, they will be rating compensation with utmost importance. In an interview with some respondents, they emphasized that they are willing to stay in their present work even if the compensation does not meet their expectations as long as there is an opportunity for career development and the nature of their job will give them enough experience to grow.

5.3 Level of commitment of the respondents

Of the three types of commitment, normative got the highest mean score of 4.37 which indicates that the respondents are moderately committed. They believe that a person must be loyal to the organization and must stay in one organization for most of their career. For them, moving from one organization to another organization very often is unethical. On the other hand, affective commitment obtained a mean score of 3.88. This is a reflection that respondents also care about the fate of the organization. Moreover, they feel that they are also “part of the family” in the organization. Lastly, continuous commitment obtained the lowest mean score of 3.31 which only proves that the respondents stay in the organization because it is very hard for them to leave even if they want and staying for them in the organization is a matter of necessity rather than a desire.

5.4 Job satisfaction dimensions influenced on organizational commitment

It can be gleaned from the table that compensation is negatively related to continuous commitment as indicated by the computed r-value of -0.344 which exceeded the critical p-value of .273 at 48 degree of

Table 2. Level of commitment of the respondents.

	Mean
Affective commitment	3.88
Continuous commitment	3.31
Normative commitment	4.37
Overall mean	3.85

freedom and at .05 level of significance. It only implies that even if the compensation is low, the respondents are still committed primarily because of the difficulty in finding jobs in the province, fear of losing jobs and simplicity in style of living. Seemingly, results revealed that career development is positively related to affective commitment as indicated by the computed r-value of 0.316 which exceeded the critical p-value of .273 at .05 level of significance. This means that career development can influence organizational commitment. Respondents really care about the fate of the organization because they can feel that they are part of it. However, no relationship can be found for other dimensions as their computed r-values were all below the critical p-value of .273. Therefore, it can be said that the level of commitment of the respondents are not dependent on recognition, job nature and relationship.

5.5 Job satisfaction dimensions’ influence on turnover intentions

It can be noted that only two dimensions are negatively related to turnover intentions. These are career development and job nature with computed r-values of -0.278 and -0.394 respectively. Figures imply that the respondents’ commitments are predicted by career development and job nature. Further, respondents will only be committed if they can see that they will grow career wise in the organization or the nature of their jobs will give them enough skills and experience. The findings were supported by that of Choi and Sneed (2006).

5.6 Organizational commitment’s influences on turnover intentions

It can be observed that no relationship exists between organizational commitment and turnover intentions. This is indicated by the computed r-values of affective (-0.059); continuous (-0.016) and normative (.0477) which are all below the computed p-value of .273 using .05 level of significance with 48 degree of freedom. Results imply that organizational commitment is not a predictor of turnover intentions, that employees will leave the organization if they find better opportunities. Likewise, commitment will not keep employees in the company. The result of the study supports the findings of Sangroengrob and Techachaicherdchoo (2010).

Table 3. Job satisfaction dimensions influence on organizational commitment.

IV: Job satisfaction dimensions	DV: Organizational commitment					
	Affective		Continuous		Normative	
	r		r		r	
Compensation	-.09	8.1 ⁻⁰³	-0.344	.118	0.132	.017
Recognition	3.7998E-17	14.43	-0.178	.032	0.023	5.29 ⁻⁰⁴
Career development	0.316	.100	0.069	4.76 ⁻⁰³	-0.176	.031
Job nature	-0.196	.038	0.029	8.41 ⁻⁰⁴	0.007	4.9 ⁻⁰⁵
Job relationship	.165	.027	.174	.030	.0501	2.51 ⁻⁰³

Level of Significance = .05
df = 48
critical p-value = .273

Table 4. Job satisfaction dimensions influence on turnover intentions.

IV: Job satisfaction dimensions	DV: Turnover intentions	
	r	r ²
Compensation	0.093	8.649 ⁻⁰³
Recognition	0.077	5.929 ⁻⁰³
Career development	-0.278	.077
Job nature	-0.394	.155
Job relationship	0.198	.039

Table 5. Organizational commitment' influences on turnover intentions.

IV: Organizational commitment	DV: Turnover intentions	
	r	r ²
Affective	-0.059	3.481 ⁻⁰³
Continuous	-0.016	2.56 ⁻⁰⁴
Normative	.0477	2.28 ⁻⁰³

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study showed that the five job satisfaction dimensions are all very important to the respondents. However, of the five dimensions compensation was considered to be of utmost importance. As regards the level of commitment, normative commitment got the highest mean score while continuous commitment got the lowest rating which only proves that respondents stay in the organization because of the difficulty in finding a job considering they are in the province. Results of the study also indicate that compensation is negatively related to continuous commitment while career development is positively related to affective commitment. On the other hand, only two job satisfaction dimensions such as career development and job nature are negatively related to

turnover intentions. Lastly, the study revealed that no relationship exists between organizational commitment and turnover intentions. This only proves that commitment will not keep employees in the organization.

Based on the conclusions drawn, it is recommended that the organizations should review their current human resource practices for the purpose of enhancing the organizational commitment of the employees and minimizing turnover among them. The employers should create an environment in which employees are truly committed and they will stay in the organization because of desire and not of necessity. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are most likely to be committed and will stay longer in the organization.

REFERENCES

- Andrews, M. 2010. An Interview with RD of Edxcel Mean, Gulf Daily News-Bahrain, April 8, 2011.
- Baotham,S., Hongkhuntod, W., & Rattanajun, S. 2010. The Effects of Job Satisfaction and Organizational ommitment on Voluntary Turnover Intentions of Employees in the New University, Review of Business Research.
- Barling, J., Kelloway, E.K. & Iverson R.D. 2003. High Quality Work, Job Satisfaction and Occupational Injuries", Journal of Applied Psychology 88, No. 2, p. 276-283.
- Bentein, K., Vandenberg, R.J., Vandenberghe, C., & Stinglhamber, F. 2005. The Role of Change in the Relationship Between Commitment and Turnover: A Latent Growth Modeling Approach", Journal of Applied Psychology, 90, p. 468-482.
- Bergman, M.E. 2006. The Relationship Between Affective and Normative Commitment: Review and Research Agenda", Journal of Organizational Behavior, 27, p. 645-663.
- Boles, J., Madupalli, R., Rutherford, B. and Wood, J. 2007. The Relationship of Facet of Salesperson Job Satisfaction with Affective Organization Commitment. Journal of Business& Industrial Marketing, Vol. 22.5, p. 311-321.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics 2006. United States Department of Labor.
- Chen, C. (2006). Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment and Flight Attendants' Turnover Intentions: A Note, Journal of Air Transport Management 12 (2006), p. 274-276.

- Choi, Woo-Sik and Sneed, Jeannie 2006 "Factors Related to Job Satisfaction and Intent to Turnover for Part-Time Student Employees in University Dining Services", *JFSRE*, July 2006.
- Cohen, A. (2003), *Multiple Commitments in the Workplace: An Integrative Approach*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Cranny, Smith & Stone, 1992 cited in Weiss, H. M. (2002). *Deconstructing Job Satisfaction: Separating Evaluations, Beliefs and Affective Experiences*. *Human Resource Management Review*, 12, 173–194, p.174
- Demir, M.C.(2002), *Job Satisfaction of Nurses Working at Turkish Military Forces Hospitals*. *Military Medicine*, p. 167, 402-404.
- Des, G.D & Shaw, J.D. (2001), "Voluntary Turnover, Social Capital and Organizational Performance", *Academy of Management Review*. 26 (3), 446–456.
- DeVaney, S.A. & Chen Z.S. (2003), "Job Satisfaction of Recent Graduates in Financial Services, US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Compensation and Working Conditions". (<http://www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cm20030522ar01p1.htm>)
- Employment Policy Foundation. "Employee Turnover is Expensive", EPF Newsletter, October 22, 2004.
- Feather, N.T. & Rauter, K.A. (2004), "Organizational Citizenship Behaviors in Relation to Job Status, Job Insecurity, Organizational Commitment and Identification, Job Satisfaction and Work Values", *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, Vol. 77, No. 1, p. 81–94.
- Feinstein, A.H. & Harrah, W.F. (2000), "A Study of Relationships Between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment Among Restaurant Employees", (online), (www.emeraldinsight.com, diakses 12 Mei 2004).
- Gibson et al., (1994) cited in Sangroengrob, T. and Techachaicherdchoo, T. (2010), "The Impact of Employee's Satisfaction, Organization Commitment and Work Commitment to Turnover Intention: A Case Study of IT Outsourcing Company in Thailand", *BAI Conference 2010*.
- Hellriegel, D. & Slocum, J. (2004) cited in Sangroengrob, T. and Techachaicherdchoo, T. (2010), "The Impact of Employee's Satisfaction, Organization Commitment and Work Commitment to Turnover Intention: A Case Study of IT Outsourcing Company in Thailand", *BAI Conference 2010*.
- Herscovitch, L. & Meyer, J.P. (2002), "Commitment to Organizational Change: Extension of the Three-Component Model", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87, p. 474–487.
- Johns, G & Saks, A.M. (2001), *Understanding and Managing Life at Work*. Toronto: Addison Wesley Longman, p. 110.
- Joo, B & McLean, G.N. (2006), "Best employer Studies: A Conceptual Model from a Literature Review and a Case Study", *Human Resource Development Review*, Vo. 5. No. 2, p. 228–257.
- Joo, B. & Park, S. (2010), "Career Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention: The Effects of Goal Orientation, Organizational Learning Culture and Developmental Feedback", *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 6, 2010, p 482–500.
- Khatri, N. and Fern, C.T. (2001), *Explaining Employee Turnover in an Asian Context*" *Human Resource Management Journal*, 11(1): p. 54–57.
- Klaus, T., LeRouge, C. and Blanton, J. (2003) "An Examination of the Relationships Between Select Nature of Work Characteristics and Organizational Commitment of IT Professional", *SIGMIS Conference '03*, April 10–12, 2003.
- Korunka, C., Hoonakker, P.L.T. & Carayon, P.(2005), "A Universal Turnover Model for the IT Workforce-A Replication Study", *Human Factors in Organizational Design and Management-VIII*, edited by Carayon, Kleiner, Robertson and Hoonakker. Santa Monica, CA:IEA Press, p. 467–472.
- Lacity, M. (2008), "Turnover Intention of Indian IS Professionals", *Information Systems Frontiers*, Vol. 10 No. 2, p. 225–241.
- Lambert, E.G., Hogan, N.L., & Barton, S.M. (2001), *The Impact of Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intent: A Test of Structural Measurement Model Using a National Sample of Workers*", *Social Science Journal*, 38(2), p. 233–251.
- Lee, C.H. & Bruvold, N.T. (2003), "Creating Value for Employees Investment in Employee Development", *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 14, No. 6, p. 981–1000.
- Locke, 1976 cited in Brief, A. P., & Weiss, H. M. (2002). *Organizational Behavior: Affect in the Workplace*. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 279–307, p. 282
- Meland, H., Waage, R. and Sein, M. (2005), "The Other Side of Turnover: Managing IT Personnel Strategically", *SIGMIS-CPR'05*, April 14–16, 2005.
- Meyer, J.P., Stanley, D.J., Herscovitch, L., & Topolnitsky, L. (2002), "Affective Continuance and Normative Commitment to the Organization: A Meta-analysis of Antecedents, Correlates and Consequences", *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 61, p. 20–52.
- Mowday, et al., (1982) cited in Joo, B. & Park, S. (2010), "Career Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention: The Effects of Goal Orientation, Organizational Learning Culture and Developmental Feedback", *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 6, 2010, p 482–500.
- Nielsen, I & Smyth, R. (2006) "Job Satisfaction and Response to Incentives Among China's Urban Workforce", *Monash University, Department of Management Working Paper Series*, 23/06.
- Onu, M.O. Madukwe, M.C. & Agwu, A.E. (2005), "Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction of Front Line Extension Workers in Engunu State Agricultural Development Program, Nigeria", *Agro-Sci*, 4, p. 19–22
- Philips, J & Connell, A.O. (2003), *Managing Employee Retention: A Strategic Accountability Approach*. Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Pool, S. and Pool, B. (2007), "A Management Development Model: Measurement Organizational Commitment and Its Impact on Job Satisfaction Among Executives in a Learning Organization", *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 26 No. 4, p. 353–369.
- Price, J.I. (2001), "Reflections of the Determinants of Voluntary Turnover", *International Journal of Manpower*, 22(7), p. 606–624.
- Rahman, A.S. et al. (2008) cited in Ali, N. (2008), "Factors Affecting Overall Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intentions", *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, Vol. II, No. 2.
- Robbins, S. (2005), *Organizational Behavior* (11th edition). Pearson International Edition.
- Samad, S. (2006) cited in Ali, N. (2008), "Factors Affecting Overall Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intentions", *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, Vol. II, No. 2.
- Sangroengrob, T. and Techachaicherdchoo, T. (2010), "The Impact of Employee's Satisfaction, Organization Commitment and Work Commitment to Turnover Intention: A Case Study of IT Outsourcing Company in Thailand", *BAI Conference 2010*.
- Schmidt, C.T. (2008), "What is Organizational Commitment", (online), (www.uri.edu/research/Lrc/scholl/webnotes/commitment.htm)

- Selvarajan, T.T (2005), "Antecedents to Temporary Employees' Turnover Intention", *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, September.
- Souza-Poza, A. & Souza-Poza, A.A. (2000), "Well-being at Work: A Cross-national Analysis of the Levels and Determinants of Job Satisfaction", *Journal of Socio-Economics*, 12, p. 517–538
- Summer, M. and Niederman, F. (2003-2004), "The Impact of Gender Difference on Job Satisfaction, Job Turnover, and Career Experiences of Information Technology Professionals", *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, Vol. 44 No. 2 p. 29–38.
- Tett and Meyer (1993) cited in Samad, S. (2006). "The Contribution of Demographic Variables: Job Characteristics and Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intentions, *Journal of International Management Studies*, 1(1).
- Totuncu, O. & Kozak, M. (2006), "An Investigation of Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction", *International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration*, 8(1) p. 1–19.

This page intentionally left blank

Direct financial compensation and future graduates career choice in hotel industry

Noor Azmi Ahmad, Azri Abdul Aziz, Mohd Syaquif Yasin Kamaruddin, Azdel Abdul Aziz & Mohd Faez Saiful Bakhtiar

Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Hospitality and tourism industry is expanding and become one of the major revenue contributors to other nations and Malaysia. It is also one of the largest sectors that employ and provide huge job opportunities for many countries. In fact, influx of workforce is produced by hospitality and tourism schools. Despite the tremendous job opportunities and vacancies in this sector, students from hotel and tourism school rather opt for other job alternatives. This never ending issue could be contributed by many factors including low entry minimal wages. Therefore, this study examines direct financial compensation influencing career choice in hotel industry among the students. Through self reported questionnaire, 265 respondents were approached using proportionate stratified random sampling method. The study shows a direct relationship on factor in research which is direct financial compensation and career choice intention in the hotel industry. Main focus on graduate is the satisfactory introductory level salary as the pull factor to join the industry beside interest and career advancement.

Keywords: direct financial compensation, hotel management and culinary arts graduate, graduate career choice intention, hotel industry

1 INTRODUCTION

The hospitality and tourism industry is one of the largest economic contributors for Malaysia. Tourism is identified and recognised as one the source of development in developing a particular country for many developing countries (Awang & Abd Aziz, 2011). At this moment, Malaysia is one of the top tourism spot and place to visit in the world (Ab. Karim, Bee & Salleh, 2009). Furthermore, Malaysia has been ranked as the World's Top Fifteen Destinations that also has becoming the prime contributor to its overall economic (WTO, 2002).

Malaysia had managed to generate US\$6.8 billion of income (WTO, 2003). Facing with great expansion and rapid growth of the hospitality and tourism industry the country need to have dependable human capital. In general, by 2020, there will be a total of 1.6 billion million jobs in the tourism industry (WTTC, 2007). Thus, there is a significant need in having a more qualified, motivated and skilled manpower available to meet the challenges of this ever changing and demanding industry. These people also the one to head and manage the industry by continually contributing to the growths and development of the hospitality and tourism industry.

The workforce force is an integral part and they ought to be the spine and the decisive factor in all industries regardless the nature of the business

(Gravish, 2009). The human play a pivotal role in delivering a product that will influence the overall experience of tourists as to the tourism is a service oriented industry (Chellen & Nunkoo, 2010). In other words, this leads to the sources of labor in which majority of them are graduates from universities and colleges.

Even though there are increments in students' enrolment in hospitality and tourism program, yet, there is an issue whereby these students will not enter or join the industry after completion of their study. Jenkins, (2001) highlighted that, while the undergraduate hospitality students' degree course progresses, at the meantime, their perceptions towards the industry deteriorate as well. It is particularly true and it can be considered as a big time loss to the industry in terms of having the potential of hiring the suitable and competent personnel for them.

This scenario is really becoming a famous issue that is being tried to be understood by hospitality researchers. Yet, there is an indicator that there is a need for such studies to be carried out due to there are still lack of studies on understanding about perceptions and intentions of the labour market towards tourism as a career (Aksu & Köksal, 2005; Ross, 1992).

Subsequently, those who not decided on a career choice tend to have more concern about extrinsic values for future job. In that case, there is a need for better reward and recognition system to help the employers

attract high potential employees to a firm (Jauhari & Manaktola, 2009). Practices such as developing equitable reward systems for staff and by incorporating a wide range of benefits are an innovative recruitment and retention techniques (O'Leary & Deegan, 2005).

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *The hospitality and hotel industry*

The terms travel and tourism industry and hospitality industry mean the same thing for some people (Nenemeier & Perdue, 2005). They added that, it is basically hard to define in a correct way because of the nature of the works are the same in which providing services to people; service-oriented business. Hence, all organizations that primarily provide lodging or accommodations and foodservices for travelling public or people when they are away from their homes refer the hospitality industry (Nenemeier & Perdue, 2005).

2.2 *Compensation*

Compensation is defined as 'the amount of money and other items of value (e.g.: benefits, bonuses, perks) given in exchange for work performed' (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009). In other word, all forms of financial returns and tangible services and benefits employees receive as part of an employment relationship can be referred as "compensation".

Developing a compensation program that recognizes the lifestyle and standard of living of all employees is crucial these days' (Milkovich, Newman & Milkovich, 2001). Other authors also asserted that compensation that every employee in the hospitality receives for doing their jobs is critically important and related to their job satisfaction (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009). With this kind of program also it would be able to promote effective delivery of essential goods and services (Milkovich, Newman & Milkovich, 2001).

Moreover, an effective compensation package or program can improve job satisfaction as well as it will assist the organization to attract and retain skilled employees (Patricia, 2002). Dessler, (2011) stated that two main components of compensation are direct financial payments (wages, salaries, incentives, commissions, and bonuses) and indirect financial payments (financial benefits like employer-paid insurance and vacations). In which this study will only focused on direct compensation criterion.

2.2.1 *Salary*

All types of pay going to employees and arising from their employment are referred to 'employee compensation' (Dessler, 2011). Price, (2004) stressed that pay is the main reason why people work and it is an important feature of human resource management. It is a sensitive and controversial area that has been extensively debated at both practical and theoretical levels. Employees' job satisfaction also interrelated to the

pay practice of an organization or firm (Mudor & Tooksoon, 2011).

As a vital component in employee work motivation salary is income paid to an individual on the basis of performance, not on the basis of time (Griffin & DeNisi, 2005). The salaried status implied a long-term employment relationship and the potential for career development compared to wage workers (White & Druker, 2001) that are paid according to number of hours worked or pieces of job completed.

2.2.2 *Wage*

On the contrary, interestingly researchers found out that the definition of wage can vary greatly, on the way of the word is used and the term is used in a variety of contexts. 'Wages' is the basic monthly wages plus fixed allowances (fixed amounts received monthly) paid to employees as defined in Section 2 of the Human Resources Development Act, 1992 (Ministry of Human Resources of Malaysia, 2009). In the hospitality industry context, 'wages paid to workers typically take the form of hourly wages or piecework wages' (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009).

2.2.3 *Incentives and bonuses*

Researchers believed that the both incentives and bonus program are essential and becoming increasingly common in hospitality industry (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009). In general, compensation management provides a step-by-step approach for designing a remuneration system that recognizes job requirements; employee-related knowledge and skills; and performance-related incentives that link individual, team, and work unit and organization performance. Bonuses and incentives also include a host of benefit that protect and expand the lifestyle and help all workers and their family (Milkovich, Newman & Milkovich, 2001). In other words, they have something that could 'spark' their performances. Subsequently, there are various advantages that lead to bonuses and incentives (Dessler, 2011).

2.3 *Career choice*

The exact meaning for the word 'career' is hard to justify. Definitions such as: 'a career is a sequence of positions held by a person during his or her lifetime' (Robbins, Bergman, Stagg, & Coulter, 2000) or 'a career is the evolving sequence of a person's working experience over time' (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989). Also, 'a career is the pattern of work-related experiences that span the course of a person's life' (Greenhaus, 1987).

It is clear that the word 'career' offers a mix of interpretations and views by various people which can be found, but all these do not account for the external influences affecting career progress, such as social and family responsibilities. Thereafter, researchers might think that it is more useful to define a career as a dynamic process in which individuals gather information on their own likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses,

and on the world of work; develop realistic career goals; develop and implement strategies to achieve these goals; and obtain feedback to promote career decision making (Greenhaus & Callanan, 1994).

3 METHODOLOGY

In accessing the direct compensation influence toward graduate career choice, a quantitative research approach was employed using self administered questionnaire. The samples of the study were chosen according to proportionate stratified random sampling technique in which 265 respondents from the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, University Teknologi Mara (UiTM). The data were later analyzed using descriptive analysis approach to test several hypotheses formulated to for the study.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

Before commencing into analysis, it is essential to understand the characteristics of the respondents. Frequency test was used against all demographic and other related variables (gender, program/department, semester, career choice, internship, previous work experience and position). The results obtained from 265 respondents showed that 41.1 percent ($n = 109$) male and 58.9 percent ($n = 156$) female respondents. Next, it is clear that, 50.2 percent ($n = 133$) are hotel management students and the other 49.8 percent ($n = 132$) are culinary arts students. 77.4 percent ($n = 205$) choosing it willingly. Meanwhile, the balance of the respondents 22.6 percent ($n = 60$) did not choose their course. The data indicates that 88.7 percent ($n = 235$) had internship experience. And the rest 11.3 percent ($n = 30$) had no internship experience. The respondents are from the STPM and Matriculation leavers. Majority of the respondents had experienced and worked in hotel industry before 65.7 percent ($n = 174$) followed by 34.3 percent ($n = 91$) no working experience. This show that they are aware of the work nature and pay rate of the hotel industry Moreover, most of respondents; 54.7 percent ($n = 145$) had worked as a part time staff, before. Meanwhile, 35.5 percent ($n = 94$) had never worked and hold any position in a hotel, previously. The final data shows that the remaining; 9.8 percent ($n = 26$) had worked as a full-time or permanent staff.

4.2 Assessing the internal reliability of the instruments

It is vital to analyse the internal reliability of the instruments before any further analysis is conducted. Cronbach's Alpha test done showed that all the independent and dependent variables recorded the reliability values of .829 (salary), .856 (wage), .877 (incentives and bonus), and .790 (career choice). Thus, all these are ranging from an acceptable to good the instrument.

4.3 Measuring the influence between direct compensation benefit and career choice intentions

In measuring the influence of direct compensation benefit towards graduate career choice. A standard multiple regressions were used to explore the relationship between the direct financial compensation factors (independent variables: salary, wage, and incentives and bonus) and career choice (dependent variable) (Pallant, 2005). A set of hypotheses was formulated and tested. The analysis was to identify how the dimensions in the independent variable influence the dependent variable. Thus research hypotheses were constructed to assessed variable presented for the study.

H1: *Salary influence graduate career choice in the hotel industry*

Result of multiple regression reveals that salary and career choice are positively related ($p = .000 < \alpha = 0.10$). It is the most or strongest influential dimensions of direct financial compensation according to the Beta value projected of .790. This somehow had shown how important is salary to all the respondents in order for them to join the industry. Salary level offered is the prime thing that they look at before deciding to work in the hotel. Hence H1 is supported

H2: *Wages influence graduate career choice in the hotel industry*

Second analysis reveals that wage and career choice are positively related ($p = .001 < \alpha = 0.10$). However the Beta value is $-.193$, highlight it is the least important elements of direct financial compensation. Thus, H2 is also supported.

H3: *Incentives and bonus influence graduate career choice in the hotel industry*

It exposed that incentives and bonus, and career choice are also positively related ($p = .000 < \alpha = 0.10$). It shows that incentives and bonus is the second important dimensions of direct financial compensation as to the Beta value is .311. The respondents pay a lot of attention on incentives and bonus level being offered by the hotel industry as it involves long-term commitment to be achieved, due to bonus are offered on yearly basis and based on the individual performance. Therefore, H3 is also supported.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of the findings

The direct financial compensation factors were operationalized by three dimensions namely salary, wage, and incentives and bonus. The multiple regression analysis done highlighted that all three dimensions are significantly related to career choice. In general, direct financial compensation factors level offered by the industry greatly influence graduate career choice in hotel industry.

5.2 Limitations of the study and possible future research

Thereafter, this study only provides a glance on what really matters for the potential candidates of the hotel industry, and mainly the hospitality school graduates of UiTM. In addition, this research only focuses on direct financial compensation factors (the pay factor) as an element that influences career choice in the hotel industry.

5.3 Implications and conclusion

Although hospitality schools have prepared students with adequate skills and knowledge to develop a career in the industry, there still exists a gap between these graduates' career expectations and the reality. Consequently, they opt to not to pursue to work in the industry. This will lead to a big loss to the industry of having highly skilled labor.

Thereafter, based on this research finding, it is hope that the industry players would take a step forward to improvise the image of the hotel industry that is always associated with factors such as low pay, low job status, long working hours, antisocial working hours, unstable and seasonal employment and making the employment within the hotel industry is unpleasant (Malaysian Association of Hotels, 2000) that contribute also to the high turnover rate in Malaysia's hotel industry, despite the tremendous development of hotels in Malaysia (Hemdi, 2006; Hemdi, Nasurdin & Ramayah, 2003; Zahari, 2004).

Notably, salary levels, interaction with managers, and career paths are the universal remedies to solve this problematic scenario of attracting graduates of hospitality and tourism schools (Richardson, 2008). It is suggested to reconsider or revise back the pay level offered by the hotel operators in an effort to create improved recruitment efforts and ultimately enhance the recruitment results in the industry. Industry recruiters also should actively reach out the hospitality schools' students and provide current and realistic information about rewards (including salary, wage, incentives and bonus, and others), work conditions, career advancement opportunities, and in the industry. It is hoped that they may reconsider their expectations and be more realistic when deciding which segment to enter and plan their career accordingly.

REFERENCES

- Ab. Karim, M. S., Bee, L. C., and Salleh, H. 2009. Malaysia as a culinary tourism destination: international tourists' perspective. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, chap. 4, pp. 63–64.
- Aksu, A. A., and Koksal, C. D. 2005. "Perceptions and attitudes of tourism students in Turkey". *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 17 No. 4/5, 2005, pp. 43–47.
- Arthur, M. B., Hall, D. T., and Lawrence, B. S. 1989. *Handbook of career theory*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Awang, K. H., and Abd Aziz, Y. 2011. Tourism policy development: A Malaysian Experience. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, chap. 6, pp. 53.
- Chellen, H., and Nunkoo, R. 2010. "Understanding Students' Commitment to Employment in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry". *International Research Symposium in Service Management*. Le Meridien Hotel, Mauritius, 24–27 August 2010. pp. 3.
- Dessler, G. 2011. *Human Resource Management (12th ed.)*. New Jersey: Pearson Education Limited 2011, Global Edition.
- Gravish, M. J. 2009. *Maintaining hotel employee productivity and morale in the face of doom and gloom*. [Online] Retrieved January 21, 2011 from http://www.hotelonline.com/News/PR2009_1st/Jan09_Morale.html
- Greenhaus, J. 1987. *Career Management*. New York, Dryden Press.
- Greenhaus, J.H. and Callanan, G.A. 1994. *Career Management*. 2nd Ed. The Dryden Press, Fort Worth, TX.
- Griffin, R. W., and DeNisi, A. S. 2005. *Human Resource Management*. New Jersey, Houghton Mifflin. pp. 97–99.
- Hayes, D. K., and Ninemeier, J. D. 2009. *Human resources management in the hospitality industry*. New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., pp. 264–267.
- Hemdi, M. A. 2006. *Turnover intentions of hotel employees: the role of human resource management practices, trust in organization, and affective commitment*. (Unpublished PHD thesis, Penang: Universiti Sains Malaysia).
- Hemdi, M. A., Nasurdin, A. M, and Ramayah, T. 2003. Motivational preferences of hotel employees: implications for managers. *Proceeding of the National Human Resources Development Conference (HRDC2003)*, pp. 217–226, Sarawak: Malaysia.
- Jauhari, V. and Manaktola, K. 2009. Managing workforce issues in the hospitality industry in India. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, Vol. 1 No. 1, 2009. pp. 19–24.
- Jenkins, A.K., 2001. Making a career of it? Hospitality students' future perspectives: an Anglo-Dutch study, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13(1), pp. 13–20.
- Malaysian Association of Hotels. 2000. *Hotel Industry Employment Report*. MAH, Malaysia.
- Ministry of Human Resources of Malaysia 2009. [Online] Retrieved January 4, 2003 from <http://www.mohr.gov.my>
- Milkovich, G. T., Newman, J. M., and Milkovich, C. 2001. *Compensation*. McGraw-Hill. pp. 1–12.
- Mudor, H. and Tooksoon, P. 2011. Conceptual framework on the relationship between human resource management practices, job satisfaction, and turnover. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 41–49, Feb 2011, pp. 44.
- Nenemeier, J. D. and Perdue, J. 2005. *Discovering Hospitality and Tourism: The World's Greatest Industry (2nd Ed)*. Pearson Prentice Hall. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. pp. 1–22.
- O'Leary, S., and Deegan, J. 2005 Career progression of Irish tourism and hospitality management graduates. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 17 No. 5, 2005, pp. 421–432.
- Pallant, J. 2005. *SPSS Survival Manual: a step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows (Version 12)*. Australia: Allen & Unwin, pp. 121–135.
- Patricia, B. 2002. *Human Resource Management: All the information you need to manage your business objectives*. Streetwise Publication 2002, pg. 220–221.
- Richardson, S. 2008. "Undergraduate Tourism and Hospitality Students Attitudes toward a Career in the

- Industry: A Preliminary Investigation". *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism*. pp. 23–45.
- Robbins, S. P., Bergman, R., Stagg, I., and Coulter, M. 2000 *Management*. Australia, Prentice Hall.
- Ross, G. 1992. Tourism management as a career path: vocational perceptions of Australian school leavers. *Tourism Management*, 13, 242–247.
- White, G., and Druker, J. 2001. *Reward Management: A critical text*. Routledge: London. pp. 106, 127.
- World Tourism Organization (WTO) 2003. Retrieved January 4, 2003 from <http://www.world-tourism.org>
- World Tourism Organization (WTO), 2002. *Tourism Highlights 2002*. Madrid:WTO. Retrieved January 4, 2003 from <http://www.world-tourism.org>
- World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), 2007. Retrieved January 4, 2003 from <http://www.world-tourism.org>
- Zahari, M. S. 2004. *Study of factors moderating Malaysian hospitality students selection of tertiary education institutions, programme and subsequent career intentions*. (Unpublished PHD Thesis, Lincoln University, Canterbury New Zealand).

This page intentionally left blank

Influential factors effecting fast food consumers' intention to use menu labels in fast food restaurants: A conceptual framework

Shadi Delvarani, Mohhidin Othman & Hazrina Ghazali

Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Urban living and busy lifestyles have somehow encouraged fast food consumption amongst Malaysian during last few decades. Some health critics blame fast food as one of the cause of obesity because the diet consists of high level of calorie, fat, sodium and sugar. It is believed that obesity poses many health related problems such as cardio-vascular diseases which were the leading cause of death in Malaysia. In support of healthy dietary plan, menu labeling has been implemented by some of the popular fast food chain restaurants. Menu labeling is an attempt to provide consumers with information on the nutritional component of foods, to enable them to choose nutritionally appropriate menu items. Hence scrutiny of fast food consumers' behavior and the identification of factors that influence their intention to use menu labeling are of vital important. This study aims to identify the factors which may influence fast food consumer's intention to utilize menu labeling and the relationship of these factors with the socio-demographic determinants. The conceptual framework of this research is based on Theory of Planned Behavior by Azjen which has been widely applied in various researches in consumer behavior and healthcare studies. Furthermore the result of this study will also help the health promoters to embark on customer friendly menu labeling formats which will further maximize their utilization.

Keywords: fast food, intention to use, menu labeling, theory of planned behavior, Malaysia.

1 INTRODUCTION

Menu labeling is a listing of nutritional information on menus and menu boards which typically reports calories, saturated fat, sodium and carbohydrates. A health education tool, menu labeling helps consumers achieve healthier diets and better overall health. Urban lifestyle has increased the rate of restaurants and habit of eating out among Malaysians (Kassem et al., 2003). Consumers in general underestimate the calories in menu items (Wansink & Chandon, 2006). Food away from home and specially fast food is dense in calorie and consuming such foods cause overweight and obesity, which can lead to heart disease, cancers, diabetes and stroke (Satia et al., 2007). Presently cardiovascular diseases are one of the main reasons of mortality in Malaysia and health organizations invest a considerable of effort in minimizing the problem (MOH Malaysia, 2009). Medical expenditures for treating overweight and obesity, and other related health problems, may cost a lot and may affect the economy.

Menu labeling is provided mainly in fast food chain restaurant in order to inform the consumers about the content of the foods and help them to choose their meal wisely. Despite menu labeling could be an effective way in guiding consumers to select healthier food; heart diseases and obesity are still on the rise in Malaysia. Therefore scrutiny of fast food consumers'

behavior and the identification of factors that influence their intention to use menu labeling are of vital important.

Many studies show that menu labeling encourages consumers to much healthier eating behavior, lower calorie intake and decrease obesity rate. (Burton et al., 2006). In this paper, by employing the theory of planned behavior, the factors that influence intention to use menu labeling have been scrutinized. Basically by investigating these factors the final result hope to rectify consumers' eating behavior.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Consumer attitude towards menu labeling*

Many studies demonstrate that consumers are interested in having menu labeling while they are eating out (Bleich & Pollack, 2010; O'Dougherty et al., 2006); which means they have a positive attitude towards menu labeling. Sixty-three percent of respondents in a UK survey of 2,101 people wanted to know what was in their foods when they ate out. (Food Standard Agency, 2008). Previous studies have shown how attitudes can positively change, whether directly or indirectly, as customers became more aware of proper nutrition. It is interesting that even though some customers viewed the provision of nutritional

content information on restaurant menus as a mere showpiece, they still considered the availability of such information important (Almanza & Hsieh, 1995; Nelson et al., 1996).

2.2 *Consumer behavior after the provision of menu labeling*

The researches which investigate the consumer behavior while the menu labeling was provided show a mixture of result regarding consumer food choice and calorie intake. Most of the studies focused mainly on consumers' behavior regarding calorie intake as it has a direct relationship with weight gain and obesity. A study in New York City, measured pre- and post introduction of calorie information on menus and it shows no evidence that labeling influenced total calories purchased (Elbel et al., 2009), in another research by Roberto and colleagues in 2010 menu labeling had a favorable effect which lead consumers to have foods with lower calorie. In a study on adolescents' ordering behavior, some participants ordered food with higher calorie after being provided with menu with calorie information (Yamamoto et al., 2005). In general the number of studies which support the benefit and effectiveness of menu labeling are far more than those with neutral or negative results.

2.3 *Role of nutritional knowledge and use of menu labeling*

Consumers appear to have limited knowledge of nutrition as measured by a number of different nutritional tests. Jacoby, Chestnut, and Silberman (1977), for instance, found that respondents scored poorly on a test of knowledge about nutrients and their functions and they hypothesized that the lack of nutritional knowledge was the reason why consumers did not search for more nutritional information; however, this hypothesis was not directly tested. Behavioral factors such as desire and motivation to search can also influence information search (Spreng and Olshavsky, 1989).

Some studies indicate that consumers have difficulty in understanding and utilizing the menu labeling (Wansink & Cheney, 2005). In this case even if the consumer has the intention to use the menu labeling, but due to the obstacles (such as complication in the format of menu labeling, lack of information in point of purchase or time consuming process to use the data, etc) practically the menu labeling is unused. Guthrie et al., (1995) found a positive relationship between label use and nutrition knowledge, indicating the importance of nutrition knowledge as a determinant of label use. Nayga (2000) on the other hand, found that nutrition knowledge does not affect label use. These differences in results could be due to differences in methods, samples, timing of the study, etc. Although it is reasonable to expect that nutrition knowledge can affect nutritional food label use, it is also possible that label use can affect nutrition knowledge.

3 PREVIOUS AND PROPOSED MODELS

3.1 *Common models in usage of label*

Guthrie et al. (1995) and Nayga (1996) employed the economic model of information search, first introduced by Stigler (1961), to model nutrition label use. Consumers' use of product information such as nutrition labeling is an active process that involves searching out information, evaluating its meaning, and making a decision based on that evaluation (Senauer et al., 1991). In this context, the use of nutritional labels or nutrient content is considered an act of information search. Within the economics of information approach, the consumer is assumed to continue acquiring and processing information as long as the additional costs do not outweigh the additional benefits. The main cost of label used is reflected in the time spent reading labels; the benefits can be healthier food choices, yielding a more nutritious diet, which in turn can be perceived as the reduced risk of chronic diseases because of the diet-health relationship that continues to gain scientific support (Pomerleau et al., 2003). The more a consumer feels that his health is likely to suffer in the future, the greater the perceived health risk. Therefore, the consumer decides the optimal level of label use by comparing the marginal benefits with the marginal costs.

3.2 *Models of intention to use information and behavioral intentions*

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been used vastly in exploring consumers' intention and behavior. It has been applied in many health related topics. TPB is rooted in the theory of reasoned action. The latter assumes "that human beings are usually quite rational and make systematic use of the information available to them", i.e. "that people consider the implications of their actions before they decide to engage or not engage in a given behavior". Thus, the theory of reasoned action "views a person's *intention* to perform (or not to perform) a behavior as the immediate determinant of the action" (Ajzen, Fishbein, 1980, p. 5). The intention is a function of a person's attitude toward the behavior, i.e. his or her positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior, and the person's perception of social pressures to perform or not to perform a behavior. This second determinant is termed subjective norm. Besides attitudes and social norm, the theory of planned behavior takes into account a third determinant of behavior, i.e. perceived behavioral control. The latter factor represents the non-motivational factors which determine the ability to perform a behavior such as requisite opportunities and resources (for instance, time, money, cooperation of others, skills; Ajzen, 1991). The most consistent finding from these studies was that attitude was a better predictor of behavioral intention and actual behavior than subjective norms (Conner et al., 2001). Furthermore, a number of studies demonstrated that self-efficacy (or

perceived behavioral control) was an important predictor of eating behavior (Shannon, 1990). On the other hand, a study concerning intention to eat whole-meal bread indicated that the addition of perceived control did not contribute to a significant improvement of behavioral intention (Sparks, 1991).

The technology acceptance model is an extension of the theory of planned behavior and was mainly developed as a theoretical background for understanding intention and decision to use or not to use new information technologies such as graphics systems, email and editors (Davis, 1989). The model assumes that the decision how and when to use a technology is determined by the behavioral intentions of individuals to adopt this technology. The intention is determined by people's attitudes toward this technology. The attitudes are a determinant of "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance . . . performance" (perceived usefulness) and "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (perceived ease of use) (Davis, 1989, p. 320). Both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are influenced by external factors. (Heyder et al., 2010)

3.3 Proposed model and propositions

The focus of the conceptual framework (Figure 1) is a behavioral research model. The model presented is based on both the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) which is a widely used model of social cognition and has recently been applied to the health behavior and also the model of information search (Nayga, 1996). The intention of using menu labeling preceded the process before actual purchase. Intention reflects future behavior. Attitude is postulated to have a direct relationship with intention behavior. The relationship between subjective norms and behavioral control is also posited as a direct relationship here. Besides three main independent factors in TPB, nutritional knowledge and socio demographic factors are added to this conceptual model which is partly borrowed from the model of information search.

P1-Nutritional knowledge will directly affect the intention to utilize menu labeling.

According to previous studies nutrition knowledge may facilitate label use by increasing its perceived benefits and by increasing the efficiency of their use, thereby decreasing the cost of using them. Levy and Fein (1998) revealed the effect of knowledge on consumers' ability to perform nutrition label use tasks. In addition, Guthrie et al., (1995) found a positive relationship between label use and nutrition knowledge, indicating the importance of nutrition knowledge as a determinant of label use. Nayga (2000) on the other hand, found that nutrition knowledge does not affect label use. These differences in results could be due to differences in methods, samples, timing of the study, etc.

P2-Socio-demographic characteristics influence consumer's attitude and intention to use menu labeling.

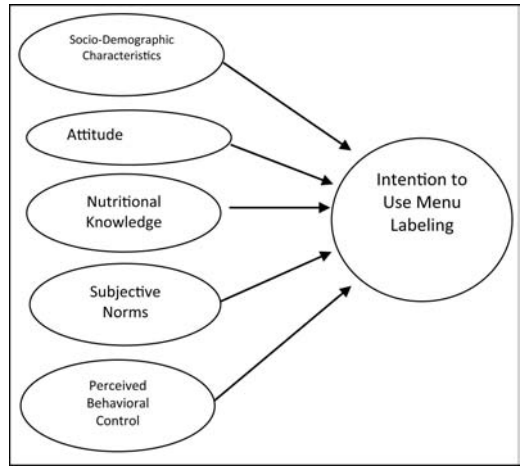


Figure 1. Conceptual framework based on theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1985).

It is well known that individual characteristics affect information search behavior. For example, past researchers have found that information search is affected by various demographic factors such as age, gender and education (Schultz, 1975). Time pressure has been also found to affect nutrition information search (Park et al., 1989). More specifically, working status (Nayga, 2000) and income (Kim et al., 2001) have been found to affect nutritional label use. In this model it is expected that socio demographics will affect intention to use menu labeling and consumers' attitude in fast food restaurants.

P3-Attitude is a significant predictor of intention to use menu labeling.

Previous studies show intention as a function of three component in theory of planned behavior (Attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control) but the strongest predictor in most of the studies were attitude followed by perceived behavior and subjective norms (Kassem et al., 2003). Attitude toward the behavior is defined as the individual's positive or negative feelings about performing a behavior. It is determined through an assessment of one's beliefs regarding the consequences arising from a behavior and an evaluation of the desirability of these consequences.

4 METHODS FOR COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA

This conceptual paper is based solely on a review and analysis of previous researches and data from the literature. Several methods were used to collect and analyze the literature.

First, research was conducted using the Google search engine. Terms such as 'intention to use' and 'menu labeling' were used, and a limited amount of information was found. The most helpful piece of

literature was Drichoutis and colleagues' work, "Nutrition knowledge and consumer use of nutritional food labels" that contained results of surveys that collected data on the consumer's opinion toward label use and influential factors.

For future research a quantitative study will be conducted to obtain data on the consumer's intention to use menu labelling in Klang Valley. A quantitative method would be used to address the research questions by distributing questionnaires. The sample population to be studied would be 400 adults, 18 years old and above. A population of that age range would be used because they are more likely to be established in society as an individual person who is in control of his/ her decision and consumption behaviour. The survey will use a likert scale to facilitate the analysing of the data. The questionnaires will be analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) from the analysis, findings will determine whether the five mentioned independent variables affects a person's intention to use menu labelling in fast food restaurants as well as identifying the positive and negative influential factors.

5 IMPLICATIONS

This conceptual paper will add to the limited amount of literature which considers the influence of attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control on consumers' behavioral intention in menu labeling. In particular, current studies mainly have investigated the effect of nutritional information disclosure in a restaurant and have mainly focused on the effects of nutritional menu context depending on the presence of nutritional information. Thus, the results of this study will extend the literature about menu labeling utilization.

This study is expected to provide information on how to better educate consumers such that they increase their intention to use of nutritional information on menus and control their food consumptions for health. It also aids health policy makers in understanding how fast food consumers approach to menu labeling and healthiness of food in the decision process, and allows them to use better marketing strategies to promote healthy foods.

REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. 1991. The Theory of Planned Behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 50: 179–211.
- Ajzen, I., Fishbein, M. 1980. Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Almanza, B. A. and Hsieh, H. M. 1995. Consumer preferences among labeling formats in a restaurant. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 95: 83–85.
- Bleich S, Pollack K. 2010. The public's understanding of daily caloric recommendations and their perceptions of caloric posting in chain restaurants. *BMC Public Health* 10(121).
- Burton, S., Creyer, E.H., Kees, J. and Huggins, K. 2006. Attacking the obesity epidemic: The potential health benefits of providing nutrition information in restaurants. *American Journal of Public Health* 96(9): 1669–1675.
- Conner, M., Kirk, S. F.L., Cade, J. E., Barret, J.H. 2001. Why do women use dietary supplements? The use of the Theory of Planned Behavior to explore beliefs about their use. *Social Science and Medicine* 52: 621–633.
- Davis, F. D. 1989. Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology. *MIS Quarterly* 13 (3): 319–340.
- Drichoutis, A.C., Lazaridis, P and Nayga, R.M. 2005. Nutrition knowledge and consumer use of nutritional food labels. *European Review of Agricultural Economics* 32(1): 93–118.
- Elbel B, Kersh R, Brescoll VL, Dixon LB. 2009. Calorie labeling and food choices: a first look at the effects on low-income people in New York City. *Health Aff (Millwood)* 28(6): w1110–w1121.
- Food Standards Agency . 2008. Consumers give their views on eating out. London: Food Standards Agency, 2008. Available at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2008/jun/eatout. Accessed 24 Jan 2012.
- Guthrie, J.F, Fox, J.J., Cleveland, L.E. and Welsh, S. 1995. Who uses nutrition labeling, and what effects does label use have on diet quality? *Journal of Nutrition Education* 27(4): 163–163.
- Heyder, M., Hollmann-Hespos, T. and Theuvsen, L. 2010. Agribusiness firm reactions to regulations: The case of investments in traceability systems. *International Journal on Food System Dynamics* 2: 133–142.
- Jacoby, Jacob, Chestnut, Robert W., and Silberman, William. 1977. "Consumer Use and Comprehension of Nutrition Information," *Journal of Consumer Research* 4, 119–28.
- Kassem, N. O., Lee, J. W., Modeste, N. N. and Johnston, P. K. 2003. Understanding soft drink consumption among female adolescents using the Theory of Planned Behavior. *Health Education Research* 18(3): 278–291.
- Kim, S., Nayga, R. M., Jr and Capps, O., Jr. 2001. Food label use, self-selectivity, and diet quality. *Journal of Consumer Affairs* 35(2): 346–363.
- Levy, A.S. and Fein, S.B. 1998. Consumers' ability to perform tasks using nutrition labels. *Journal of Nutrition Education* 30(4): 210–217.
- Ministry of Health Malaysia. 2009. www.moh.gov.my
- Nayga, R. M., Jr . 1996. Determinants of consumers' use of nutritional information on food packages. *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics* 28(2): 303–312.
- Nayga, R.M. 2000. Nutrition knowledge, gender, and food label use. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs* 34(1): 97–112.
- Nelson, D.C., Almanza, B.A., Jaffe, W. F. 1996. The effect of point-of-sales nutrition information on the entree selection of patrons of a university foodservice operation. *Journal of Nutrition in Recipe & Menu Development* 2(4), 29–50.
- O'Dougherty, M., Harnack L., French, S., Story, M., Oakes, J. and Jeffery, R. 2006. Nutrition labeling and value sized pricing at fast food restaurants: A consumer perspective. *American Journal of Health Promotion* 20(4): 247–250.
- Park, C. W., Iyer, E. S. and Smith, D. C. 1989. The effects of situational factors on in-store grocery shopping behavior: the role of store environment and time available for shopping. *Journal of Consumer Research* 15: 422–433.
- Pomerleau, J., McKee, M., Lobstein, T. and Knai, C. 2003. The burden of disease attributable to nutrition in Europe. *Public Health Nutrition* 6(5): 453–461.
- Roberto CA, Larsen PD, Agnew H, Baik J, Brownell KD. 2010. Evaluating the impact of menu labeling on food

- choices and intake. *American Journal Public Health* 100(2): 312–318.
- Satia JA, Galanko JA, Siega-Riz AM. 2007. Eating at fast-food restaurants is associated with dietary intake, demographic, psychosocial and behavioral and behavioral factors among African Americans in North Carolina. *Public Health Nutrition* 7(8): 1089–1096.
- Schultz, T. W. 1975. The value of ability to deal with disequilibria. *Journal of Economic Literature* 13(3): 827–846.
- Senauer, B., Asp, E. and Kinsey, J. 1991. *Food Trends and the Changing Consumer*. St. Paul, Minneapolis, MN: Eagan Press.
- Shannon, B. 1990. Self-efficacy: a contributor to the explanation of eating behavior. *Health Education Research* 395–407.
- Sparks, P., Hedderley, D. and Shepherd, R. 1991. Expectancy value model of attitudes: a note on the relationship between theory and methodology. *European Journal of Social Psychology* 21, 261–271.
- Spreng, R. A. and Olshavsky, R. 1989. Exploring the headwaters of the prior knowledge- search relationship. *Proceedings of the American Marketing Association, Summer Educators' Meeting, Chicago, IL*, 220–224.
- Stigler, G. J. 1961. The economics of information. *Journal of Political Economy* 69(3): 213–225.
- Wansink B, Chandon P. 2006. Meal size, not body size, explains errors in estimating the calorie contents of meals. *Ann Int Med* 145: 326–332.
- Wansink, B. and Cheney, M. 2005. Leveraging FDA health claims. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs* 39(2): 386–398.
- Yamamoto, J.A., Yamamoto, J.B., Yamamoto, B.E. and Yamamoto, L.G. 2005. Adolescent fast food and restaurant ordering behavior with and without calorie and fat content menu information. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 37: 397–402.

This page intentionally left blank

Revenue management practices and restaurant performance: A study on theme restaurants in Klang Valley, Malaysia

M.H.I. Noorkhizan, S.M. Radzi, F.S.C. Abdullah & A.A. Azdel

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Restaurant industry is an extremely risky business with a highly unpredictable demand nature with many new entrants ended with failures. In a very competitive market, maximizing revenues are restaurant managers' top priorities and main concerns. One of the tools that can help restaurateurs to improve their restaurant performances is by using revenue management. This study is conducted to examine the relationship between revenue management practices and restaurant performance. Sample of 104 restaurant managers in Klang Valley area were selected. There were four revenue management dimensions will be measured which are capacity management, perishable inventory, pricing strategy and market segmentation. The results showed that there were positive relationships between each revenue management dimensions and restaurant performance. The study concluded that revenue management did help managers to improve their restaurant performance and revenue maximization with capacity management as the most important dimension. Practically, this study has revealed the importance of revenue management practices in maximizing restaurant performance and revenue.

Keywords: theme restaurant, revenue management, performance

1 INTRODUCTION

The uses of revenue management strategy has been widely applied in the service industry with the prove of many previous researchers. Examples can be seen in Airlines industry with James (1987) and Smith et al (1992), in hotel industry with Brotherton and Mooney (1992), Donaghy (1996), in restaurant industry Kimes (1989, 1997b, 1999, 2000 & 2004), and in transportation industry with Wang and Regan (2005). Although there were wide spread and extensive researches pertaining to the revenue management in which related to other business and service-related industry, there is limited research done, which encompasses on relationship between revenue management strategies focuses on theme restaurant operation in Malaysia particularly in Klang Valley. This research intends to answer the question:

Q1. Is there a relationship between revenue management practices and restaurant performance?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Revenue management*

There are many thoughts pertaining to the actual meaning of revenue or yield management definition which vary according to different degree and type of service sector that apply this strategy (Sieburgh,

1988; Kimes, 1989; Brotherton and Mooney, 1992; and Lieberman, 1993). According to Donaghy (1996), revenue management which also known as yield management originated from the American airline industry following its deregulation in 1978.

In the earlier meaning of this term, James (1987) suggested that revenue management is a form of technique that one can apply to improve productivity and revenue. This also have been added by Smith, Leimkuhler, and Darrow (1992) who stated that revenue management is the application of information systems and pricing strategies to allocate the right resources to the right customer at the right place at the right time.

In addition, a widely accepted definition of revenue management came from Kimes(1997) who stated that "revenue or yield management is the process of allocating the right capacity or inventory unit to the right customer at the right price and at the right time so as to maximize revenue or yield". Furthermore, Coulter (2001) described revenue management as the emergence of optimized capacity in service activities to be applied to various service-based activities such as airlines, hotels, cruises, and Internet activities.

2.2 *Theme restaurant*

Hsu and Powers (2002), defined Theme restaurant as a concept of restaurant designed at a particular spot or area with a distinctive building, style of music and

personality. The Hard Rock Cafe is a good example of a theme restaurant whereby the overall concept of the restaurant is about music, music instruments such as guitars, and live entertainments with not much attention given to the food menu.

2.3 *History of theme restaurant*

The first theme restaurant is believed to have opened in the 1910s and 1920s, where the theme restaurant was perceived as remote and on a secluded area with limited service offers.

Over time, theme restaurant attributes were changed dramatically in the late 1960s (MacLaurin & MacLaurin, 2000). In addition, Lewis (1997) suggested that the theme restaurant services have changed in early 1970s after the opening of Hard Rock café at that time. The changes can be seen in the overall restaurant concept, food and service quality, menu engineering, convenient atmosphere, value and pricing strategy (Kim et al., 2011).

In the recent scenarios, theme restaurant can be seen as a restaurant establishment that provides a wide range of services to the customers without losing the restaurant originality and authenticity. This has been stated in Tsai and Lu (2012) which mentioned that, although there have been many changes and developments of theme restaurants over the years, the authenticity nature of these restaurants remain as they were used to be.

2.4 *Dimension of revenue management in restaurant operation*

According to the model developed by Wirtz et al. (2003), revenue management consists of five different subsets or dimensions. They are variable demand, capacity restriction, inventory control, overbooking, and pricing strategy. However, there are some differences in airlines and hotel sectors with restaurant service industry.

The dimensions will not be exactly the same with above statement, but there are similarities between them. This has been supported by Kimes (2004) in which she stated that the application of revenue management has been most effective in the restaurant industry because of its attributes. They are capacity management, perishable inventory, pricing strategy and market segmentation.

2.5 *Revenue management practices and restaurant performance relationship*

In relation between revenue management and restaurant performance, Burgess and Bryant (2001) suggested that revenue management has changed the financial aspect of the organization. With a good practice of demand and capacity management, restaurant can increase its productivity and generate better revenue (Klassen and Rohleder, 2002). Besides, these

two factors are able to promote maximum profitability if chosen appropriately in a sense that they will cover for the lack of one another in appropriate situation (Docters et al. 2010). Apart from that, revenue management will improve restaurant performance by tackling the average check patterns, revenue per available seat-hour and help to increase sales volume and seat's turnover, which can generate higher revenue and improve restaurant performance (Kimes, 1999, 2004).

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research adopts the cross-sectional study design. The reason why this design is selected is due to the fact that this research is aimed to identify the current practices of revenue management by restaurant managers as well as to measure the relationship between the practices and restaurant performances. In collecting the data, it was distributed in a form of questionnaire to the number of determined sample.

The population of the research consists of all managers of theme restaurants in Klang Valley area. As for the sample size, a total of 104 restaurants were selected in which restaurant managers have been selected as the questionnaires' respondents.

3.1 *Finding results*

3.1.1 *Response rate*

In the researcher's case, a total of 104 questionnaires were successfully distributed to the 104 restaurant managers during the data collection process and the researcher managed to get 100 percent response rate.

3.1.2 *Main findings*

The findings in this research suggested that there are positive relationship between revenue management and restaurant performance. This indicator can be seen in the test result within each dimension in the hypotheses testing.

In order to measure each relationship of the variables, the correlation table by Cohen (1988) was used. This is to determine the direction and strength of these relationships and to answer the purposes of the study.

In the findings, it showed that the independent variables of revenue management and practices were positively related to the restaurant performance. Finally, hypotheses analysis can be further determined after an analytical test of Pearson's correlation process.

3.1.3 *Hypotheses testing analysis and summary*

From the information at hand, it can be concluded that all hypotheses proposed by the researcher in the previous section, were carefully and successfully tested by using the Pearson's Correlation test. In addition, all of the hypotheses which consist of independent and dependent variable were then supported with the showcase of result presented earlier. For that reason, a summary of hypotheses and Pearson's correlation results was formed in Table 3 respectively.

Table 1. Pearson's correlation analysis on each variable with restaurant performance.

Revenue management dimensions		Restaurant performance (sales)
Revenue management	Pearson correlation	.327*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021
	N	104
Capacity management	Pearson correlation	.387**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003
	N	104
Perishable inventory	Pearson correlation	.171*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032
	N	104
Pricing strategy	Pearson correlation	.419**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006
	N	104
Market segmentation	Pearson correlation	.306*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.23
	N	104

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2. Correlation strength measurement (from Cohen 1988).

Pearson's correlation (r)	Measurements
r = .10 to .29 or -.10 to -.29	Small
r = .30 to .49 or -.30 to -.49	Medium
r = .50 to 1 or -.50 to 1	Large

4 IMPLICATIONS

There were two main implications in this section. The first implication was under the theoretical or academic contribution. This study gives better understanding regarding revenue management dimensions and practices, and restaurant performance. Besides that, this study initiated theoretical guidance to the academicians as well as the future researchers.

The second item in the implication section was practical contribution. Practically, this study has provided with awareness on how important the revenue management to the managers in the restaurant is. Findings from the previous section showed that restaurant industry people still not fully understand about revenue management in terms of its terminology, applications and practicality. Some managers still do not understand and know how to use or practice this strategy effectively in the restaurant operation and settings.

5 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The first limitation was related to the sample of the study. The researcher was not managed to find

Table 3. Hypotheses results summary – Pearson's correlation analysis.

Hypotheses	Scoring results
H1 There is a relationship between revenue management and restaurant performance.	Confirmed & Supported $r = +0.327, p = >0.05$
Ha There is a relationship between capacity management and restaurant performance.	Confirmed & Supported $r = +0.387, p = >0.01$
Hb There is a relationship between perishable inventory and restaurant performance.	Confirmed & Supported $r = +0.211, p = >0.05$
Hc There is a relationship between pricing strategy and restaurant performance.	Confirmed & Supported $r = +0.419, p > 0.01$
Hd There is a relationship between market segmentation and restaurant performance.	Confirmed & Supported $r = +0.306, p < 0.05$

the actual number of theme restaurant in Malaysia especially in the Klang Valley. It is because, not all restaurant specifically themed type of restaurant registered under one main organization in Malaysia. Some are registered to The Malaysian Food and Beverage Executives Association (MFBEA), Malaysian Franchise Association (MFA) and some can be found in Restaurant Directory of Malaysia and Malaysia Retailer-Chain Association (MRCA). This has given a problem to identify the exact number of theme restaurants exist in Malaysia particularly in Klang Valley.

Secondly, there was a limitation in data collection process. It was related to the generation of restaurant performance information. Basically, since it was not possible for the restaurant manager to give out the sales figure in actual numbers, the researcher was only able to generate the sales figure in gross ranges by combining information from the restaurants' number of seats with the value of average check per person and average seat's turnover. This has given the researcher a limit to the study in finding the actual sales volume the restaurants have made and to answer the research objectives.

Finally, in spite of having these limitations, the researcher still thinks that this study can fill the gap in understanding the importance of revenue management strategy to the restaurant performance and provide necessary support for future prospects of research.

6 CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, further study is feasible in other type of restaurants based on the limitation of the study

presented earlier. In addition, this study has made it clear that restaurant managers do implement revenue management into their practices and enough evidence from the findings revealed that it influenced restaurant performance. Therefore it can be concluded that revenue management through its dimensions has helped managers to maximize revenue in their restaurants.

REFERENCES

- Brotherton, B. & Mooney, S. 1992. Yield Management. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 11(1), 23–32.
- Burgess, C. & Bryant, K. 2001. Revenue management—the contribution of the finance function to profitability. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13(3), 144–150.
- Cohen, J. 1988. *Statistical power analysis for behavioral sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Cote, J. P., Marcotte, P. & Savard, G. 2003. A bi-level modeling approach to pricing and fare optimization in the airline industry. *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, 2(1), 23–36.
- Coulter, K. S. 2001. Decreasing price sensitivity involving physical product inventory: a yield management application. *Journal of product and brand Management*, 10(4/5), 310–317.
- Docters, R., Reopel, M., Sun, J. M. & Tanny, S. 2010. *Journal of Business Strategy*. 25(2), 23–28.
- Donaghy, K. 1996. An investigation of the awareness, current impact and potential implications of YM among hotel managers. PhD thesis. University of Ulster, Jordanstown.
- Edvardsson, B., Gustafsson, A. & Roos, I. 2005. Service portraits in service research: a critical review. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 16(1), 107–121.
- Hsu, C. H. C. & Powers, T. 2002. *Marketing Hospitality*, 3rd Edition, New York, Published by John Wiley and Sons Inc.
- James, G. W. 1987. Fares must yield to the market. *Airline Business*, 16–19.
- Kim, D., Magnini, V. P. & Singal, M. 2011. The effects of customers' perceptions of brand personality in casual theme restaurants. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 30(2), June, 448–458.
- Kimes, S. E. 1989. Yield Management: A tool for capacity constrained service firms. *Journal of Operations Research*, 8(4), 348–363.
- Kimes, S. E. 1997b. A Strategic Approach to Yield Management, In: Yeoman, I., and Ingold, A. (eds). *Yield Management: Strategies for the Service Industries*, Cassell: London.
- Kimes, S. E. 1999. Implementing restaurant's revenue management. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 40(3), 16–21.
- Kimes, S. E. 2000. Revenue Management on the Links. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 120–127.
- Klassen, R. J. & Rohleder, T. R. 2002. Demand and Capacity Management decisions in services: How they impact on one another. *International Journal of Operations and Production Management*, 22(5), 527–548.
- Lieberman, W. H. 1993. Debunking the myths of yield management. *The Cornell HRAQ*, 34(1), February, 34–41.
- Sekaran, U. 2005. *Research Method for Business*, 6th Edition, New York, Published by John Wiley and Sons Inc.
- Sieburgh, J. A. 1988. Yield management at work at Royal Sonesta. *Lodging Hospitality*, 235–237.
- Smith, B. A., Leimkuhler J. F., & Darrow R. M. 1992. Yield Management at American Airlines. *Interfaces*, 22(1), 8–31.
- Tsai, P. L. 2012. Authentic dining experiences in ethnic theme restaurants. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31(1), March, 304–306.
- Wirtz, J., Kimes, S. E., Ho, J. & Patterson, P. 2003. Revenue management: resolving potential customer conflicts. *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, 2(3), 216–226.

Boutique hotel business: A survey on tourist preference to stay at boutique hotels in Georgetown, Penang

Ng Kok Meng & Jessica Low Suat Lay

School of Hospitality, Tourism & Culinary Arts KDU College (PG), Penang, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Since George Town Penang has been officially recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site on 7th July 2008, boutique hotels have become a new trend of lodging business in the historical area. A target sample of 258 respondents (who stayed at boutique hotels) aged range from 20 to 55 years old had been randomly selected in the area. A pre-tested questionnaire were administered and distributed at the selected boutique hotels. This study will benefit the local industry players i.e. hoteliers to further understand the tourists preference in selecting a boutique hotel to stay and to certain extends, increase the tourist's overall travel experience in the heritage city.

Keywords: boutique hotels, George Town, tourist preference

1 INTRODUCTION

George Town Penang has become one of the popular travel destinations for both local and foreign tourists after its official recognition as the UNESCO World Heritage Site on 7th July 2008 due to its most stunning architectural and cultural townscape in East and Southeast Asia (Khoo, 2010). In fact, various restoration projects have been developed in the heritage town area resulting in many development of luxury boutique hotels such as Yeng Keng Hotel, Banana Boutique Hotel, Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion, Muntri Mews, Hotel Penaga, Clove Hall, 23 Lovelane Penang and Chulia Heritage Hotel. According to Explorer Malaysia (www.explorer-malaysia.com), the constant change of the travel industry i.e. from mega-aircraft to small boutiques hotels are directly fuelled by customer demand in the current market which is determined by the price sensitivity and other socio-demographic factors. It is not only travel industry alone, but most of the service industries in the world today are also moving toward the trend that offers cheaper prices to consumers. Similarity to most hotels in Penang, affordable room rate is offered to the price-conscious travelers. However these hotels tend to offer cheap price in a way of cutting back on the operation cost i.e. no complimentary food, simple room features, cheap room furniture and limited services offered. Ultimately, this threatens the emergence of small yet luxury boutique hotels in Penang that offer inclusivity, unrivalled personal service, impressive architecture, unique interior designs and amenities that will not be found elsewhere. Keulen et al (2002) stated that boutique hotels are still new and underdeveloped in the Malaysian market and these hotels are mostly family-owned or

small-scale owned business. Hence, these boutique hotels are commonly less competitive in terms of capital and other resources compared to the branded upscale lodging property that has long been dominant in the market. Besides, the dynamic preferences of tourist has increase the uncertainty of actual preference in decision making while there is plenty of lodging accommodations are being offered in George Town. Specifically, this research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the factors that influence tourist in making decision to stay at boutique hotels compared to other lodging property in Penang UNESCO World Heritage Site?
2. How does boutique hotels stay survive in the highly competitive market place and its challenge in historical site?

This research focuses on the preference of tourist to stay at selected boutique hotels at George Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site as the main issue with the examination of the socio-demographic factors that influence the decision making in purchasing a stay at boutique hotels. This study also aims to find out the potential niche market for the boutique hotels that explain tourist travel behavior as well as their interest towards the heritage boutique hotels.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

A cross-sectional study was undertaken in June 2011 at selected boutique hotels in George Town Penang UNESCO World Heritage Site to access the tourist

preference of stay at boutique hotels. A total number of 258 respondents were selected from boutique hotels i.e. Yeng Keng hotel and Banana boutique along Chulia Street; Muntri Mews at Muntri street; 23 love-lane at Love lane. All the respondents had been given a pre-tested questionnaire and instructions were given prior to their answering of the questionnaire. In this study, a simple random sampling method was applied for the consideration to be a fair way of selecting a sample from the population which represents the tourist that visited historical George Town in Penang. This type of sample was chosen to help to get the sample comparable basis for convenience of the analysis. The research questionnaire mainly focuses on the socio-demographic factors and the questionnaire developed aimed to test the knowledge of tourist towards the concept of boutique hotels and the socio-demographic factors that will influence their decision to stay at boutique hotels in George Town. The sample questionnaire is divided into 3 parts. **Part A** was used to collect the respondents' backgrounds such as income level, age, gender, marital status and educational levels. **Part B** aimed to collect the data regarding the purchasing behavior of tourist that may be affected by socio-demographic factors. A 5 point Likert scale was applied in the questionnaire to test the level of agreement and the level of importance towards the statements with 5 indicates the highest level of agreement or importance and 1 indicating the least disagreement or least importance for the respective purpose. **Part C** was formed as open-ended questions to respondents for additional suggestion and comments towards their expectation on the boutique hotels at George Town. The questionnaires were checked for completeness prior to its collection from the respondents. Data was processed and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

3 FINDINGS

Out of 258 both foreign and local tourists sampled, 210 responded to the questionnaire. Socio-demographic factors influence purchasing decision of the stay at boutique hotels at George Town, Penang. Table 1 shows the influence of socio-demographic factors on purchasing decision of the stay at boutique hotels at George Town, Penang. Based on the result, income was the most significant factor ($p < 0.05$) that influences the purchasing decision of the stay at boutique hotels at George Town. Tourists with high income have a higher probability to be influenced to purchase a stay at boutique hotels at George Town Penang compared to tourist with low income. Other socio-demographic factors such as academic level, age, and gender did not play a significant role in influencing the purchasing decision on the stay at boutique hotels at George Town, Penang.

In order to gain a clearer picture on the influence factors towards the purchasing decision of the stay at boutique hotels at George Town Penang, the

Table 1. Influence of socio-demographics factors on tourist purchasing decision of the stay at boutique hotels at George Town, Penang.

Socio-demographic factors	Tourist purchasing decision				
	Most Influenced	Least Influenced	Odds ratio	Confidence interval	p-value
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	30 (56.6%)	90 (57.3%)	1.28	0.79–2.08	0.3472
Female	23 (43.4%)	67 (42.7%)			
<i>Age</i>					
20–39	55 (47.3%)	50 (53.5%)	0.7	0.43–1.15	0.1722
40 above	61 (52.7%)	44 (46.5%)			
<i>Academic level</i>					
Low	96 (70.0%)	38 (51.4%)	1.54	0.94–2.53	0.0863
High	41 (30%)	35 (48.6%)			
<i>Income</i>					
Low	61 (48.7%)	32 (38.0%)	2.21	1.33–3.67	*0.002
High	65 (51.3%)	52 (62.0%)			

*significant ($p < 0.05$).

Table 2. Importance of elements that influence on decision to purchase to stay at boutique hotels in George Town, Penang.

Importance variables	Mean	Standard error	Standard deviation
Historical value	4.08	0.082	1.184
Facilities	3.89	0.082	1.189
Atmosphere	3.65	0.095	1.383
Staff friendliness	3.64	0.073	1.064
Service	3.60	0.092	1.331
Promotions	3.28	0.074	1.077
Info accessibility of boutique hotels	3.13	0.079	1.141
Price	2.95	0.092	1.330
Location	1.92	0.083	1.200

mean score of other elements which shown in table 2 (service, staff friendliness, historical value, info accessibility of boutique hotels, atmosphere, promotions, facilities, price and location) was calculated and presented in the descending order of importance. Element of first, second and third greatest importances to the respondents include historical value (mean score 4.08), facilities (mean score 3.89) and atmosphere (mean score 3.65) of the boutique hotels at George Town, Penang. This substantiates the importance of the historical value of boutique hotels in George Town, Penang that was transformed from old heritage buildings as well as the distinctive atmosphere and good facilities that make up of the uniqueness of boutique hotels within the area.

Nevertheless, majority of respondents would consider choosing to stay at boutique hotels within George Town Penang only when the staffs in boutique hotels are friendly (mean score 3.64) and the service in boutique hotels are excellent (mean score 3.60). Many respondents critiqued that not all the boutique hotel

staff and service in George Town are performed at the level of their expectation.

In the meantime, some respondents also emphasized that the additional values offered by boutique hotels such as promotions, discounts and vouchers is one of the very important elements that will make them consider choosing to stay at a boutique hotel within the area. Other respondents would consider choosing to stay at boutique hotels within the area if the information of the boutique hotels can be easily accessible (mean score 3.13). Price is the least important elements when comes to the decision to purchase a stay at boutique hotels in George Town for its priceless heritage value of the building itself that cannot be found elsewhere.

4 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

As human needs and wants will never be fulfilled, there are more and more increasing number of tourist prefers to stay in hotels that are noticeably different in look and feel from the conventional ones stated Anhar (2001). Therefore, the concept of boutique hotel that emphasizes the one of a kind' of lodging experience with its own unique personality' had been developed in George Town Penang since the area was officially recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site on 7th July 2008 for its heritage architectural and cultural townscape in East and Southeast Asia (Khoo, 2010). However, the development of a concept of boutique hotel in George Town Penang is still in its early stage. Several studies had tried to show the relationship between consumers' purchase decision and consumers' characteristic that influenced by socio-demographic factors such as age, income and gender (Exter, 1986; Homburg and Giering, 2001; Uncles and Ehrenburg, 1990, cited from Kim, Y.J., 2008.). Similarly to this study, a socio-demographic approach applied to tourist preference to choose to stay at boutique hotels at George Town mainly addresses the question of who the tourist is in terms of age, income, social class and gender. In this study, income seems to have significant influence on the purchasing decision of the stay at boutique hotels in George Town.

Consequently, a boutique hotel that is often being regarded as 'expensive' has to target the correct market segment that often consist of individuals that have relatively middle or upper income level within the age range of 20–55 years old. The result shown in this study was further supported by Arnold (2008) in the economist perspective that the demand of particular goods or services may be rise, fall or remain constant followed by the increased or decreased of an income. Other than just socio-demographic factors alone, purchasing decision on the stay at boutique hotels in George Town was also influenced by other elements such as historical value, facilities, atmosphere, staff friendliness, service, promotions, boutique hotel information accessibility, price and location. Among these elements, historical value, facilities and atmosphere were the elements that would make a tourist to consider choosing to stay at boutique hotels. Therefore, boutique hotels in the area have to create a warm and intimate atmosphere, providing up-to-date facilities and emphasize on its priceless historical value to create a unique experience along the stay of tourist at boutique hotels in George Town Penang.

REFERENCES

- Anhar L. 2001. HVS International. *The definition of boutique hotel*. [Electronic] <<http://www.hospitalitynet.org/index.html>> [Last visited 21 September 2011]
- Anon. 2009. Explorer Malaysia. Dynamic Tourism Industry. [Electronic] <www.explorer-malaysia.com> [Last visited 2 July 2011]
- Arnold, G. 2008. Economics. 8th ed. United States: Thomson South-Western
- Khoo, S.N.2010. Streets of George Town Penang. 3rd ed. Malaysia: The Phoenix Press Sdn. Bhd
- Keulen et al. 2002. Entrepreneurial Marketing-The Interface between Marketing and Entrepreneurship: A Qualitative Research on Boutique Hotels. *Journal of Social Sciences*. 97(22), p.63–64
- Kim, Y.J. 2008. Intention to Stay and Customers' Perceptions about the Effectiveness and the Components of Environmentally Friendly Programs in Hotels.[Electronic] <http://books.google.com.my/books?id=hJIsuiAs0loC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false> [Last visited 3 August 2011]

This page intentionally left blank

Barrier-free dining environment for the visually impaired: A case study of restaurant in Taichung, Taiwan

Wan-Chen, Chung & Chi-Chuan, Lue

National Dong Hwa University, Hualien, Taiwan

ABSTRACT: The reason why few people with visual impairment are dining out is that restaurant managers are not aware of making their dining area a barrier-free environment; and how to appropriately serve people who are visually impaired in Taiwan. Neither the government nor the management of restaurants are enforcing and obeying the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Disabled Citizens Act. The purpose of this paper is to explore the demands of the dining service for people who are visual impaired in Taichung, Taiwan. Ten in-depth interviews were conducted with the Visually Impaired Students of Taichung Parental Corporate Association (VISTPCA). According to the analysis, we found that barrier-free dining service refers to the following - social justice, navigating, setting orientation and hospitality for people with visual impaired. If restaurant managers are made aware of the information from this study, people with visual impairment can enjoy the experience of dining out as the general public are able to.

Keywords: blind, non-obstacle, service demand

1 INTRODUCTION

The Americans With Disabilities Act stressed that all people are born equally, individuals with disabilities are not allowed to be deprived of basic rights, including all software and hardware facilities (Smith, Austin & Kennedy, 2005). In Taiwan, the Welfare Regulations for the Mentally and Physically Disadvantaged was set in 1980, and as such the concept of barrier-free environment has been of concerned since then. "Accessibility" means that all people can enjoy a safe and comfortable living space (Ministry of the Interior, 2011). A statement in the Charter for Leisure formulated by World Leisure Association states that government has to ensure human rights; people have equal rights to participate in leisure. Although leisure is an important part of life, disadvantaged groups still face many difficulties in the pursuit of leisure. Besides, leisure is always viewed as optional. The value of disabled people may not be recognized (Jessup, Cornell, & Bundy, 2010). Richards, Pritchard & Morgan (2010) pointed out that tourism research has failed to engage seriously with disability research. People with disabilities in the tourism market have greater potential but are ignored more. Detailed research on disabled people is fairly limited within tourism studies (Mc Kercher, Packer, Yau, & Lam, 2003). People who are visually impaired demand for restaurant service which service providers has not been able to offer yet in Taiwan. The purpose of this study is to explore the difficulty

of dining out for people with visual impairment at restaurants in Taichung, Taiwan.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Visually impaired*

As there is a rise in accidental injuries affecting the visual function, the proportions of people with visual impaired at home and abroad are increasing. According to the statistics from World Health Organization (WHO), the current global population of people who are visual impaired is more than 4,500 million. It is estimated that the population of the visually impaired people will increase to 7,600 million in 2020 (Qiu, 2007). In 2009, the population for persons with visual impairment reached 56,928 people in Taiwan (Ministry of the Interior, 2010). Thus, the visually impaired population is gradually increasing. Besides, a survey for Asia-pacific region indicates that the most favorite leisure activity for Taiwanese is dining out (Chang, 2011). But structural constraints (environment and attitudes encountered) are the main reason why people who are visual impaired often do not dine out. Difficulties occurred when service attitude and information was not provided to visual impaired people in a suitable way (menus with large-print font or braille formats; knowing the position of the food on the plate) (Smalla, Darcy, & Packerb, 2012). This can cause

people with visual impairment usually cannot experience and enjoy the ambience, the food as the general public do in restaurants.

2.2 Demands of non-obstacle service (the accessibility)

In 1981, the UN's International figure stated that 10% of the physically impaired in the world's population are disabled elder. (Wu, 1987) Today in 2012, due to frequent accidents, it has caused the increasing number of obstacles. Therefore, there is a need to improve the accessibility available.

Accessibility-related acts in Taiwan can be divided into 2 major parts (Liao, 2009), as described as follows:

1) The Protection of the Rights and Interests of (Physically and Mentally) Disabled Citizens Act.

In 1980, the government promulgated the Welfare Regulations for the Mentally and Physically Disadvantaged which stated that the government should set up and facilitate the actions of the disabled equipment in places for activities and the public buildings. In 1997, it changed its name to the Protection Act for Disabled Citizens. Until 2007, it was revised to be the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Disabled Citizens Act. Based on these provisions, accessibility is associated with factors such as housing, public buildings, public facilities and living environments.

2) Other legislations.

In 1995, the Standard Specifications for Making Buildings and Facilities Accessible to and Usable by the Physically Disabled was constructed in Taiwan. This included specific facilities and buildings. Since then, the accessibility acts has become more effective.

Thus, not only hardware (public buildings, public facilities) should be included in barrier-free environment, but also software (service, attitude). However, barrier-free software for people who are visual impaired was rarely mentioned in the tourism domain. The existence of the need for visual impaired person's accessible dining experience should be explored.

3 RESEARCH METHODS

Ten visually impaired students from the VISTPCA were surveyed through in-depth interviews. The ages of these ten participants' ranged from 20 to 32, three of them had mild visual impairment; three of them were moderately visually impaired; three of them were severely visual impaired and one of them was totally blind.

Purposive sampling was used in this study. Research participants who had more dining out experience were included firstly. Before the interview, the researcher had made sure of all participants' agreement. Pseudonyms treatment was used to protect the participants' privacy during research process.

4 CONCLUSION

From the results, all participants were not satisfied with the accessible services provided by staff of the restaurant. It was found that the staff's unfriendly attitude, facility design, improper navigating to/in restaurant and unsafe procedure deprived the participants' of dining out. People with visual impairment need more care which are summarized below:

1) Demands of social justice.

People with visual impairment need to be treated with dignity, equality, fairness, justice. All participants are afraid of being discriminated against, ignored and misunderstood; and they cannot deny the fact that they really need more aid. Participants stated that all of them have had the experience of being refused to be served, unless they were accompanied by normal people. If appliances and aid could be provided by restaurant appropriately, visual impaired people will get similar dining experience as the general public has had. Staff of the restaurant need to subtly serve visual impaired people in order to retain pleasure as ordinary people has. These experiences will allow people with visual impaired acquire social equity and justice.

2) Demands of navigating.

For people who are visually impaired, they require the restaurant's service guide approach the restaurant's entrance. Then, staff should provide the layout of the restaurant orally, after guiding them to most suitable table. Personal guiding to the restroom may be necessary for the first time. Restaurant's navigating (specific route, the layout of restaurant) by memory is a skill used by people with visual impaired. Participants mention that they can get more environmental information through navigating.

3) Demands of setting orientation. People with visual impaired have some difficulties in receiving the message from the environment. Restaurant's staff should help visual impaired person's setting orientation by other sensory perception (sense of smell, hearing, taste and touch) and to embodied their experiences (Smalla, Darcy, & Packerb, 2012). Besides, all participants state that they need more aids for knowing the position of the food on the plate and the position of tableware. Due to safety concern, foods serve with the burner should not be provided.

4) Demands of hospitable attitude. It is essential for the restaurant's staff to offer good attitude, initiative and actively service to people with visual impaired. Due to the different conditions of visual impaired with participants, staff can help participants to meet their service demands. Information of menu should provided to people with visual impaired by staff's good attitude and suitable service. Therefore, participants suggested that menus with large-print font, braille or voice device will be better for people with visual impaired.

In addition, staff can help visual impaired person to order what they need, if staff offer some suggesting request.

Visual impaired people are faced with a disabling dining environment. In particular, they are constrained by safety procedure: navigation to/in restaurant, design of facilities, service attitude, aids and appliance. In providing a quality dining experience to people with visual impaired, improved education and special training in the staff of the restaurant is the most important step. If restaurant managers recognize information from this study, people with visual impaired can enjoy the dining out as the general people do.

REFERENCES

- Department of Health 2010. Grades of disability. Download Date: May 16, 2010, from: http://www.sci.org.tw/typsnfa-3_3.html
- French, S. 1993. Disability, impairment or something in between In J. Swan, V. Finkelstein, S. French & M.Oliver(Eds.), *Disabling barriers enabling environments*, (pp. 17–25).London:Sage.
- Hui-Yan Liao, 2009, explained the building barrier-free facilities design manual, London: Ministry of Interior.
- Jessup G.M., Cornell E., Bundy A.C. 2010 . The treasure in leisure activities: Fostering resilience in young people who are blind. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness*, 104 (7), pp. 419–430.
- Mc Kercher,B.,Packer,T. Yau,M.K.,& Lam,P. 2003.Travel agents as facilitators or inhibitors of travel: Perceptions of people with disabilities. *Tourism Management*, 24(4), 465–474.
- Ministry of the Interior 2011. Disability Rights Protection Act. Download Date: March 10, 2011, from: <http://sowf.moi.gov.tw/05/news/news-960716.htm>
- Ministry of the Interior 2010. Basic statistics disabled. Download Date: April 25, 2010, from: http://www.cla.gov.tw/cgi-bin/SM_theme?page=41fefeb9
- Murray, M., & Sproats, J. 1990. The disabled traveler: Tourism in Australia. *Journal of Tourism Studies*, 1(1), 9–14.
- Oliver, M. 1993. Re-defining disability: A challenge to research. In J. Swain, V. Finkelstein, S. French & M. Oliver (Eds.), *Disabling barriers enabling environments*, (pp. 61–67). London:Sage.
- Pei-Jung Lu, Chih-Chung Wang, Wen-Lung Liang. 2006. A Survey of the Barrier-Free of Environment University Campus for Students with Physical Disabilities. *Journals of Occupational Therapy Association*, 24.
- Prager, J.H. 1999, December 15. People with disabilities are next consumer niche. *Wall Street Journal*, pp. B1–B2.
- Qiong-Ping Qiu, 2007. the visually impaired have the opportunity to see the light again! National Chiao Tung University research published in retinal prosthesis, ETTV reported.
- Ray,N.M.,& Ryder,M.E. 2003. “Ebilities” tourism: An exploratory discussion of the travel needs and motivations of the mobility-disabled. *Tourism Management*, 24(1), 57–720.
- Richards V., Pritchard A., Morgan N., 2010 . (Re) Envisioning tourism and visual impairment. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37 (4).
- Smith, RW, Ed. 2005. *Inclusive and Special Recreation*.
- Tribe, J. 2009. Philosophical issues in tourism. In J. Tribe (Ed.), *Philosophical issues in tourism* (pp. 3–22). Bristol: Channel View.
- Tsai-Ching Yeh, Shwn-Jen Lee, Ching-Sung Lin, Pei-Chi Chu, Hwa-Pey Wang, Mei-Wun Tsai, Yu-Ping Chen, Ming-Ji Tzeng, 2004. An Investigation of Educational Barrier-Free Environment in Taiwan-Using I-Lan County as an Example. *Journals of Physical Therapy*, 29(2).
- Wu-Tien Wu, 1987, barrier-free living environment, Taipei: Taiwan Institute of Special Education.

This page intentionally left blank

Important Hong Kong shopping mall characteristics as perceived by tourists

Vincent C.S. Heung & Deniz Kucukusta

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

ABSTRACT: The retail industry has long been one of the economic pillars of Hong Kong. Within the retail sector, shopping malls play a dominant role in making Hong Kong a “shoppers’ paradise.” Each year, millions of tourists visit various popular shopping malls. However, little attention has been paid by management to the needs of tourists in terms of mall design, layout and facilities. This study investigates the attributes of shopping malls perceived to be important by tourists to Hong Kong. The findings from a survey of 162 international tourists indicate that “Language ability of customer service staff” is ranked the most important, followed by “Cleanliness of the mall” and “Accessible by public transport.” Significant differences are found between demographic variables, such as gender, age and nationality, and shopping mall attributes. The implications of the findings are discussed and directions for future research are suggested.

Keywords: shopping mall; Hong Kong tourists; perceived important characteristics

1 INTRODUCTION

The retail industry has long been one of the economic pillars of Hong Kong (Census and Statistics Department, 2006). With the increase in mobility and ease of transport, shopping has become one of the motivations for travel. According to “A Statistical Review of Hong Kong Tourism 2007,” shopping accounts for the largest share of the spending of overnight (56.7%) and same-day in-town (86.2%) visitors. In Hong Kong, the retail sector has benefited from the growth in tourism, which has resulted in a large influx of Asian shoppers, especially those from mainland China. Within this sector, shopping malls not only serve the local community but also cater for millions of shopping tourists. However, few studies have examined the characteristics of shopping malls perceived as important by tourists. Previous research on the relation between facility management and the physical environment of shopping malls is limited. Baker (1986) and Bitner (1992) developed models that includes the physical attributes that are indispensable for shopping environments, but no study has investigated the preferences of tourists. Shopping as a tourist activity is relatively under-researched (Yuksel, 2004). It should be noted that tourists can be quite different from local consumers and may have different types of shopping motives and behaviors (Turner & Reisinger, 2001). In addition, whereas manuals on managing hospitality facilities in the lodging industry are common, few exist for shopping malls. Therefore, to enhance the understanding of the preferences of tourists, this study investigates the attributes of shopping malls perceived as important by tourists. The aim is to explore tourists’ perceptions of important characteristics of shopping malls. The study has

three major objectives: a) to examine tourists’ perceived characteristics of the ideal mall; b) to compare and rank the importance of different attributes; and c) to assess whether significant differences exist between the ranking of important attributes and demographic variables, including gender, age and nationality.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Previous studies of shopping mall characteristics*

The literature includes two models of consumer motivation to visit malls. Baker (1986) identified environmental factors as major cues that affect consumer perceptions and developed a model that features three categories of factors, namely, ambient, design and social factors. Ambient factors induce sensory feelings that are experienced immediately but may not be seen; design factors are mainly tangible and noticed easily; and social factors concern the people who get involved with consumers during their visit to shopping malls. This model can be used as a framework to design the blueprint of a shopping mall that can satisfy the needs of consumers. Bitner (1992) proposed a model with three components related to environmental cues, which are based on those of Baker’s model. They are ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality and signs, symbols and artifacts. In Bitner’s model (1992), time pressure, signage and symbols are considered significant attributes among tourists who are traveling to a destination with an unfamiliar language. Regarding shopping activities, time efficiency is a major concern of shoppers. It is believed that

the time spent on way finding (to the malls) reduces the excitement attained through shopping. Therefore, clear and informative signage and service personnel such as customer service assistants are indispensable. Babin and Darden (1996) found that in-store mood influenced consumer spending and satisfaction with the store. Physical attributes such as sound, smell, scent and lighting can help to create a favorable mood, whereas negative ambient stimuli such as loud noise, extreme temperature, air quality or inadequate lighting can cause physical discomfort and prompt avoidance decisions (Bitner, 1992). Studies looking into the effect of sound and smell have found that music creates ambience, which can generate positive consumer and employee responses (Areni and Kim, 1993; Baker, Levy and Grewall, 1992; Kellaris and Kent, 1991; Mattila and Wirtz, 2001; Milliman, 1982, 1986; Yalch and Spangenberg, 1990, 1993). Research also shows a positive interactive influence of musical mode and tempo, with music-induced pleasure having the strongest effect on the desire of subjects to affiliate with the provider, under low or high arousal conditions (Dubé, Chebat, & Morin, 1995). In Baker's model, air quality and ventilation are also regarded as important ambient factors. As part of the background condition, poor air quality or ventilation will lower the level of perceived comfort related to air quality in shopping malls, negatively affecting not only the shopping experience but also the health of tourists (Li et al., 2001). The models developed in previous studies mainly examine the perceptions of general consumers rather than those of tourists. The shopping behavior and motives of tourists may be different from those of local shoppers. In addition, shopping behavior may change within the exciting and non-home atmosphere of travel (Turner and Reisinger, 2001). It is believed that the need for fulfillment among tourists may differ from that among local consumers. Therefore, the characteristics of the ideal shopping mall from the perspective of tourists are investigated. Few studies have focused on shopping center management (Howard, 1997). Hence, this study investigates the characteristics of shopping malls perceived as important by tourists to gain a better understanding of the preferences and expectations of this group of consumers, based on which mall improvements can be made. In addition, there is an increasing trend toward green practices and designs, and whether this trend will affect the future development of shopping malls can be predicted by understanding tourist perceptions of important shopping mall characteristics.

2.2 *Perceived shopping mall attributes and demographic characteristics*

Demographic segmentation was used in constructing the model to assess the importance of different shopping attributes (Frasquet et al., 2001). Consumer wants have been found to be highly correlated to demographic profiles (Kolter, 1997; Hooley et al., 1998). Country of origin affects shopping behavior, as well

as the perceived importance of shopping mall characteristics. Cultural differences can significantly affect service expectations. For example, Chinese tend to be more proactive than non-Chinese in helping visitors to cope with a different culture when they are the hosts (Reisinger and Turner, 2002). In addition, formal etiquette is more highly valued by Asian than non-Asian tourists (Reisinger and Turner, 2002). This suggests differences in preference among consumers regarding customer service provision.

3 METHODOLOGY

A survey was conducted among 200 tourists in Hong Kong. Face-to face interviews were carried out to collect the primary data. A four-page questionnaire in two languages (Chinese and English) was developed through an extensive literature review. The questionnaire comprises four sections: section one includes screening questions to identify suitable interviewees; section two gathers general travel information such as travel mode, traveling companions and main purpose of the visit; and section three examines five dimensions (which covers 26 attributes) of shopping malls, including ambience, design, layout and zoning, people and accessibility, following Baker's and Bitner's models (1992). In the third section, the relationships among different attributes and those that are most important to tourists are investigated. The importance of attributes is assessed using a five-point scale, which ranges from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important). The final section collects the demographic information of the tourists. Convenience sampling is used because of the difficulties of employing random sampling. The target respondents are all visitors to Hong Kong. The surveys were conducted in four shopping malls most commonly visited by both individual tourists and tour groups (both business and leisure travelers). They were selected based on their locations in different tourist areas and near hotel clusters. Respondents were selected using the intercept method. Two hundred tourists were interviewed and asked to complete the questionnaire. After excluding unusable/incomplete questionnaires, there remained 162 valid and completed ones for use in the final analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to explore the nature of the responses. Factor analysis was then performed to identify the underlying dimensions of important characteristics of shopping malls as perceived by tourists. Independent t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to investigate the significant differences between the mall dimensions perceived to be important and demographic variables.

3.1 *Results & discussions*

3.1.1 *Demographic profile of the respondents*

The gender distribution was even, with 50.3% male and 49.7% female respondents. The major age groups were 16–25 years (30.6%) and 26–35 years (30.2%).

Mainland Chinese tourists accounted for the majority (65.4%), followed by European (17.3%), American (9.3%) and Korean (8%). More than 60% of the respondents had attained university or above education. The largest group of respondents was students (40.7%), followed by professionals (21%) and senior white collar workers (16.7%). Regarding personal monthly income, the majority made less than USD 1,000 (65.4%).

3.1.2 Important shopping mall attributes

The mean scores and standard deviations of the 26 attributes of shopping malls are shown in Table 1. All of the attributes had a mean score greater than 3 except one, which had a mean score of 2.96. Thus, no attributes were regarded as unimportant by the tourists. "Language ability of staff" was rated the most important among the attributes, followed by "Cleanliness" and "Accessible by public transport". The respondents gave relatively low scores to attributes such as "sound and music," "various promotional activities" and "color elements in shopping malls." This can be explained by the needs of tourists, which are mainly hedonic. Shoppers may pay less attention to design when choosing to shop at a particular mall.

3.1.3 Underlying dimensions of the important attributes

Factor analysis was used to examine the relationships among a large set of variables. In this study, a total of 26 attributes are grouped into eight factors, which explained 65.19% of the cumulative variance and thus represent the perceived attributes of shopping malls reasonably well. *Factor 1: Ambience:* The first factor consisted of six attributes, including "ventilation" (factor loading of 0.71), "comfortable level of air conditioning" (0.82), "cleanliness" (0.53), "lighting" (0.43), "layout facilitating shopping and other activities" (0.42) and "zoning that satisfies the needs of different visitors" (0.49). This factor explained 26.58% of the total variance. *Factor 2: Customer care services and facilities:* Factor 2 included five attributes: "directory and signage" (factor loading of 0.44), "availability of customer service staff to help" (0.79), "hospitable customer service staff" (0.74), "information provided by customer service staff" (0.67) and "language ability of staff" (0.65). This factor explained 8.68% of the total variance. *Factor 3: Shop diversity and type:* Factor 3 included four attributes: "clustering of the same types of shops within a zone," (factor loading of 0.59), "clustering of brand name stores" (0.65), "variety of shops" (0.81) and "provision of sufficient indoor space" (0.42). *Factor 4: Accessibility:* Factor 4 included three attributes: "accessible by public transport" (factor loading of 0.74), "length of travel time" (0.83) and "opening hours" (0.77). *Factor 5: Theme and appearance:* Factor 5 included "architectural appearance" and "theme," with factor loadings of 0.66 and 0.73, respectively. *Factor 6: Color elements inside the mall:* Factor 6 included "use of color and materials that match the ambience" and "functions and

Table 1. Tourists' perceptions of important attributes of shopping malls ($N = 162$).

Attribute	Mean	S.D.	Rank
Language ability of staff	4.20	0.795	1
Cleanliness	4.13	0.797	2
Accessible by public transport	4.11	0.796	3
Directory and signage	4.08	0.959	4
Availability of customer service staff to help	4.01	0.929	5
Hospitable customer service staff	3.99	0.867	6
Information provided by customer service staff	3.96	0.851	7
Length of travel time	3.92	0.912	8
Opening hours	3.90	0.969	9
Ventilation	3.86	0.918	10
Variety of shops	3.85	0.930	11
Layout facilitating shopping and other activities	3.85	0.93	12
Lighting	3.80	0.835	13
Clustering of the same types of shops within a zone	3.80	0.953	14
Comfortable level of air conditioning	3.78	0.892	15
Zoning satisfies the needs of different visitors	3.73	0.897	16
Provision of sufficient indoor space	3.68	0.896	17
Clustering of brand name stores	3.64	1.019	18
Architectural appearance	3.59	0.930	19
Decor, such as Christmas/CNY decorations	3.57	0.931	20
Use of color and materials that match the ambience	3.49	0.921	21
Theme	3.46	0.920	22
Noise level	3.41	0.988	23
Provision of sufficient green space	3.35	1.000	24
Background music	3.03	0.949	25
Functions and events, such as lucky draws and performances	2.96	1.111	26

Results are the mean, based on a five-point scale, where 1 indicates "least important" and 5 indicates "most important."

events, such as lucky draws and performances," with factor loadings of 0.51 and 0.73, respectively. *Factor 7: Various promotional activities:* Factor 7 included "decor, such as Christmas/Chinese New Year decorations" and "functions and events, such as lucky draws and performances," with factor loadings of 0.77 and 0.82, respectively. *Factor 8: Sound and music:* Factor 8 included "background music" and "noise level," with factor loadings of 0.82 and 0.64, respectively.

3.1.4 Perceived important factors and demographic variables

Significant differences were found in "shop diversity and type" (0.053) and "various promotional activities" (0.036). Female tourists generally gave higher scores for most of the shopping mall attributes compared to their male counterparts. "Shop diversity and type" may have been more important among females

as they were more involved in shopping activities and demanded greater variety in shops than did males. Differences in the rating of “accessibility” and “sound and music” were significant among the age groups. Those aged 16 to 25 scored “accessibility” the highest (mean score = 4.06), which includes opening hours, accessible by public transport and travel time. This finding may be explained by the greater mobility of this age group in seeking entertainment and the willingness of youth to spend more time traveling and shopping. It has been posited that significant cultural differences exist among international tourist shoppers. Thus, it was expected that tourists from different countries would assign different values to products and have different demands regarding services. The findings indicate that significant differences do exist among tourists of different nationalities, mostly in their perceptions of “sound and music” and “various promotional activities.” The results also show that among Western tourists, “Customer care services and facilities” were the top priority. It is crucial to identify the needs and usual shopping practices of tourists from different countries. As noted in the literature, there are cultural differences in the perception of satisfactory customer services between Asian and Western tourists. For example, time devoted to offering help and handling enquiries is important among Asian tourists, whereas Western ones expect prompt service and task fulfillment. An informative directory may be much more helpful than being escorted by customer service staff to desired shops, or having goods and services explained in detail by staff.

4 CONCLUSION

This study identified eight broad dimensions of shopping malls that are important among tourists in providing a satisfactory shopping experience. Such an experience is important as it leads to increased spending on shopping by this group and contributes to future patronage and positive word-of-mouth. By identifying the most valued factor, customer care services and facilities, more can be done by malls to gain a competitive edge to minimize the threat posed by rivals. Significance differences were found among age groups with regard to sound and music and accessibility; between genders regarding various promotional activities; and among those of different nationalities with respect to sound and music and various promotional activities. By understanding the needs of different market segments, shopping malls targeting tourists can devise better marketing strategies or choose layouts with different features to cater to the needs of different groups of tourists. A major contribution of the study to the existing literature is the identification of the physical attributes of shopping malls that are most highly valued by tourists. By taking into consideration such attributes, a destination can conduct effective marketing campaigns and enhance its position in the international tourism market

(Calantone et al., 1986). This can boost the flow of customers and generate greater revenues. In addition, it can further enhance the competitive edge of the destination in the long run, as events such as the Hong Kong Shopping Festival are not sustainable given economic turmoil and can easily be duplicated by competitors. The study contributes to the hospitality industry by presenting an approach for the managing of the physical environment of malls in an economically beneficial way. The findings provide valuable information for the management of shopping malls in terms of planning, design and operation. For instance, a study of the important attributes of malls and management of the physical environment could be developed into a manual for the planning of shopping malls, which could serve as a blueprint for development.

REFERENCES

- Areni, C.S., & Kim, D. 1993. The Influence of Background Music on Shopping Behavior: Classical versus Top-Forty Music in a Wine Store”. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 20, 336–340.
- Babin, B.J., & Darden, W.R. 1996. Good and bad shopping vibes: Spending and patronage satisfaction. *Journal of Business Research*, 35(3), 201–206.
- Baker, J. 1986. The Role of the Environment in Marketing Services: The Consumer Perspective. In John A. Czepeil, Carole A. Congram and James Shanaha (eds.). *The Service Challenge: Integrating for Competitive Advantage*, Chicago, IL: American Marketing Association, 79–84.
- Baker, J., Levy, M & Grewal, D. 1992. An experimental approach to making retail store environmental decisions. *Journal of Retailing*, 68, 445–460.
- Bitner, M.J. 1992. Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of Marketing*, April, 57–71.
- Calantone, R. J., Di Benedetto, C.A. & Hakam, A. 1989. Multiple Multinational Tourism Positioning Using Correspondence Analysis. *Journal of Travel*, 28 (2), 25–32.
- Census and Statistics Department, Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. 2006.
- The situation of the four key industries in the Hong Kong economy in 2006. *Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics* (March 2008). Hong Kong Government Information Services.
- Dubé, L., Chebat, J.C., & Moin, S. 1995. The Effects of Background Music on Consumers’ Desire to Affiliate in Buyer-Seller Interactions. *Psychology and Marketing*, 12(4), 305–319.
- Frasquet, M., Gil, I. & Mollá, A. 2001. Shopping-centre selection modelling: A segmentation approach. *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 11(1), 23–38.
- Hooley, G. J., Saunder, J.A., & Piercy, N.F. 1998. *Marketing Strategy and Competitive Positioning*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall Europe.
- Howard, E. 1997. The management of shopping centres: Conflict or Collaboration? *International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 7(3), 263–285.
- Kellaris, J.J., & Kent, R.J. 1991. Exploring Tempo and Modality Effects on Consumer Responses to Music. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 18, 243–248.
- Kolter, P. 1997. *Marketing Management*. 9th Edition. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

- Li, W.M., Lee, S.C., & Chan L.Y. 2001. Indoor air quality at nine shopping malls in Hong Kong. *The Science of the Total Environment*, 273, 27–40.
- Mattila, A.S., & Wirtz, J. 2001. Congruency of scent and music as a driver of in-store evaluations and behavior. *Journal of Retailing*, 77(2), 273–289.
- Milliman, R.E. 1982. Using Background Music to Affect the Behavior of Supermarket Shoppers. *The Journal of Marketing*, 46, 86–91.
- Reisinger, Y. & Turner, L.W. 2002. Cultural differences between Asian tourist markets and Australian hosts, part 1. *Journal of Travel Research*, 40, 295–315.
- Turner, L.W. & Reisinger, Y. 2001. Shopping Satisfaction for Domestic Tourists. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 8(1), 15–21.
- Yalch, R.F., & Spangenberg, E.R. 1993. Using Store Music for Retail Zoning: A Field Experiment. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 20, 632–636.
- Yuksel, A. 2004. Shopping experience evaluation: A case of domestic and international visitors. *Tourism Management*, 25(6), 751–759.

This page intentionally left blank

Occupancy improvement in serviced apartments: Customer profiling

L.N. Fukey

Christ University, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

ABSTRACT: Sustaining and improving higher occupancy and generating steady revenue by bringing the experience of ‘Home away from Home’ for the Customers is the business model of Serviced Apartments Industry. Serviced Apartment Industry has to be highly competitive. Its performance is governed by many factors such as competition, technology, social factors and lastly Customers themselves. This study focuses only on Customer profile. To achieve results, the Serviced Apartment Owners/Managers will need to study Customers’ profile and their needs. Customer satisfaction and retention lead to better customer loyalty, occupancy rates, and revenue. In this paper a methodological framework to analyze and profile Serviced Apartment Customers is discussed, focusing on the factors and particularly the Customer information which could help in increasing the Occupancy. There is a trend that would normally go unnoticed if analysis of data is taken at the aggregate level but looking at them individually, it provides interesting information.

Keywords: serviced apartment; customer; occupancy; customer profile.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Serviced apartment*

Serviced Apartment is a type of well-furnished apartments available for short term or long term stays providing amenities for daily use. Generally, serviced apartments are less expensive than hotel rooms. (wikipedia.org).

1.2 *Profile of serviced apartment customers*

Today’s Customers know what they want, and need not settle for less. As with their favorite accommodation, their preferences are strong in relation to product, location, and value-added services offered. They form the backbone and are the drivers of any industry demand and hence it is extremely important to study the composition of the same. Out of the many factors responsible for the growth of this industry, the customer profile assumes prime importance. Serviced apartment is primarily used for business travel, although it is also a favorite choice for leisure travelers, entertainment companies, even those needing interim housing for personal emergencies. (The Global Serviced Apartment Industry Report 2008/09). We are also witnessing a surge of single woman travelers to the Indian sub-continent traveling for business and this could form a strong target-market for serviced apartments. Management and Consulting companies, including accountancy and legal firms, bring in employees from other offices on temporary assignments. Embassies and Foreign Trade Commissions tend to generate demand for serviced apartment accommodation as the

consular and other senior members of staff may require medium to long-term accommodation. Training seminars requiring participation from employees from other parts of the world also generate demand. It is also an important consideration for companies attempting to reduce operative overhead costs by bringing in expatriates for short-term employment or on a project-to-project basis.

The profile of serviced apartments’ occupants would typically include executives of foreign banks to multinational corporations providing accommodation at different levels in the company hierarchy: from entry level executives who are typically provided with shared accommodation, to senior management who are provided with furnished quality custom-designed housing to suit their needs. However, due to the lack of quality supply of serviced apartments in India, the current profile is primarily the upper middle management. Hence, apart from the rise in demand that is foreseeable in the near future for this category of accommodation, there is also a catchment of latent demand that can be tapped quite effectively. (Zaveri)

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Customer profile*

The basic component of customer knowledge comes from a customer profile that is obtained by the use of a database and data mining technologies used in organizations (Adomavicius & Tuzhilin). Some characteristics correlate positively with companies performing

well in customer relationship management: excellent products, excellent management, and the informed use of knowledge about customers. An insufficient knowledge base of customers limits the value which a company can offer to those customers (Tiwana, Wayland & Cole).

Knowing customers better, a corporation can precisely invest in valuable customers and reduce the cost spent on poorly performing customers (Swift and Hwang et al).

2.2 Customer segmentation

An overview of market segmentation in hospitality was published in 1991 (Crawford and Welch). Most studies that examine any form of segmentation include a demographic profile of the consumers in each segment. For instance, one group of researchers found that a segmentation model based on age and life circumstances was superior to a model based simply on age (Moschis et al). Serviced apartment clientele can be classified into six categories:

Large to medium Corporate clients, small corporate industry, Foreign Tourists, Foreign worker, Health patients for treatment/convalence, Individual businessmen (in search of potential business), Sport and entertainment (The Global Serviced Apartment Industry Report 2008/09).

There are still some categories which are not listed above as they constitute less than 10 % of the clientele. One such new trend is: the serviced apartments segment of the hospitality industry in Bangalore has managed to attract not just business travelers, but also medical tourists to the city. Serviced apartment brands are now looking at tying up with hospitals to move patients – mostly in the post-operative-care stage of treatment – into their apartments (Chandramouly).

2.3 Customer relationship management

Customer Relationship management is an interactive process that turns customer information into customer relationships through actively using and learning from information. It is a cycle for encompassing major group of actions: knowledge discovery, market planning, customer interaction, and analysis refinement (Buckinx et al).

The new marketing paradigm is based on knowledge and experience (McKenna, and Payne et al). The knowledge-based marketing paradigm indicates that corporations need to know more about customers; and an experience-based marketing paradigm suggests bringing more interactions into customer related activities. Since the 90s, there has been arisen numerous synonymous terms: customer management, customer information systems, customer value management, customer care and sometimes customer centrality or customer-centric management, but now clearly, the term Customer Relationship Management has become the most widely used (Brown & Lee & Kim).

Past literature has identified three critical variables that have been inextricably linked to contributing to

loyalty-quality, value and satisfaction. (Cronin et al., Payne et al., Loveman and Heskett, Reichheld, Parasuraman et al., Cronin and Taylor, Reichheld and Sasser). Although a number of studies have found these variables to have significant impact on loyalty, several researchers have argued that these variables only provide partial insight into the loyalty building dynamic (Cronin et al., Dube and Renaghan). Although attracting little research interest, one critical variable impacting customer loyalty has been identified in the Customer Relationship Management Literature – that of the customer experience. Indeed, for Donnelly et al, a major criticism of the loyalty research is that the customer experience variable has been excluded from consideration.

3 HYPOTHESIS

By obtaining and analyzing customer profiles, Serviced Apartments can develop products and services as per the customer's needs and improve occupancy. To examine this proposition, the null hypothesis of this research is proposed.

H0: Serviced Apartments that collect and study customer profiles could not influence its occupancy.

4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design for the kind of population in this particular study comprise of heterogeneous characteristics. Apart from these deviations due to geographic clusterisation, it was decided to clusterise the universe into two clusters in South Indian Cities Bangalore and Chennai. For each cluster the individual sample was drawn randomly taking the help of three digit random numbers. Hence the sample technique finally adopted was cluster random sample.

4.1 Sampling frames and data collection methods

The study is based on a sample survey of Serviced Apartments Customers in Bangalore and Chennai, India. For the purpose of present study, 61 Serviced apartments out of 400 in Bangalore and 39 out of 255 in Chennai i.e., 16 % of the total apartment have been selected to draw valid inferences. The Serviced apartments were selected based on the location, size, classification, facilities and services offered. Total 180 Customers from 100 Serviced Apartments were interviewed through Questionnaire having 15 questions. This includes 100 Customers from 61 Serviced Apartments from Bangalore and 80 Customers from 39 Serviced Apartments from Chennai.

4.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into five sections as in Table 1. A total of forty one questions were considered for evaluation.

Table 1. Questionnaire components.

City	Total number of SA*	Selected SA*	Customers Interviewed
Bangalore	400	61	100
Chennai	255	39	080

*Serviced apartment.

Table 2. Questionnaire components.

S.No.	Sections	Number of components
1.	Demography	09
2.	Occupation	08
3.	Frequency of travel	08
4.	Income group	06
5.	Number of persons accompanying	10

4.3 Limitations

The Survey had certain limitations a) Study was based on sample survey b) Some of the Serviced Apartment were missed out due lack of accessibility and lack of information c) Survey was limited to Bangalore and Chennai and therefore excludes other Serviced Apartments in other Metropolitan cities in India.

5 INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was done for the Five sections from the Customer Questionnaire. First part is to find out whether PCA is helpful. For this Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure is used. The KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy is a statistic that indicates the proportion of variance in the variables that might be caused by underlying factors. High values (close to 1.0) generally indicate that a component analysis may be useful with your data. If the value is less than 0.50, the results of the factor analysis probably won't be very useful. Following is the result and analysis of PCA for these Questions.

5.1 Demography profile

Demography with Nine Components shows KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy 0.759. This figure is close to 1. So PCA will be useful.

As noticed from the Table 5, components 4, 6 and 8 have the highest values. That means Customers with Professional qualification, Arriving by Air and Travelling from more than 1000 km constitute the most important factors in Customer Demography Profile. Study of the expectations and Services related to these factors will improve the chances of selection of the Serviced Apartment and help in improving the Occupancy, gaining Customer loyalty.

Table 3. Demography components.

S.No.	Component
1	Age group 20-45
2	Age group >45
3	Gender
4	Professional qualification
5	Knowledge of local language
6	Arrival by air
7	Arrival by rail, road
8	Travelling from more than 1000 km
9	Services sought concierges

Table 4. Demography: Variance explained.

Component	Initial eigen values		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	5.896	65.511	65.51
2	1.045	11.615	77.126
3	0.791	8.785	85.911
4	0.415	4.610	90.521
5	0.349	3.880	94.401
6	0.237	2.632	97.034
7	0.131	1.450	98.484
8	0.098	1.090	99.574
9	0.038	0.426	100.000

Table 5. Demography: Component matrix.

	Component	
	1	2
Q1_1	0.781	-0.414
Q1_2	0.832	-0.193
Q1_3	0.835	0.360
Q1_4	0.873	-0.263
Q1_5	0.774	0.088
Q1_6	0.906	-0.244
Q1_7	0.781	0.239
Q1_8	0.600	0.715
Q1_9	0.864	-0.057

5.2 Occupation profile

Occupation with Eight Components shows KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy 0.89. This figure is close to 1. So PCA will be useful.

As noticed from the Table 9, components 2, 3 and 6 have the highest values. That means Employees of Small and Medium Industry; Self employed Entrepreneur and People working in the ITeS and Services Industry constitute the most important factors in Customer Occupation Profile. A deeper study in understanding their expectation will directly benefit the Serviced Apartments in increasing the Occupancy levels.

Table 6. Occupation components.

S.No.	Question
1	Employed: corporate large
2	Employed: corporate small and medium
3	Self Employed: entrepreneur
4	Student
5	Expatriate
6	Related to ITeS*, services industry
7	Related to other industries
8	Unemployed

*Information technology and enabled services.

Table 7. Occupation: Variance explained.

Component	Initial eigen values		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	6.410	80.128	80.128
2	0.617	7.711	87.839
3	0.299	3.738	91.576
4	0.261	3.262	94.838
5	0.167	2.091	96.930
6	0.135	1.686	98.615
7	0.066	0.819	99.435
8	0.045	0.565	100.000

Table 8. Occupation: Component matrix.

	Component 1
Q2_1	0.891
Q2_2	0.959
Q2_3	0.931
Q2_4	0.868
Q2_5	0.793
Q2_6	0.924
Q2_7	0.875
Q2_8	0.909

Table 9. Frequency of travel components.

S.No.	Question
1	Maximum Duration of stay < 2 weeks
2	Maximum Duration of stay > 4 weeks
3	Travelling in a month = 1
4	Travelling in a month > 2
5	Travelling in a month > 3
6	Extending duration of stay

5.3 Frequency of travel

Frequency of Travel with Eight Components shows KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy 0.803. This figure is close to 1. So PCA will be useful.

Table 10. Frequency of travel: Variance explained.

Component	Initial eigen values		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	5.639	70.483	70.483
2	0.712	8.895	79.378
3	0.589	7.358	86.736
4	0.378	4.725	91.461
5	0.353	4.417	95.879
6	0.165	2.057	97.936
7	0.090	1.130	99.066
8	0.075	0.934	100.000

Table 11. Frequency of travel: Component matrix.

	Component 1
Q3_1	0.876
Q3_2	0.743
Q3_3	0.827
Q3_4	0.846
Q3_5	0.837
Q3_6	0.901
Q3_7	0.796
Q3_8	0.880

Table 12. Income brackets (monthly) components.

S.No.	Question
Q4_1	Monthly income > 25,000 INR*
Q4_2	Monthly income > 50,000 INR
Q4_3	Monthly income > 75,000 INR
Q4_4	Monthly income > 125,000 INR
Q4_5	Monthly income > 150,000 INR
Q4_6	Monthly income > 200,000 INR

*Indian rupees.

As noticed from the Table 12, components 1 and 6 have the highest values. That means maximum duration of stay is less than 2 weeks and there is always a need of extension of stay. This can be interpreted as clear information on the stay preferences and need of flexibility for extension of stay by the Serviced Apartments which will directly benefit in increasing the Occupancy levels.

5.4 Income brackets (monthly)

Income levels with Six Components show KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy 0.813. This figure is close to 1. So PCA will be useful.

As noticed from the Table 15, components 3 and 4 have the highest values. That means the Customers are mostly from monthly income group of 75,000 to 125 000 INR. This can be interpreted to understand the

Table 13. Income brackets (monthly): Variance explained.

Component	Initial eigen values		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	3.606	60.093	60.093
2	0.984	16.400	76.493
3	0.791	13.181	89.674
4	0.369	6.144	95.818
5	0.251	4.182	100.000
6	0.0037	0.00675	100.000

Table 14. Income brackets (monthly): Component matrix.

	Component 1
Q4_1	0.766
Q4_2	0.703
Q4_3	0.836
Q4_4	0.824
Q4_5	0.707
Q4_6	0.804

Table 15. Number of persons accompanying.

S.No.	Question
1	No. of persons accompanying = 1-3
2	No. of persons accompanying > 4
3	No. of persons accompanying > 6
4	No. of persons accompanying > 8
5	No. of persons accompanying > 10
6	No. of persons accompanying > 15
7	Persons accompanying are colleagues
8	Persons accompanying are family members
9	Persons accompanying are friends
10	Persons accompanying are business partners

lifestyle of the Customers and expectation during the stay. Also a pricing strategy can be worked out which will benefit the increase in the Occupancy levels.

5.5 Number of persons accompanying

Number of Persons accompanying with Ten Components show KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy 0.667. This figure is close to 1. So PCA will be useful.

As noticed from the Table 18, components 1, 7, 8 and 10 have the highest values. That means Persons accompanying are between 1-3 and are Colleagues, family members or Business Partners and are the deciding factors for Selection of the Serviced Apartments. Accordingly the room size and Pricing strategy can be worked out which will benefit the increase in the Occupancy levels.

Table 16. Number of persons accompanying: Variance explained.

Component	Initial eigen values		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	6.654	51.183	51.183
2	2.307	17.743	68.926
3	1.173	9.024	77.950
4	1.035	7.963	85.913
5	0.645	4.964	90.877
6	0.466	3.583	94.460
7	0.254	1.952	96.412
8	0.188	1.449	97.857
9	0.148	1.141	98.998
10	0.130	1.002	100

Table 17. Number of persons accompanying: Component matrix.

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Q5_1	.073	.968	-.070	.005
Q5_2	.054	.948	-.083	.007
Q5_3	.047	.022	.899	-.400
Q5_4	.347	-.072	.284	.854
Q5_5	.811	-.037	.049	.165
Q5_6	.680	.506	.335	.040
Q5_7	.906	-.136	-.102	-.131
Q5_8	.918	-.129	-.138	-.061
Q5_9	.847	-.111	.240	.166
Q5_10	.926	-.135	-.177	-.086

6 CONCLUSION

The findings suggest that the serviced apartments would be wise to apply customer profiles into practical characteristics of services.

Overall, the research discussed in this paper explores the various sections of customer profiling which results in improving occupancy levels and thus prove that the null hypothesis drawn can be rejected. These findings can be considered as the elements of developing a strong customer relationship that ultimately results in improving occupancies in serviced apartments which is needed in order to survive in today's competitive hospitality environment.

REFERENCES

- Adomavicius, G. & Tuzhilin, A., 2001. Using data mining methods to build customer profiles, *Computer* 34(2): 74-82.
- Brown, S. A., 2000. *Customer Relationship Management*, John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd, Toronto

- Buckinx, W., Verstraeten, G. & Poel, D. Van den, 2007. Predicting customer loyalty using the internal transactional database, *Expert Systems with Applications*, 32(1): 125–134
- Chandramouly, A. 2008. Serviced apartments prove a boon for medical tourists. *The Hindu Business Line, Business Daily* from THE HINDU group of publications, 25 June 2008. India.
- Crawford-Welch, S. 1994. Restaurant and foodservice marketing into the 21st century, *Journal of Restaurant and Foodservice Marketing* 1(1): 1–19.
- Cronin, J, Brady, M.K. & Hult, G. 2000. Assessing the effects of quality, Value, and Customer Satisfaction on Consumer behavioral intentions in Service environments, *Journal of retailing*, 76(2), 193–218.
- Donnelly, M., Lynch, P. & Holden. M.T. 2008. Building Loyalty; creating Value through Customer Experiences in Tourism, THRIC conference.
- Dube, L. & Renaghan, L. M. 2000. Creating Visible Customer Value, *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 41 (1), 62–72.
- Hwang, H., Jung, T. & Suh, E. 2004. An LTV model and customer segmentation based on customer value: A case study on the wireless telecommunication industry. *Expert Systems with Applications* (26): 181–188.
- Lee, H. H. and Kim, J. 2008. The effects of shopping orientations on consumers' satisfaction with product search and purchases in a multi-channel environment, *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 12(2): 193–216.
- Loveman, G.W. & Heskett, J.L. 1999. *Service-profit chain research*, McGraw.
- Moschis, G., Curasi, C. & Bellenger, D. 2003. Restaurant selection preferences of mature consumers, *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*. August, 51–60.
- McKenna, R., 1991. Marketing is everything, *Harvard Business Review*, 69(1): 65–69.
- Payne, A., Halt, S. & Frow, P. 2000. Integrating employee, customer and shareholder value through an enterprise performance model: an opportunity for financial service. *The International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 18(6): 258–73.
- Reichheld, F. F. & Sasser, W.E. Jr. 1990. Zero defections: quality comes to service. *Harvard Business review*.
- Serviced Apartment. In Wikipedia. Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/serviced_apartment in October 2009.
- Swift, R. S., 2001. *Accelerating Customer Relationships*, Prentice Hall PTR, NJ.
- The Global Serviced Apartment Industry Report (2008–09).
- Tiwana, A., 2001, *The Essential Guide to Knowledge Management: E-Business and CRM Applications*, Prentice Hall PTR, NJ.
- Wayland, R. E. & Cole, P. M., 1997, *Customer Connections: New Strategies for Growth*, Harvard Business School Press.
- Zaveri, P. 2006, August 1. *Advent of Serviced Apartments in India*. HVS International-Global Hospitality Consulting, 1–4.

Hypermarket fresh foods' attributes toward customer satisfaction

M.F.S. Bakhtiar, M.S. Mohd Zahari, A.R. Azhar & M.S.Y. Kamaruddin
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Malaysia's food retailing industry has been experiencing tremendous growth over the years. This evolving pattern is influenced by the changing behavior and lifestyle of local consumers, thus impacting their purchase behaviour. Through quantitative research approach, this paper examined customers' satisfaction toward fresh food attributes in hypermarkets. Through self reported questionnaire, 387 respondents were approached using convenience sampling method. It was discovered that majority of them are satisfied with the overall quality of fresh food products, slightly satisfied with price and availability of fresh foods. Overall, understanding the importance of fresh food attributes is crucial as it impacts customer's satisfaction at large.

Keywords: hypermarket, fresh food attribute, customer satisfaction

1 INTRODUCTION

The evolution in food retailing industry has created a changing scenario in today's businesses; fresh food retail stores are being replaced with modern fresh food retail outlets (Goldman & Hino, 2004). The increase in population and rising personal disposable income has led to significant shifts in the demand of the fresh food retail outlets like supermarket and the hypermarkets. In Malaysia, the food retailing industry is experiencing incredible growth with modern fresh food retail hypermarkets dominating local retail trade (Shamsudin & Selamat 2005). It was further contended that hypermarkets started penetrating Malaysia's market in the early millennium and are mainly located in the major urban centers. In conjunction with the development of the fresh food retail industry, the behavior of Malaysian consumers has changed in line with changes of their lifestyle. Consumers now seek for variety, quality, availability, freshness and others attributes when searching for fresh goods (Baker 1990). Consumers formulate their experience through satisfaction which is affected by several factors including product variety, assortment, quality, and pricing policy (Morschett et al., 2005) hence evaluating the retailers offerings of a combination of all the attributes in order to decide their degree of satisfaction (Finn and Louviere, 1996). Several studies have examined how fresh food attributes (quality, price, and availability) affect customer satisfaction (Hackl et al., 2000). However, most studies were only to specific countries, like United States, Western Europe and Australia with scarce empirical evidence from a Malaysian retail context. Therefore, this study aimed to access the hypermarkets' fresh food attributes (quality, price and availability) toward customer satisfaction in local context.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Malaysia's hypermarket industry*

Hypermarket evolution in Malaysia is rapidly growing especially by early millennium (Abu, 2004). Strong economic conditions with the increase in consumers demand for niche and value-added products have led to the increasing number of hypermarkets. Hypermarket chains are rapidly growing to meet the needs of more affluent consumers due to changes in society educational levels and consumers' shopping behavior. Shamsudin & Selamat (2005) expounded that foreign owned hypermarkets are fast gaining popularity, attracting consumers to "one stop" concept stores offering various goods including fresh foods.

2.2 *Fresh food attributes (freshness, quality, price and availability)*

Kennedy et al. (2004) deduced that product appearance, which comprises of color and physical appearance are used in order to judge freshness. Product appearance is crucial as consumers rely entirely on their visual cues to determine the degree of quality during purchase. The freshness of frozen meat and fish are important from health perspectives and several methods have been established to determine this. In another vein, Goldman & Hino (2004) added that in the developed countries many consumers emphasized fresh products in their food preparation and hypermarkets and supermarkets are their options.

Sloan et al. (1984) manifested that consumers are generally becoming more demanding for food quality as a result of the increase in individual and family income and the willingness to pay extra. With the improvement in today's education, Farhangmehr et al.

(2000) contended that consumers gave greater concern on quality and price when purchasing food products. Quality and taste were cited as the most important criteria in selecting fresh meat; a study conducted in Scotland proved that locals believe that there is a difference in the quality of fresh meat between both retail stores and hypermarkets. Quality has different interpretation according to different people (Goldman & Hino 2004). According to Gomez et al., (2004), quality is seen as “a satisfaction in maintaining the freshness of the products” and that improvements in quality have a positive impact on satisfaction while reduction in quality of the same magnitude has a significantly greater chance of reducing satisfaction.

Price is a powerful and convincing tool to attract consumers to purchase from a particular retail outlet. According to Pride et al (2005), it is a tool which informs consumers about the value of the product and ultimately brings satisfaction. Price competition was mentioned as a reason for consumers to buy fresh food from other retail outlets and those offering good quality products at a lower price will attract more consumers. Trappey & Lai (1997) stated that offering lower prices is an important reason for consumers to shop and motivates them buy products from hypermarkets (Farhangmehr et al. 2000). Pricing was also found to be one of the most important attributes in grocery-shopping decisions and determinant of different consumer groups (Carpenter & Moore, 2006). Consumers can be inelastic to price changes for grocery purchases and price has a great effect on the value of the store (Sirohi et al., 1998).

Hypermarkets in general are capable of offering a wide variety of food and non-food items for consumers. The advantage of shopping at hypermarkets is they can buy other items at the same time. Farhangmehr et al. (2000) confirmed that Portuguese consumers preferred to shop at modern retail outlets because of the possibility of buying everything under one roof. When asked why Malaysians shop at shopping malls, the majority of the respondents cited the variety of shops and products as the main criteria to shop at modern retail outlets (Mui et al. 2003). Product variety influences customer's perception of a store creating the perception concerning product variety, later influencing both satisfaction and store choice (Hoch et al., 1999).

2.3 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a crucial issue for retail management (Anselmsson, 2006); it is linked to several important outcomes including sales performance, customer retention and loyalty (Darian et al., 2001; Gomez et al., 2004; Anselmsson, 2006). An extensive examination of early studies in consumer satisfaction illustrates that most researchers define customer satisfaction, as a post choice evaluative judgment concerning a specific purchase decision (Oliver, 1980; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988). Bolton & Drew (1999) identified two types of satisfaction: the

“transaction-specific” and the “overall” or cumulative satisfaction. From the transaction-specific perspective, customer satisfaction is viewed as a post-choice evaluation of a specific purchase occasion (Oliver, 1980). In contrast, the overall or cumulative perspective suggests that satisfaction accumulates across a series of experiences with the product, which results in an overall evaluation over time (Anderson et al., 1994). Studies have proven that satisfaction should be viewed as a judgment based on the cumulative experience rather than a transaction specific phenomenon (Anderson et al., 1994). Cumulative satisfaction in the retail setting can be interpreted as the result of evaluating the “shopping trip” and retailer's offer in correlation to the consumers' fulfilled expectations (Sivadas & Baker-Prewitt, 2000). Thus, consumer satisfaction in this study is defined as “the customer's overall evaluation of the store experience” (MacIntosh & Lockshin, 1997). Since satisfaction is the overall evaluation of stimuli affecting the customer, it is certain that one can define different subgroups of customers with different levels of satisfaction (Morschett et al., 2005).

3 METHODOLOGY

In accessing the hypermarkets fresh foods' attributes toward customer satisfaction, a quantitative research approach was employed using self administered questionnaire. Bahasa Melayu was used in the instrumentation to ease respondents' understanding of the subject matters. Several hypermarkets in Selangor were chosen for data collection using convenience sampling technique, and data from 387 respondents were successfully gathered. The data were later analyzed using descriptive analysis approach.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

Frequency test was used against all demographic and other related variables (gender, age together with average money (RM) spent per visit, frequency of purchasing and general concern of fresh food attributes). From 387 respondents, 76.0 percent ($n = 294$) were females as opposed to 24.0 percent ($n = 93$) males. Next, 58.9 percent ($n = 228$) of the respondents are between 40–49 years old, followed by 26.6 percent ($n = 103$) from 30–39, 10.3 percent ($n = 40$) from 19–29 as opposed to only 4.1 percent ($n = 16$) above 50 years old.

On average, 39.8 percent ($n = 154$) of the respondents earned around RM2500 below per month, followed by 48.8 percents ($n = 189$) with the range from RM2501- RM4500, 9.0 percent ($n = 35$) from RM4501- RM6000 and only 2.3 percent ($n = 9$) earned above RM6001.

Looking at the frequency of shopping, 33.1 percent ($n = 125$) buy fresh food from hypermarket once

Table 1. Mean scores on quality of fresh goods.

No.	Variables	<i>n</i>	(M)	S.D
1.	Overall quality of fresh food items	387	3.51	0.747
2.	Freshness of the fresh goods	387	3.53	0.733
3.	Physical appearance of fresh goods	387	3.54	0.728
4.	Arrangement of the fresh goods	387	3.57	0.745
5.	Packaging the fresh goods	387	3.59	0.735
6.	Cleanliness of fresh goods	387	3.57	0.765
7.	Quality of vegetables	387	3.59	0.706
8.	Quality of meat items	387	3.57	0.739
9.	Quality of seafood items	387	3.52	0.778
10.	Quality of frozen foods	387	3.57	0.745
11.	Quality of fruit produces	387	3.55	0.781
12.	Quality of pastry and bakery goods	387	3.52	0.778

Scale: 1 = Strongly dissatisfied, 2 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Slightly satisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 5 = Totally satisfied.

a month, 30.1 percent (*n* = 119) twice, 20.4 percent (*n* = 79) three times and 15.8 percent (*n* = 61) visiting more than four times a month.

Moving on to the average spending per visit to hypermarkets, 41.9 percent (*n* = 162) spent between RM 101-RM 200, 32.0 percent (*n* = 124) between RM 201-RM 300 while 16.8 percent (*n* = 65) spent RM 100 and 9.3 percent (*n* = 36) spend more than RM300.

When it came to fresh goods in hypermarkets, 41.9 percent (*n* = 162) are concern for quality, 40.1 percents (*n* = 155) look upon on price, 30.4 percent (*n* = 52) on the availability and only 4.7 percent (*n* = 18) cared for the reliability.

In terms of fresh goods information at hypermarkets, 54.8 percent (*n* = 212) get the source from media, 20.2 percent (*n* = 78) from word of mouth, 20.7 percent (*n* = 80) promotional materials such as brochures, leaflets', and flyers while 4.4 percent (*n* = 17) from the internet.

4.2 Customer satisfaction of fresh food attributes

The mean score on items in assessing customer satisfaction toward fresh food attributes in hypermarkets are quality, price, availability and reliability. The result is presented in Table 1. From the table, majority of respondents were satisfied with the overall quality of fresh products in hypermarkets (*M* = 3.51). They were also satisfied with the freshness (*M* = 3.53), physical appearance (*M* = 3.54), arrangement (*M* = 3.57), packaging (*M* = 3.59) and cleanliness of fresh goods (*M* = 3.57). Degree of satisfaction was further explored through the attributes of specific items. This result indicates that quality of the fresh food offered by hypermarket meets customers' need as most of the customers were totally satisfied with specific products.

Table 2. Mean scores on price of fresh goods.

No.	Variables	<i>n</i>	(M)	S.D
1.	Overall price of fresh food items	387	3.28	0.796
2.	Affordable overall prices	387	3.35	0.776
3.	Cheap overall prices	387	3.31	0.731
4.	Price of fresh good is consistent	387	3.33	0.784
7.	Price of fruit produce	387	3.32	0.776
8.	Price of frozen foods	387	3.30	0.756
9.	Price of pastry and bakery goods	387	3.29	0.703
10.	Price of seafood items	387	3.27	0.778
11.	Price of vegetables	387	3.23	0.770
12.	Price of meat items	387	3.21	0.757

Scale: 1 = Strongly dissatisfied, 2 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Slightly satisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 5 = Totally satisfied.

Besides the quality of fresh food, price is considered to be the most sensitive element which determined the likelihood of customers to shops at hypermarkets. In relation to this, respondent's level of satisfaction towards price of fresh goods at hypermarkets was also explored. As opposed to quality, the magnitude of mean score shows that respondents in this study were minimally satisfied with all items in comparison to the price offered; they were slightly satisfied with the overall price of fresh food items (*M* = 3.28) and equally satisfied stating that hypermarkets offer affordable (*M* = 3.35) and cheap overall price (*M* = 3.31). They also had similar feelings with regard to the consistency of fresh good price (*M* = 3.33).

Again, the same level of satisfaction was given to individual products. As such, the overall respondent were slightly satisfied with the price of fruit produce (*M* = 3.32), frozen foods (*M* = 3.30), pastry and bakery goods (*M* = 3.29), seafood items (*M* = 3.27), vegetables (*M* = 3.23) and meat items (*M* = 3.21). The overall result is shown in Table 2.

Availability of fresh good is equally important; eleven (11) items were used in the instrument to tap respondents or consumer level of satisfaction related to this attributes. The results is displayed in Table 3.

Results from the analysis shows that respondents were slightly satisfied with the overall availability of local (*M* = 3.27), imported fresh items (*M* = 3.26) and the availability of variety fresh goods (*M* = 3.28) in hypermarkets. Similar feelings were expressed on the availability of local and imported frozen foods (*M* = 3.30), local and imported meat items (3.28), local and imported vegetables (*M* = 3.27), local and imported fruit items (*M* = 3.27) and local and imported fish and other seafood items (*M* = 3.24). Contemplating the patterns of the mean scores, similar argument as of the preceding one could be used. It has become a normal practice for any hypermarket to be concerned about the price, availability of the products as they are equally important to attracting customers.

Table 3. Mean scores on availability of fresh goods.

No.	Items	n	M)	S.D
1.	Overall availability of all local fresh items	387	3.27	0.765
2.	Overall availability of all imported fresh items	387	3.26	0.738
3.	The availability on the variety of fresh good	387	3.28	0.726
4.	The availability of local and imported frozen foods	387	3.30	0.723
5.	The availability of local and imported meat items	387	3.28	0.716
6.	The availability of local and imported vegetable items	387	3.27	0.765
7.	The availability of local and imported fruit items	387	3.27	0.745
8.	The availability of local and imported fish and seafood items	387	3.24	0.748

Scale: 1 = Strongly dissatisfied, 2 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Slightly satisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 5 = Totally satisfied.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of the findings

The result revealed that female outweighs male customers; this is probably due to the fact women perform most of the grocery shopping in a family. The middle-age group represents the highest number of consumers as compared to other age groups. Results also revealed that more than half of the consumers visited a hypermarket once a month. The average income of consumers is between RM2500 to RM4500 and average spending per visit is between RM 100 to RM 300. Moving to fresh goods in hypermarkets, consumers gave a greater concern on the quality and price compared to the availability and the reliability of service. Results also revealed that more than half of the total respondents get the information on fresh goods at hypermarkets through the media while the rest via word of mouth and other means like brochures, leaflets, flyers and the Internet.

Results from the analysis revealed that majority of respondents were satisfied with the overall quality of fresh products in hypermarkets. They were also satisfied with the freshness, physical appearance, arrangement, packaging and cleanliness of fresh goods. The levels of satisfaction were further expressed through specific items such as quality of vegetables, meat items, frozen foods, fruit, and seafood items including pastry and bakery goods.

As opposed to quality, respondents were merely satisfied with the overall price of fresh food items; equally satisfied with the fact that hypermarkets provide affordable and cheap overall prices as well as consistent price for fresh goods. In fact, the same level of satisfaction was recorded for the individual products such as fruit produce, frozen foods, pastry and

bakery goods, seafood items, vegetables as well as meat items.

Similar to quality, the analysis revealed that consumers were slightly satisfied with the overall availability of the local and imported fresh items as well as the availability of variety fresh goods in the hypermarkets. Similar feelings were recorded in terms of availability of local and imported frozen foods, local and imported meat items, local and imported vegetables, local and imported fruits and the availability of local and imported fish as well as seafood items.

5.2 Study limitations and future research

Since this study was only focused on one hypermarket, the findings were not strong to represent the whole hypermarkets in the country. Future studies should consider respondents from various hypermarkets.

5.3 Implications and conclusion

This study revealed that price is one of the utmost sensitive elements which determine the propensity of customers to purchase at hypermarkets. In fact, satisfaction with the price of fresh food products influences customers' loyalty with hypermarket. Hypermarkets should be more sensitive with the prices of fresh good they offer if they intent to stay competitive among other competitors in gaining big chunk of the market.

As a conclusion, understanding the customers' needs is vital for hypermarket operators as to ensure consumers satisfaction especially with regard to price and other elements like quality and availability. This will not only improve consumers purchase decision but encourage repeat purchase behavior and creating loyalty toward particular hypermarkets.

REFERENCES

- Abu, N.K. 2004. Service quality dimensions: a study on various sizes of grocery retailers a conceptual paper. accessed on October 20, (2008).
- Ahmed, Z.U., Ghingold, M. and Dahari, Z. 2007. Malaysian shopping mall behaviour: an exploratory study. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics* 19(4): 331–348.
- Anderson, E.W., Fornell, C. and Lehmann, D.R. 1994. Customer satisfaction, marketshare, and profitability: findings from Sweden, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 58 No. 3, pp. 53–66.
- Anselmsson, J. 2006. Sources of customer satisfaction with shopping malls: a comparative study of different customer segments, *International Review of Retail Distribution and Consumer Research*, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 115–38.
- Baker, J.A. 1990. The effect of retail store environments of consumer perceptions of quality, price and value. Doctoral Dissertation, Texas A+M University.
- Bolton, R.N. and Drew, J.H. 1991. A multi-stage model of customers' assessments of service quality and value, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 17 No. 4, pp. 375–84.
- Carpenter, J.M. and Moore, M. 2006. Consumer demographics, store attributes and retail format choice in the US grocery market, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 34 No. 6, pp. 434–52.

- Farhangmehr, M., Marques, S. and Silva, J. 2000. Consumer and retailer perceptions of hypermarkets and traditional retail stores in Portugal. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 7: 197–206.
- Finn, A. and Louviere, J. 1996. Shopping center image, consideration and choice: anchor store distribution. *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 35 No. 3, pp. 241–51.
- Goldman, A. and Hino, H. 2004. Supermarkets vs. traditional retail stores: diagnosing the barriers to supermarkets' market share growth in an ethnic minority community. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 12: 273–284.
- Goldman, A., Krider, R. and Ramaswami, S. 1999. The persistent competitive advantage of traditional food retailers in Asia: Wet market's continued dominance in Hong Kong. *Journal of Macromarketing* 19: 126–139.
- Gomez, I.M., McLaughlin, W.E. and Wittink, R.D. 2004. Customer satisfaction and retail sales performance: an empirical investigation. *Journal of Retailing*, Vol. 80 No. 4, pp. 265–78.
- Hackl, P., Scharitzer, D. and Zuba, R. 2000. Customer satisfaction in the Austrian food retail market. *Total Quality Management*, Vol. 11 No. 7, pp. 999–1006.
- Hoch, S.J., Bradlow, E.T. and Wansink, B. 1999. The variety of an assortment. *Marketing Science*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 527–46.
- Kennedy, O.B., Stewart-Knox, B.J., Mitchell, P.C. and Thurnham, D.I. 2004. Consumer perceptions of poultry meat: a qualitative analysis. *Nutrition and Food Science* 34(3): 122–129.
- Lumpkin, J.R. and McConkey, C.W. 1984. Identifying determinants of store choice of fashion shoppers. *Akron Business & Economic Review*, Vol. 15 No. 4, pp. 36–55.
- MacIntosh, G. and Lockshin, L. 1997. Retail relationships and store loyalty: a multi-level perspective. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, Vol. 14 No. 5, pp. 487–97.
- Morschett, D., Swoboda, B. and Schramm-Klein, H. 2006. Competitive strategies in retailing an investigation of the applicability of Porter's framework for food retailers. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 275–87.
- Mui, L.Y., Badarulzaman, N. and Ahmad, A.G. 2003. Pacific Rim Real Estate Society 9th Annual Conference, January 20–22, 2003: Retail activity in Malaysia: from shop-house to hypermarket. Brisbane, QLD: University of Queensland and Queensland University of Technology.
- Oliver, R.L. and DeSarbo, W.S. 1988. Response determinants in satisfaction judgments. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 495–507.
- Oliver, R.L. 1980. A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 17 No. 4, pp. 460–9.
- Pride, W., Elliot, G., Rundle-Thiele, S., Waller, D. and Paladino, A. 2005. *Marketing: Core Concepts and Applications*, John Wiley & Sons Australia.
- Shamsudin, M.N. and Selamat, J. 2005. Changing Retail Food Sector in Malaysia. PECC Pacific Food System Outlook 2005-06 Annual Meeting. Kun Ming, China 11–13 May.
- Sloan, A.E., Leone, L.C., Powers, M. and McNutt, K.W. 1984. Changing consumer lifestyle. *Food Technology*: 99–103.
- Sirohi, N., E. W. McLaughlin & D. R. Wittink 1998. A model of consumer perceptions and store loyalty intentions for a supper-market retailer. *Journal of Retailing*, 74(2): 223–245.
- Sivadas, E. and Baker-Prewitt, J.L. 2000. An examination of the relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction and store loyalty. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 73–82.
- Sloan, A.E., Leone, L.C., Powers, M. and McNutt, K.W. 1984. Changing consumer lifestyle. *Food Technology*: 99–103.
- Trappey, C. and Lai, M.K. 1997. Differences in factors attracting consumers to Taiwan's supermarkets and traditional wet markets. *The Journal of Family and Economics Issues* 18(2): 211–224.
- Zinkhan, G.M., de Fontenelle, S. and Balazs, A.L. 1999. The structure of Sao Paulo street markets: Evolving patterns of retail institutions. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs* 33(1) 3–26.

This page intentionally left blank

Case study: Measuring service quality of homestay in Malacca using SERVQUAL matrix

Ahmad Fazli Bin Mohd Khodri

Politeknik Merlimau, Melaka, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The state of Malacca is highly dependent on the tourism sector which is supported by the lodging service industry in boosting the economy. Home-stay or in the Malay language – *Inap-Desa* has become a popular mode of lodging service in Malacca. The number of operators has also, every year, increased tremendously. To ensure continuous home-stay development and guest satisfaction, quality should be emphasized. This preliminary study uses the popular instruments to measure quality of service i.e SERVQUAL Matrix; which is the combination of two analytical service quality models – the SERVQUAL model and the Gap Analysis model. These instruments focuses on comparison matrix or gap scores between perception and expectations of home-stay guests toward five elements of service quality; *reliability, tangibility, assurance, empathy and responsiveness*. The findings stated negative gap scores for all elements which indicated there is a weakness in service offering and delivery. Guest disappointment clearly showed when the perception means scored less than expectation means. It is hoped that the findings can provide useful information for quality improvement to industry stakeholders such as industry researchers and experts, existing *home-stay* operators and potential entrepreneurs who want to venture into the business as a *home-stay* operator in Malacca.

Keywords: service, quality, home-stay, SERVQUAL, gap analysis

1 INTRODUCTION

According to 2010 statistics released by the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia and the Malacca State Government, there are more than 40 registered home-stays operating in various locations throughout Malacca. This number is expected to increase as the State Government is committed to develop and promote tourism sectors. Statistics clearly stated that the home-stay industry has a big potential in becoming a major income contributor to the state of Malacca. Therefore, to ensure that this industry will grow rapidly, home-stay operators have to intensify efforts to attract more tourists to come and stay in Malacca. Among the major efforts that should be taken is to improve the quality of the service offered.

Quality is often an issue and is much debated in today's modern business world; more so in the context of service-based businesses. Quality can be defined as products or services that can meet customer expectations. Its definition may be simple to understand, but "quality" is actually a concept that is difficult to measure accurately (Loveloek, 2006). Argument is often raised about the quality gap between expectations and perception of service (Markovic & Raspor, 2010).

According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990), perception of service quality refers to how far service operators can successfully fulfill the purpose

of customer service. Meanwhile Ghobadian, Speller and Jones (1994) stated that the expectations of consumers, the process of service delivery and outcomes have direct impact on user perception. In conclusion the difference between perceptions and expectations on service quality will be able to determine the level of consumer satisfaction. This is true based on the quality gap model introduced by Parasuraman *et.al* (1985) and revised by Curry (1999), Luk and Layton (2002) and Zithaml and Bitner (2003). Researcher interprets that customer satisfaction is at a positive level when the perception of quality of services provided above as expected. This means that users will feel satisfied when the perception of the actual performance of the service experience goes beyond initial expectations.

2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The study measure the service quality based on **five (5)** research problem, as follows;

2.1 Reliability

Reliability is a major issue of quality in services. Many lodging industry players including home-stay operators cannot provide consistent service offerings and

delivery. Poor service would leave guest to assume that home-stay operators are not efficient. As a response home-stay has to deliver the service that has been promised in the advertising campaign.

2.2 Assurance

Excellence service highly depends on the service personnel's ability in delivering the services. Home-stay guests will evaluate the quality based on employee knowledge and attitude which can convince them to use the service repeatedly. Home-stay operators must ensure that their employees have the right knowledge and attitude for the job.

2.3 Tangibility

Good perceptions on physical facilities can add value to the service delivery process. In order to gain this good perception, home-stay operators in Malacca need to provide necessary facilities needed by the guest during the stay. Long-term investment on facilities and amenities must be made to ensure home-stay can sustain the business in future.

2.4 Empathy

Home-stay operators in Malacca need to be more active and sensitive to each guest's request. Most of service provider does not have a personal drive and initiative to help guests and adapt to the guests needs and demands. This will surely make guest feel not appreciated.

2.5 Responsiveness

Guests will evaluate home-stay services based on the willingness and speed of service workers and that guests can rely on employees for assistance. Employee ability to give personal attention during service delivery is very crucial for the success of the service.

3 OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The main objective of this preliminary study is to measure the quality of Malacca home-stay services. Measurement is done by looking at the different (gap) that exists between guest perception and expectation. The gap is determinant factor of customer satisfaction.

4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The study result and analysis can be used by the authorities and industry players to develop and find the best strategy to improve the quality of the home-stay experience. Researcher believes this study is the first initiative in the process to help boost the tourism sector in Melaka.

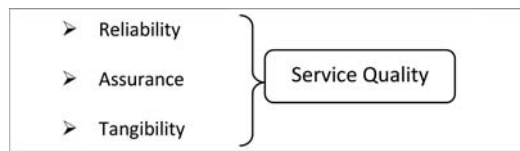
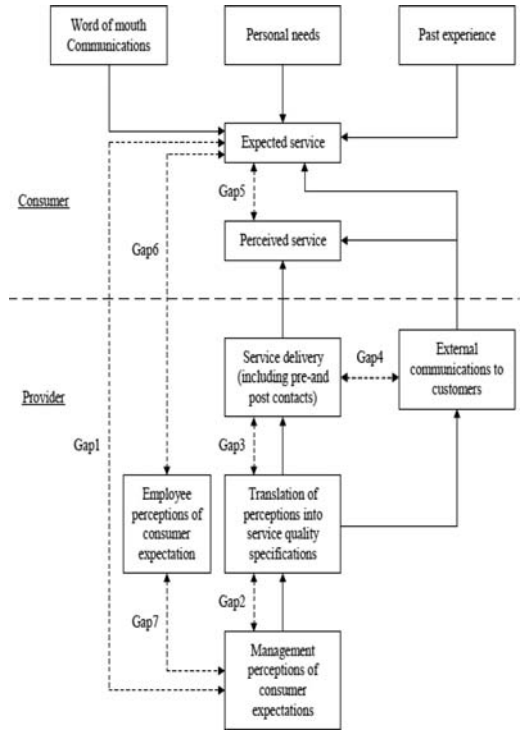


Figure 1. Model 1 – SERVQUAL conceptual model.



Source: Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V., Berry, L. L., "A Conceptual Model of Service Quality and Its Implication for Service Quality Research", *Journal of Marketing*, 49, Fall, 1985, p. 44 and Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., Parasuraman, A., "Communication and Control Processes in the Delivery of Service Quality", *Journal of Marketing*, 52, April, 1998, p. 36., in: *Tourism and hospitality management*.

Figure 2. Model 2 – Service gap analysis conceptual model.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research design

The case study approach was used in this research, with adaptation and modification of two models i.e. the SERVQUAL Model and Gap Analysis Model simply known as SERVQUAL Matrix. It is also sometimes referred to as SERVPERF which was first used by Cronin and Taylor (1992).

5.2 Research sample

Since this is preliminary study, the sampling techniques used is systematic sampling which focused on

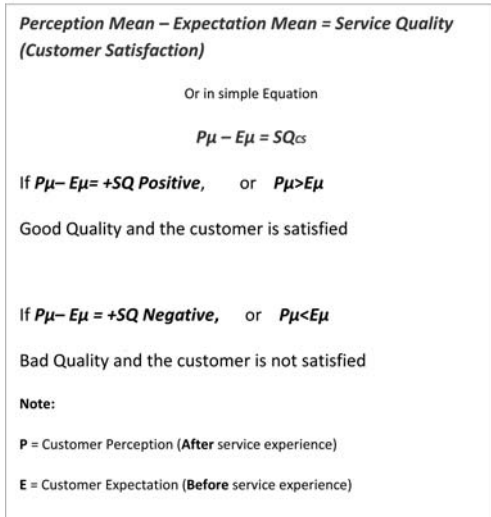
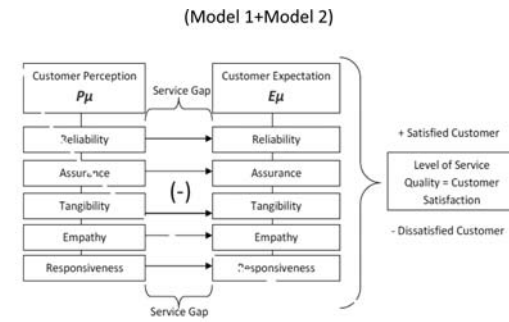


Figure 3. SERVQUAL matrix conceptual model (model 1 + model 2).

Table 1. Home-stay sample.

Homestay	Location (District)
1. Che-Ad Homestay	Merlimau, Jasin Melaka
2. Singgah Kampung Stay	Alor Gajah, Melaka
3. Kampong Pak Ali (The Malay Village & Farmstay)	Bandar Melaka, Melaka

the perceptions and expectations of guest at only three home-stays (Table 1). The criteria for sample selection was mainly to represent three districts in the state of Malacca. Fifty (50) responses have been collected from each selected home-stay.

5.3 Research instrument

Structured questionnaires were used to obtain responses from a target sample. It consisted of three parts namely: section A; personal information of respondents, section B; SERVQUAL items and

Table 2. Reliability test (Cronbach alpha) on SERVQUAL matrix score ($P\mu - E\mu$).

ServQual element	Perception (P) Cronbach	Expectation (E) Cronbach	Gap Score Cronbach (P-E)
Assurances	0.864	0.913	0.858
Empathy	0.880	0.936	0.818
Reliability	0.809	0.894	0.744
Responsive	0.944	0.947	0.898
Tangible	0.834	0.965	0.763

Table 3. Total Mean SERVQUAL Matrix Score ($P\mu - E\mu$).

SERVQUAL element	Perception mean $P\mu$	Expectation mean $E\mu$	Gap score mean ($P\mu - E\mu$)	Gap score Rank
Assurances	5.810	6.255	-0.445	5th
Empathy	5.704	6.076	-0.372	3rd
Reliability	5.840	6.132	-0.292	2nd
Responsive	5.740	6.165	-0.425	4th
Tangibility	5.800	6.085	-0.285	1st

section C; suggestions and comments. Section B is the most important part which combined 22 perception items and 22 expectation items and it was divided into five sections according to SERVQUAL model: 1. reliability, 2. assurance, 3.tangibility, 4. responsiveness and 5.empathy. This section used seven (7) point Likert-scales.

6 ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In order to determine the reliability of data collected for the study, Cronbach Alpha test was run by the researcher. Results showed that all the score were above 0.70 which indicated the data is suitable with the study as suggested by Nunnally (1978) that the minimum of 0.70 would be an acceptable level.

Table 3 describes overall findings of the study. Based on the Gap Score mean, the elements are arranged (ranked) to determine the quality level and service gap.

6.1 Tangibility

The element of tangibility is ranked at the top in the Gap Score of -0.285 with $P\mu:5.8 < E\mu:6.085$. It showed that overall, home-stay service in Malacca is not as impressive as expected by guests, the ability of home-stay operators to provide facilities at the premise is only at an adequate level. Home-stay operators need better facilities and amenities to be able to attract more guests to stay-in.

6.2 Reliability

Guest at the home-stay put the reliability elements at the second rank. With Gap Score of -0.292 , indicating that guests do not believe the home-stay operators can provide consistent service from time to time. Most of the guests perceived that the homestay operators are not delivering the service as promised in advertisement.

6.3 Empathy

The element of empathy score -0.372 on the Gap Score. This portrayed the weakness on the employees' ability to show courtesy and adapt to guests' demands. Most of guest expected ($E\mu:6.076$) to be treated well and want every request to be fulfilled, but in this case, it seemed to have not happened as proven with $P\mu:5.704 < E\mu:6.076$. Definitely the guest who experienced bad service would not come again in the future.

6.4 Responsiveness

Ranked at the fourth position with Gap Score of -0.425 , the responsiveness of employees at the home-stay is poor. Guests cannot get an immediate attention from the employees whenever they faced a problem or need extra help during the stay. In this situation home-stay operators need to provide personal attention to the guests so they will feel more appreciated.

6.5 Assurances

The assurance element is the weakest, with an average Gap Score of 0.445 , which showed that guests does not believe in the ability of workers at the home-stay. This element is ranked on the last spot with $P\mu:5.810 < E\mu:6.255$. It is most likely that guests perceived that employees do not have enough knowledge about the area or tourist locations around the state Malacca as expected by guest. Guest often expect the employees and management to provide latest information related to the area of destination.

7 LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Small sample and limited time frame are the main limitation for this study. The study only focused on one home-stay selected from each district in Malacca which might not accurately present guest actual expectation and perception about home-stay service in Malacca. Plus, total time taken to complete this study is only three months which if more time was given more data could be collected; thus provide more accurate study on total population of home-stays in Malacca. This study will be used as the pilot test and guidelines by the researcher for future exploration.

8 DISCUSSION

According to Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler (2003) there are seven (7) possible gaps that might occur in service assessment. The gaps are explained below;

8.1 Gap 1 – Delivery gap

This happens when there is a difference between specified delivery standards and the home-stay's actual performance. For this study, the issue became a bit complicated since there is no standard procedure (SOP) for home-stay exists (yet).

8.2 Gap 2 – Perceptions gap

The difference between service actually delivered and what guests perceived they have received cause this perception gap. This is due to guests not able to accurately evaluate service quality. As mentioned in the analysis, most Malacca home-stay guests made negative perceptions based on their own personal experience or empathy which is not always reliable.

8.3 Gap 3 – Internal communications gap

The difference between what the home-stay's advertising campaign and employees think about product's features, performance, and service quality level and what the company is actually able to deliver. Again, as mentioned in the analysis, three elements empathy, assurances and responsiveness related to the employees ability in delivering services. As shown by the results, employees cannot perform their task accordingly which may be due to miss-understanding about the instruction from the home-stay's management.

8.4 Gap 4 – Service gap

There are differences between what guests expect to receive and their perceptions of the service that is actually delivered. Guest stated on their response that they do not felt assured that home-stays in Malacca can deliver the service consistently. They also perceived that the service employees cannot perform their job accordingly and that home-stay cannot also provide excellent facilities during their stay.

8.5 Gap 5 – Knowledge gap

This gap can be detected when there is a difference between what home-stay believe guests expect and guest' actual needs and expectations. The main reason is due to insufficient guest relationship focus done by the Malacca home-stay operators. Home-stay operators need to be more responsive and empathic toward guests' feelings and emotions.

8.6 Gap 6 – Standard gap

Considered to be the same as delivery gap, there is a difference between quality standards established for service delivery and management perceptions of guest expectations. Guests may have expected home-stay to provide complete facilities during the stay but instead home-stay only provide adequate facilities only to fulfil minimum standards of the industry.

8.7 Gap 7 – Interpretation gap

This is the difference between what a home-stay's communication efforts actually promised and what a guest thinks was promised by these communications. Home-stay operators has to be responsible and reliable in their advertising campaign. False information might cause different interpretation among potential guest.

9 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATION

With reference to the analysis and discussions, the study concluded that service quality of home-stay in Malacca is very poor. There is a significant gap between the customers' perceptions and expectations. Each element were tested using the SERVQUAL Matrix, provided a meaningful average score of negative level on service performance which is far lower than anticipated. Generally, guests do not feel satisfied about the services received and demand more quality on the value of money paid. There are certainly a lot more things to be done by the home-stay operators and the Malacca state government in order to make Home-stay business more successful. And as mentioned through this study, service quality is the key to make all things possible.

10 RECOMMENDATION

In order to ensure continuous improvement in *home-stay* service, some ideas are proposed to close the gap thus could increase the quality of service offered by the home-stay operators.

10.1 Continuous research on customer needs and requirements and latest trend on home-stay

This study can be done through a series of customer surveys and market analysis based on complaints and suggestions. Malacca home-stay operators must take immediate action to address consumer complaints.

10.2 Training employees in the latest techniques and methods of service delivery

Continuous training is essential to ensure workers can provide high quality services based on actual performance. Home-stay employees and management must continue to increase and enhance their knowledge on the latest trends of industries. Employees who can

provide the best service should be rewarded accordingly as motivation to continue to provide the best and achieve quality service standards.

10.3 Developing Special Standard Procedures (SOP) and recognition for home-stay industry

Ensure continuous commitment of all organizations member on matters of quality and ensure that all employees understand the standards and procedures which have been introduced. Home-stay operators in Malacca can increase its efforts to achieve the highest level of performance by obtaining recognition from accreditation bodies such as Malaysia Hotels Association for 'Star Rating'. Standards procedure and recognition of quality can increase customer confidence toward the service.

10.4 Ensure service performance comparable to standard lodging establishment

Home-stay operators in Malacca need to understand the role of each member by matching the skills, abilities and knowledge parallel with the industry. The operator need to create a clear system of reward and training for each member and must always emphasize on teamwork and cooperation parallel to quality goals.

10.5 Co-operation with other tourism industry players and agencies

Partnership such as strategic alliances or collaboration may be done in various areas such as promotion, research and development. Home-stay owners should work together in obtaining the necessary information from advertising campaign to develop higher quality services which require the involvement from members. Cooperation should also be established with assistance from federal and states agencies such as the Department of Tourism Malaysia and the National Tourism Board. This support should be obtained to further strengthen the rules of the promotion and enhancement of quality of service.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad Fazli Bin Mohd Khodri. 2011. Kajian Kes: Mengukur Aras Kualiti Perkhidmatan Hospitaliti (Penginapan) di Melaka Menggunakan Model SERVQUAL Matrix. Research Paper Presented at National Conference on Research and Innovation in Technical and Vocational Education (CIE-TVET) 2011 on 16 to 17 November 2011.
- Farzaneh Mola and Jamil Jusoh. 2011. Service Quality in Penang Hotels: A Gap Score Analysis. World Applied Sciences Journal 12 (Special Issue of Tourism & Hospitality): 19–24, 2011. ISSN 1818-4952 © IDOSI Publications.
- Shun-Hsing Chen1*, Tsu-Ming Yeh2 and Chee-Cheng Chen. 2011. Integration SERVQUAL model and performance control matrix to improve service quality for the hot spring industry. Taiwan.

Graham Brown. 2010. Understanding the homestay experience: an emerging service imperative. Presented at International Research Symposium in Service Management Le Meridien Hotel, Mauritius, 24–27 August 2010. ISSN 1694-0938.

Ivana Blešić*, Dragan Tešanović and dorne Psodorov. 2010. Consumer satisfaction and quality management in the hospitality industry in South-East Europe. African Journal of Business Management Vol. 5(4), pp. 1388–1396, 18 February, 2011. ISSN 1993-8233

Ivana Blešić, Anđelija Ivkov-Džigurski, Aleksandra Dragin*, Ljubica Ivanović and Milana Pantelić. 2010. Application of Gap Model in the Researches of Hotel Services Quality. Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Science, University of Novi Sad, Trg Dositeja Obradovića 3, 21000 Novi Sad, Serbia

Christpher. Lovelock and Lauren.Wright. 2009. Principles of Service Marketing & Management. Ninth Edition. Prentice Hall.

Suzana Marković and Sanja raspor. 2009. Measuring Perceived Service Quality Using servqual: A Case Study of the Croatian Hotel Industry. Journal of Management. Polytechnic of Rijeka, Croatia.

Ivanka Avelini Holjevac, Suzana Marković and Sanja Raspor. 2009. Customer Satisfaction Measurement in Hotel Industry: Content Analysis Study. University of Rijeka.

Aysun Kapucugil Ikiz and Ali Masoudi .2008. A QFD and SERVQUAL Approach to Hotel Service Design. Azad University, Dept.of Industrial Engineering, Tehran, Iran

Irena Ograjenšek. 2008. Service quality. *Statistical Practice in Business and Industry* Edited by S.Y. Coleman, T. Greenfield, D.J. Stewardson and D.C. Montgomery? 2008 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd

Jasmina Gržinić .2007. Concepts Of Service Quality Measurement In Hotel Industry. Ekon. Misao Praksa DBK. GOD XVI. (2007) BR. 1. (81–98).

Christine A Hope and Leontios Filotheou. 2007. Measuring and Managing the Quality of Service in Hotels in Cyprus. Working Paper No 07/26. Paper presented at the 2007 POMS College of Service Operations.

Peter Mudie and Angela Pirrie. 2006. Services Marketing Management Third Edition. Published by Elsevier Ltd.

Pei Mey Lau, Dr. Abdolali Khatibi Akbar, and David Yong Gun Fie. 2005. Service Quality: A Study of the Luxury Hotels in Malaysia. The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge * Vol. 7 * Num. 2

Ahmed Ali Soliman and Anas Abdullah Alzaid. 2002. Service Quality in Riyadh's Elite Hotel: Measurement and Evaluation. J.King Saud University. Vol.14 Admin Sci (20. Pp. 83–103. Riyadh.

www.melaka.gov.my
http://www.homestaymelaka.gov.my

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: SERVQUAL data analysis template (Microsoft excess 2003)

RESPONSE DATA TEMPLATE					
A. RELIABILITY					
Enter the response value in the SCORE box					
ITEM	SCORE	ITEM	SCORE	P-E	DO NOT ENTER ANY NUMBER IN THIS COLUMN
Q.P1		Q.E1			GAP SCORE
Q.P2		Q.E2			
Q.P3		Q.E3			
Q.P4		Q.E4			
Q.P5		Q.E5			
B. ASSURANCE					
Enter the response value in the SCORE box					
ITEM	SCORE	ITEM	SCORE	P-E	DO NOT ENTER ANY NUMBER IN THIS COLUMN
Q.P1		Q.E1			GAP SCORE
Q.P2		Q.E2			
Q.P3		Q.E3			
Q.P4		Q.E4			
Q.P5		Q.E5			
C. TANGIBLES					
Enter the response value in the SCORE box					
ITEM	SCORE	ITEM	SCORE	P-E	DO NOT ENTER ANY NUMBER IN THIS COLUMN
Q.P1		Q.E1			GAP SCORE
Q.P2		Q.E2			
Q.P3		Q.E3			
Q.P4		Q.E4			
Q.P5		Q.E5			
D. EMPATHY					
Enter the response value in the SCORE box					
ITEM	SCORE	ITEM	SCORE	P-E	DO NOT ENTER ANY NUMBER IN THIS COLUMN
Q.P1		Q.E1			GAP SCORE
Q.P2		Q.E2			
Q.P3		Q.E3			
Q.P4		Q.E4			
Q.P5		Q.E5			
E. RESPONSIVENESS					
Enter the response value in the SCORE box					
ITEM	SCORE	ITEM	SCORE	P-E	DO NOT ENTER ANY NUMBER IN THIS COLUMN
Q.P1		Q.E1			GAP SCORE
Q.P2		Q.E2			
Q.P3		Q.E3			
Q.P4		Q.E4			
Q.P5		Q.E5			

Appendix 2: Gap score (Microsoft excess 2003)

RESPONDEN	GAP SCORE (PERCEPTION - EXPECTATION)				
	RELIABILITY	ASSURANCE	TANGIBLES	EMPATHY	RESPONSIVENESS
1	-0.2	0	0.5	0	0
2	-0.4	-1	0	0	0
3	-0.2	-0.25	0	-0.4	0
4	0.6	0.25	-0.25	-0.2	0
5	-1.2	-1.25	-1	-1	-1
6	0.2	-0.5	-2.75	-0.8	0.25
7	-0.6	0	-0.25	-0.2	0
8	0	0	0	0	0
9	-2	-2.25	-1	-2.4	-4.75
10	0	0	-0.75	-0.6	-0.25
11	-0.4	-1.25	-0.75	-0.4	-0.75
12	-1.2	-0.75	-1.25	-3	-1
13	-1.2	-0.75	-2.25	-1.8	-1.25
14	-0.6	-0.5	-0.75	-0.4	0
15	-1	0	0.5	-1	0
16	-0.2	-0.5	0	0	0
17	0.6	-0.75	-1.25	-1	-0.5
18	-1	-0.5	-2	-2	-1
19	0	0.25	0	0	0
20	0.8	0.75	0.5	0	0
21	-0.4	0.5	0.5	0.2	1.25
22	0	0.25	0.75	1	0
23	0.2	-0.25	0.25	-0.4	0.5
24	-0.8	1.25	0.5	0.4	-0.5
25	0	0	0	0	0
26	0	0.25	0	-0.2	0.25
27	-0.6	-0.25	0	1	1.25
28	-0.6	-0.25	1	0	-0.5
29	-0.2	0.25	-0.25	-0.4	0.25
30	0.8	-0.75	0	0.2	0.25
31	-0.2	-1	0.25	-0.2	-0.5
32	0.4	0.5	0.25	0.4	-0.25
33	-0.2	-1.25	0	-0.6	-0.75
34	-1	-0.5	-0.75	-0.4	-0.75
35	0	-0.75	0	-0.2	0
36	-0.2	-0.75	0.5	-0.4	0
37	-0.4	-0.25	0.75	1.2	0.25
38	0	-1	0.25	-1	-1
39	0	-0.5	0.5	-1	-0.25
40	-0.6	-0.75	0	0.2	-0.5
41	-0.8	-1	-1.75	0	-0.75
42	-1.2	-0.5	-0.75	-0.6	-1.25
43	1.4	1	-0.25	0.2	0.25
44	-0.6	-0.5	-1	-0.8	-0.5
45	-0.6	-0.75	-0.75	-0.6	-0.5
46	-0.2	-1.5	-0.75	-0.8	-0.75
47	0	0	-1	-1	-1
48	0	0.75	-0.25	0.4	0.25
49	-0.4	-4.5	0	0	-5
50	-0.6	-1	0.5	0	5

A clustering study of operational efficiency for international tourist hotels in Taiwan

Y.H. Kuo, H.N. Jiang, Y.Z. Hung, F.Y.Su & Y.Z. Lee

Taipei Chengshih University of Science and Technology, Taiwan

ABSTRACT: Based on the official data from the “Yearly Report on Tourist Hotel Operations in Taiwan” published by authorized administration, this study aims to cluster and classify all the international tourist hotels operating from 2005 to 2010 into experiment-determined number of groups to monitor and evaluate the hotels’ operation efficiency by comparing with other competitors within 6 continuous years. The study first collected 18 operational efficiency indexes which have overall monitored the operational efficiency of all international tourist hotels in Taiwan during 6 years, then series of statistical procedures were processed, the above indexes are calculated to assign each hotel in every year to a proper cluster to reflect its yearly operational efficiency level. Finally, conclusions with comparison among all clusters and hotels are drawn to summarize the findings and suggestions of this study.

Keywords: international tourist hotel, operational efficiency, clustering analysis, MANOVA, MDS

1 INTRODUCTION

According to “Tourism Highlights 2011 edition”, published by UNWTO, not only the international tourist arrivals have reached 940 million in 2010, up from 435 million in 1990, representing a growth of 216.1% in 2 decades, but international tourism receipts have risen by 350.8% in real terms US\$ 262 billion in 1990 to US\$ 919 billion in 2010.

The number of the tourists is one of the crucial factors influencing the hotel industry operators. On the other hand, available guestrooms reflect not only the indicator of the rise and fall of the hotel industry, but the nation’s as well, an even important resource of the foreign exchange to many countries. Since 1956, both the number of international tourist hotels and the available guestrooms of Taiwan kept growing sustainably. The number of tourists visiting grew up from 0.47 million in 1970 to 5.56 million in 2010, an increase of 11.78times; while the foreign exchange income from \$82 million in 1970 to \$5,936 million in 2010 – up 06.69. Meanwhile, the same growing trend has happened to the number of the international tourist hotels and the available guestrooms in the same period as well. Detailed statistics about the hotel industry is offered in table 1.

This paper is organized in the following structure: Section 2 reviews the recent literatures subject to operation of international hotel in Taiwan. Section 3 describes the methodology adopted in this study. Empirical results are presented in section 4. The final section concludes this study.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Different resources result in totally different competition strategies for international hotels. In order to draw up an individual competition strategy, the international tourism hotel has to evaluate its own operational performance and evaluate the strengths and limitations.

Yan (1999), Liu (2002), Chen (2003), Wang (2006) and Lin (2008) studied on operating efficiency of the domestic international tourist hotels. Zhang (2004) and Huang (2006) respectively estimated the lodging needs of domestic international tourist hotels between the local tourists and the foreign ones. Chen (2002) explored the recreation hotels tourist consuming behavior. Yang (2002) discussed the relationship among corporate culture, corporate vision, operating strategy and performance based on canonical analysis and regression analysis. Chen (2005) analyzed the location shifts of international tourist hotels in the city of Taipei. Kuo (2010, 2011) went into the operating performance of international tourist hotels. Though the operating efficiency of international hotel in Taiwan has attracted some researchers devoting their efforts to explore this subject, yet it seems, except for Kuo (2010, 2011), there is no study so far that systematically analyses and extract the main principal factors, then make use of these profiting indexes to cluster, yearly track and monitor, even visualize the distance between hotels of yearly profiting performance.

This research referred to 10 of the 18 indicators suggested by Chang and Huang (2006), and added

Table 1. Number of visitors, foreign exchange, hotels and guestrooms.

Year	Visitors	Foreign exchange (1 million USD)	Hotels	Guestrooms
1970	472,452	82	14	2,163
1971	539,755	110	15	2,542
1972	580,033	129	17	3,143
1973	824,393	246	20	4,613
1974	819,821	278	20	4,598
1975	853,140	359	20	4,439
1976	1,008,126	466	21	4,868
1977	1,110,182	527	23	5,174
1978	1,270,977	608	30	7,699
1979	1,340,382	919	34	9,160
1980	1,393,254	988	36	9,673
1981	1,409,465	1,080	42	11,945
1982	1,419,178	953	41	12,335
1983	1,457,404	990	44	12,982
1984	1,516,138	1,066	44	13,503
1985	1,451,659	963	44	13,468
1986	1,610,385	1,333	43	13,268
1987	1,760,948	1,619	43	13,223
1988	1,935,134	2,289	43	13,124
1989	2,004,126	2,698	43	12,965
1990	1,934,084	1,740	46	14,538
1991	1,854,506	2,018	46	14,538
1992	1,873,327	2,449	47	15,018
1993	1,850,214	2,943	50	15,953
1994	2,127,249	3,210	51	16,391
1995	2,331,934	3,286	53	16,714
1996	2,358,221	3,636	53	16,964
1997	2,372,232	3,402	54	16,845
1998	2,298,706	3,372	53	16,558
1999	2,411,248	3,571	56	17,403
2000	2,624,037	3,738	56	17,057
2001	2,831,035	4,335	58	17,815
2002	2,977,692	4,584	62	18,790
2003	2,248,117	2,976	62	18,776
2004	2,950,342	4,053	61	18,705
2005	3,378,118	4,977	60	18,385
2006	3,519,827	5,136	60	17,830
2007	3,716,063	5,214	60	17,733

8 other operating indexes selected by this study, to widely monitor the practicing efficiency of international hotels in Taiwan. Those 18 indexes were used in the following analysis ranging from 2005 to 2010, and their associated operating definitions were illustrated in table 2. Thus the purpose of this study is as the following.

- (1) To explore the crucial components of the gap levels in international tourist hotels' operation performance.
- (2) To explore the performance difference among the international tourist hotels with different years, areas and the amount of available guestrooms.
- (3) To offer all international tourist hotels yearly evaluation on their own operation performance, and to do clustering distance interpretation and

classification assessment comparison with the market competitors.

3 METHODOLOGY

A series of statistical procedures, including variables normalization, correlation analysis, FA(factor analysis), hierarchical clustering, K-means clustering, and MANOVA, are adopted in this study. In order to visualize clustering results, the study made use of MDS (multidimensional scaling) to reduce dimension from 5 to 2 to facilitate observations. This is to explore not only the main factors of the operating performance in international tourist hotels, but the gap levels in the same year as well; and to observe the difference of performance in different years. In the stage of data preparation, this study excluded the hotels with data missing and took 60 international hotels into account. The entire international tourist hotels analyzed is listed on table 7.

While calculating the correlation matrix of 18 variables, it is observed that most of the correlation coefficients show significantly correlated except V4. The FA is next performed to extract the PCA under eigenvalue is set to 1. The process shows the value of KMO is 0.729 and significant on Bartlett test. That indicates the following process of factor analysis is proper. Cumulative variance of FA is as listed on table 3, The 5 new extracted components from FA1 to FA5 is shown in table 4, reflects the rotated factor loadings and are renamed practicing efficiency room, profitability room division, occupied room rate, cost control, managing, and marketing efficiency, and utility consumption efficiency respectively.

4 EMPIRICAL RESULT

4.1 Hierarchical clustering

Based on similarity, hierarchical clustering gathers the most similar objects into one group. By monitoring the agglomerative schedule, all objects are gradually clustered into one group. Therefore, the proper number of clusters is determined by aggregation table. Table 5 pointed that, through the between-groups linkage, a jump increment of coefficients occurred from stage 300 to 301, indicating 6 clusters is an appropriate selection for K-means clustering.

4.2 K-means clustering

As a nonhierarchical algorithm, K-means clustering need to determine the cluster number first and can then be processed. Since hierarchical clustering has suggested 6 clusters earlier, K-means clustering can therefore assign all the hotels into 6 groups and calculate the corresponding means for 5 principal components in each cluster. Table 6 identifies the cluster means cross PCA, and hotels' cluster belongings are shown in table 7.

Table 2. Operating indexes of international hotels in Taiwan.

Initial	Index	Definition	Unit	Meanings
V1_OPP	Operating Profitability Pretax	net operating profit pretax/ operating revenue	%	NP by per operating revenue, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V2_PPE	Productivity Per Employee	revenue/ employee number	NTD/ person	revenue made by per employee involved; the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V3_ASE	Average Salary per Employee	salary cost/ employee number	NTD/ person	per employee salary payment
V4_MBP	Marketing Bill productivity	operating revenue/ cost advertising and marketing	%	operating revenue by per unit cost of advertising and marketing, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V5_PBP	Power Bill Productivity	operating revenue/ power rate	%	revenue by the cost per power, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V6_WBP	Water Bill Productivity	operating revenue/ water rate	%	revenue by the cost per water, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V7_RRR	Room division Revenue Rate	room division net profit/ room practicing revenue	%	profiting capability of the hotel guest room division, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V8_PRE	Productivity per Room sector Employee	room practicing revenue/room employee number	NTD/ person	revenue by per employee of the hotel guest room division, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V9_ARR	Average Room Rate	average room rate full-year	NTD	the higher the room rate, the higher the hotel product positioning
V10_PRR	Per Room Revenue	practicing revenue/ total guestroom number	NTD/ room	the average revenue by per occupied room, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V11_OCR	Operating Cost per Room	practicing cost/ total guestroom number	NTD/ room	the practicing cost per occupied room
V12_RMC	per Room Maintenance Cost	maintenance cost/ total guestroom number	NTD/ room	the maintenance cost per room
V13_ENR	Employee Number per Room	employee number/ total guestroom number	number/ room	the number of the employee hired per room
V14_ROR	Room Occupation Rate	total rooms sold/ available rooms	%	the capability of marketing and practicing, the higher room occupied the better the hotel practicing
V15_FRR	Food sector Revenue Rate	food division net profit/ food division revenue	%	the capability of revenue for food division, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V16_PFE	Productivity per Food sector Employee	food division revenue/ food division employee number	%	revenue by per employee of the hotel food division, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V17_CRR	Cost Recovery Rate	food division revenue/ food division cost	%	cost recovery rate of the food division, the higher the value, the better the hotel practicing
V18_FEN	Food division Employee Number per square meter	food division employee number/ square meter	Number/ square meter	food division employee number per square meter

4.3 1-way MANOVA

Testing the homogeneity of group means for multiple dependent variables, the 1-way MANOVA hypothesizes that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups. While the Lambda Λ is equal to 0.015 indicating the significant overall, the extracted 5 factors present a phenomenon of heterogeneous-mean significantly exists. Table 8 presents 1-way MANOVA & Post Hoc summary in different clusters.

4.4 MDS

As a set of data analysis techniques, MDS displays the structure of distance-like data as a geometrical picture. MDS transfers subject's distances in high dimension to a lower visible dimension for easy interpretation. The fitness measures of transformation contain S stress, stress, and RSQ. Experimental results show that the fitness measures mentioned are reasonably acceptable. Figure 1 demonstrates one of the derived stimulus configurations.

Table 3. Total variance explained on factor analysis.

PCA	Extraction SS loading			Rotation SS loading		
	Total	% of variance	cumulative %	Total	% of variance	cumulative %
1	5.964	33.134	33.134	4.100	22.779	22.779
2	2.359	13.108	46.242	2.769	15.385	38.164
3	2.011	11.171	57.413	2.437	13.538	51.702
4	1.244	6.909	64.322	1.820	10.110	61.811
5	1.146	6.367	70.690	1.598	8.878	70.690
6	.899	4.993	75.682			
~	~	~	~			
17	.019	.104	99.927			
18	.013	.073	100.000			

Table 4. Rotated component matrix.

Index	FA1	FA2	FA3	FA4	FA5
ZV13	.928	-.017	-.012	.005	.091
ZV11	.926	.033	.209	.131	-.057
ZV10	.871	.221	.350	.131	-.030
ZV9	.722	.470	-.025	.201	.007
ZV12	.704	.035	.136	.039	.397
ZV7	.094	.864	.051	.016	.127
ZV15	.118	.780	.078	.050	.050
ZV8	.215	.621	.368	.228	.033
ZV1	-.105	.607	.511	.034	.121
ZV14	.113	.238	.784	-.172	.081
ZV2	.389	.337	.695	.316	-.122
ZV16	.159	.047	.643	.528	-.068
ZV17	.271	.098	.102	.656	-.071
ZV4	.054	-.235	.053	-.626	-.215
ZV3	.371	-.251	.494	.559	-.028
ZV18	.310	.239	.050	-.366	.364
ZV5	.159	-.012	.188	-.025	.838
ZV6	-.056	.176	-.202	.106	.694

Table 5. Agglomeration schedule (Method: Ward).

Stage	Cluster comined		Coefficients	Stage cluster first appears	
	Cluster 1	Cluster 2		Cluster 1	Cluster 2
1	42	43	0.01	0	0
2	9	10	0.03	0	0
3	302	304	0.05	0	0
~	~	~	~	~	~
298	23	124	622.73	290	284
299	29	51	669.29	291	292
300	3	14	726.45	285	296
301	3	8	849.50	300	294
302	23	29	984.34	298	299
303	3	23	1,143.79	301	302
304	1	3	1,322.77	297	303
305	1	47	1,525.00	304	280

Table 6. Final coordinates of cluster means.

pca \ cluster	1	2	3	4	5	6
practicing efficiency room	0.748	-0.566	0.741	1.280	-0.388	-0.444
profitability room division	-1.607	-0.032	-0.666	0.868	0.459	0.020
occupied room rate	-0.194	-0.132	0.801	0.098	-1.231	0.857
cost control, managing, and marketing efficiency	0.367	-1.520	0.125	-0.100	0.582	0.412
utility consumption efficiency	-0.113	-0.059	6.946	-0.252	0.120	-0.153

Table 7. Cluster belongings of hotels cross year.

Hotel Name	05	06	07	08	09	10
Ambassador	6	6	6	6	6	6
Ambassador Hsinchu	1	1	4	1	1	1
Ambassador Kaohsiung	6	6	6	6	6	6
Brother Hotel	1	1	1	1	1	1
Caesar Park Hotel Kenting	2	5	4	4	6	2
Caesar Park Hotel Taipei	6	6	6	6	6	6
Chateau de Chine Hualien	6	6	6	6	1	1
City Crown Hotel Taipei	2	2				
Emperor Hotel	2	2	2	2	2	2
Evergreen Laurel Hotel Taichung	6	6	6	6	6	6
Evergreen Plaza	6	1	6	6	6	6
Far Eastern Plaza Hotel						5
Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei	4	4	4	4	4	4
Farglory Hotel Hualien	5	5	5	5	5	5
Fleur de Chine						5
Formosan Naruwan Hotel & Resort Taitung	5	5	5	5	5	5
Gloria Prince Hotel Taipei	6	6	6	6	1	6
Golden China Hotel	2	2	2	2	2	2
Grand Hi-Lai Hotel	4	4	4	4	1	4
Grand Hyatt Taipei	4	4	4	6		6
Han-hsien International Hotel	2	2	2	6	5	6
Hotel Holiday Garden	2	2	2	5	5	5
Hotel Kingdom	2	2	2	2		
Hotel National	6	6	5	5	5	
Hotel Riverview Taipei	6	6	6	6	6	6
Hotel Royal Chiao His					5	5
Hotel Royal Chihpen	5	5	5	5	5	5
Hotel Royal Hsinchu	5	5	5	5	5	5
Hotel Royal Taipei	6	4	4	4		
Howard Beach Resort Kenting	6	6	6	6	6	6
Howard Kaohsiung	6	6	6	6	6	6
Howard Taichung	6	6	6	5	6	6
Howard Taipei	4	4	4	4	5	6
Imperial Hotel	6	6	6	6	2	2
Landis Resort Yangmingshan	2	2	2	5	5	5
Marshal Hotel	2					
Miramar Garden Taipei					6	6
Monarch Skyline						5
Nice Prince Hotel					5	5
Parkview	5	2	2	2	2	6

(Continued)

Table 7. Continued.

Hotel Name	05	06	07	08	09	10
Plaza International Hotel	6	2	5	5	2	2
Regent Taipei	6	6	6	6	6	6
San Want Hotel	2	2	2	4	4	2
Sheraton Taipei	4	4	6	4	4	4
Silks Place Taroko	1	1	1			
Ta Shee Resort	5	5	5	5		
Taipei Fortuna Hotel	2	2				
Taipei Grand Hotel	1	1	1	1	1	1
Taoyuan Hotel	6	6	2	2	2	6
The Grand Hotel Kaohsiung	1	1	1	1	1	1
The Lalu Sun Moon Lake		4	4	4	4	4
The Landis Tainan	6	6	6	6	1	1
The Landis Taipei Hotel	3	3	3	3	6	6
The Lees Hotel Kaohsiung		5	5	5	5	5
The Sherwood Taipei	4	4	4	4	4	4
The Splendor Hotel Kaohsiung	1	5	1	1	1	1
The Splendor Hotel Taichung	1	1	1	1	1	1
The Westin Taipei	4	4	4	4	4	4
Tsengwen Hibiscus Resort	2	2	5	2	5	5
United Hotel	2	5	2	2	2	2
Total	52	52	48	53	49	52

Table 8. 1-way MANOVA & Post Hoc summary in different clusters.

Source	Factor	SS	Mean df	square	F	Post Hoc comparison
Between	FA1	151.64	5	30.33	59.33	1>2; 1>5; 1>6; 3>2; 4>2; 3>5; 3>6; 4>5; 4>6
	FA2	159.92	5	31.98	66.13	2>1; 3>1; 4>1; 5>1; 6>1; 4>2; 5>2; 4>3; 5>3; 4>5; 4>6; 5>6
	FA3	166.40	5	33.28	72.03	1>5; 6>1; 2>5; 6>2; 3>5; 4>5; 6>4; 6>5
	FA4	172.02	5	34.41	77.62	1>2; 1>4; 3>2; 4>2; 5>2; 6>2; 5>3; 5>4; 6>4
	FA5	199.93	5	39.99	114.18	3>1; 3>2; 3>4; 3>5; 3>6

5 CONCLUSION

Taking 60 hotels ranging from year 2005 to 2010 into account, this study analysed 18 operating indicators to evaluate profiting performance of international hotels in Taiwan. After normalization of indexes, PCAs extracted by FA, number of groups determined by hierarchical clustering, classification by K-means, the MANOVA verified that there exists heterogeneous means among the clusters. The MDS lowered the dimensionality from 5 to 2 for visual interpretation. The purpose of the study is to explore clustering, changes and fluctuation of operating performance during the 6 consecutive years for the total of 60 international tourist hotels in Taiwan.

The conclusion of this study may be drawn as follows: Firstly this study enables the international tourist hotels to view the changes on their yearly operation performance as the assessment and comparison for 6 years is done in depth. Secondly, the study offers the international tourist hotels in the same year, in assessing the efficient output of 18 operating indexes, an objective basis of cross-sectional classification and comparison.

REFERENCES

Chang, T.Y., & Huang, S.N. 2006. *The Performance Evaluation Model for the International Tourist Hotel of Taiwan-The Comparison of the Grey Relation Analysis and Data Envelopment Analysis*. Journal of Tourism Studies.

Chen, Y.H. 2005. *The Locational Evolution of International hotels in Taipei City (unpublished master dissertation)*. Feng Chia University, Taichung, Taiwan.

Chang, S.T. 2004. *The Study of the Hotel Accommodation Demand Forecasting for the International Tourist- an empirical Study for Japan, eHong Kong and United State (unpublished master dissertation)*. Chaoyang University of Technology, Taichung, Taiwan.

Chen, K.H. 2003. *A study on the relationships between regional factors and operational efficiency of the international hotel in Taiwan (unpublished master dissertation)*. Chaoyang University of Technology, Taichung, Taiwan.

Chen, H.T. 2002. *The Study on Tourist Consuming Behavior of the Resort Hotels in Taiwan (unpublished master dissertation)*. Shih Hsin University, Taipei, Taiwan.

Huang, W.H. 2006. *The Study of Seasonality of Accommodation demand of international Tourist Hotels in Taiwan (unpublished master dissertation)*. Chaoyang University of Technology, Taichung, Taiwan.

Kuo, Y.H., Jiang, H.N., Huang, Y.L., Jian, N.J. 2011, July. *Clustering Analysis for Profiting Performance of International Tourist Hotels in Taiwan*. Paper presented at the International Conference of Education for Tourism and Hospitality and Industrial Developing 2011, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taipei, Taiwan.

Kuo, Y.H., Lin, X.Z., Huang, Y.Y., Kang, W.J. 2010, July. *Factor Analysis for Profiting Performance Clustering of International hotels in Taipei*. Paper presented at the International Conference of Education for Tourism and Hospitality and Industrial Developing 2010, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taipei, Taiwan.

Kuo, Y.H., Wen, C.H., Tung, Y.T., Li, Y.C. 2009, May. *The Clustering Research of Operational Efficiency for International hotels in Taipei*. Paper presented at the 2009

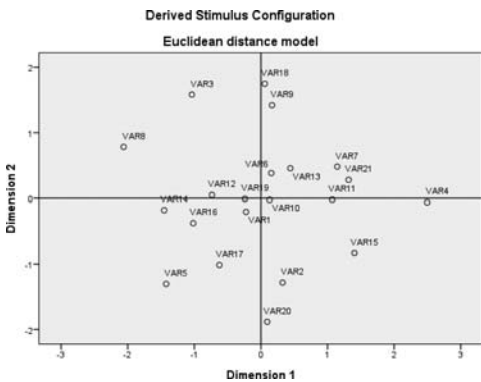


Figure 1. Derived stimulus configuration of hotels in Taipei in 2010.

- Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Lin, Y.T. 2008. *The evaluation and analysis of operation efficiency for international hotels in Taiwan (unpublished master dissertation)*. Soochow University, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Liu, W.C. 2002. *The Impacts of information Technology on Operation Performance of International hotel in Taiwan (unpublished master dissertation)*. Chaoyang University of Technology, Taichung, Taiwan.
- Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communication, R.O.C. 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010. *Yearly Report on Tourist Hotel Operations in Taiwan*. Taipei, Taiwan.
- Wang, H.H. 2006. *The Research on the Managerial Performance in the International hotel Industry – Linking Balanced Scorecard and Data Envelopment Analysis (unpublished master dissertation)*. National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism, Kaohsiung, Taiwan.
- Yang, H.H. 2002. *The research of corporate culture, corporate vision, business strategy and organizational performance of the relationship: a practical study of international hotels in Taiwan (unpublished master dissertation)*. National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan.
- Yan, C.H. 1999. *The evaluation research of the operational efficiency for international hotels in Taiwan (unpublished master dissertation)*. Chinese Culture University, Taipei, Taiwan.

Organizational citizenship behavior of hotel employees: Investigating the impact of organizational justice

M.A. Hemdi & M.A. Razali

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia

N.R. Nik Abd Rashid & R. Nordin

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Perlis, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This study investigates the link between employees' perceptions of Organizational Justice (OJ) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) intentions at large hotels in Malaysia. It was proposed that procedural justice and distributive justice will have positive influence on hotel employees' OCB. 380 operational hotel employees participated in this study and hierarchical multiple regression was performed to test the posited hypotheses. Results indicated that distributive justice perceptions were significantly related to OCB intentions. Implications of the findings, limitations, and suggestions for future directions are discussed.

Keywords: procedural justice, distributive justice, OCB intentions, hotel industry.

1 INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has been performing extremely well in the Malaysian economy. Globally, Malaysia is ranked 16th in terms of global inbound tourism receipts, capturing approximately 2% of global market share in 2008 (*Tourism Malaysia*, 2009). Between 2006 and 2009, revenue from the tourism industry increased 67.1% to RM53.4 billion and tourist arrivals increased 43.6% to 23.6 million. In 2010, a total of 24.6 million tourists arrived in Malaysia and spent RM56.5 billion. In terms of employment, the tourism industry employs 1.7 million workers or approximately 16% of total employment in 2008 (*Tourism Malaysia*, 2010). During the 10th Malaysian Plan (2011–2015) period, the target is to improve Malaysia's position to be within the top 10 in terms of global tourism receipts and increase the sector's contribution by 2.1 times, contributing RM115 billion in receipts and providing 2 million jobs in the industry in 2015 (*Economic Planning Unit – 10th Malaysian Plan*, 2011). As a result of a steady increase in tourism over the years, Malaysia now has more hotel rooms than ever before. For example, the total room supply has increased to 168,497 rooms in 2010 as compared to only 165,739 hotel rooms in 2008, even though the number of hotels decreased from 2,373 hotels to 2,367 hotels during the same period (*Economic Planning Unit – 10th Malaysian Plan*, 2011).

In order for Malaysia to be competitive in the global tourism industry, service-oriented organizations such

as hotels, an important sector in the tourism industry, need to be proactive in their human resources implementations in order to deliver high quality services to their customers. Since the nature of hotel operations is labor-intensive, the dependence on motivated and committed workforces is of great importance to the success of hotel businesses (Chang, Gong, & Shum, 2011). As services are characterized by their basic defining features namely intangibility, non-standardized, and simultaneous production and consumption with the customer observing and participating in the production process (Bowen & Greiner, 1986), hence, positive behaviors exhibited by employees will ultimately benefit the external customers leading to their satisfaction. For these reasons, eliciting more employees' customer-oriented behaviors at the workplace such as organizational citizenship is warranted.

Several variables such as job satisfaction (Nadiri & Tanova, 2010), organizational commitment (Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011), interpersonal trust (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990), and employee mood (Guangling, 2011) may be antecedents of OCB. Another construct related to the occurrence of OCB and more susceptible to managerial influence is organizational justice, or employee perceptions of fairness (Bove, Pervan, Beatty, & Shiu, 2009; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Tang & Tang, 2012; Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011). Thus, this study intends to investigate the predictors of hotel employees' OCB intentions. Specifically, this study seeks to examine the influence of distributive

and procedural justice on the intention of employees to perform OCB.

2 LITERATURE REVIEWED

2.1 *Organizational citizenship behavior intentions*

OCB represents individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988). The word “discretionary” here refers to a behavior that is voluntary and not specified in the employment contract.

Although organizational citizenship behavior can take several forms, at least five dimensions have been empirically established or theoretically suggested in the literature (for example, Allison, Voss, & Dryer, 2001; Organ, 1988; Podsakoff et al., 1990; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993; Schnake, Dumler, & Cochran, 1993; Konovsky & Organ, 1996). These dimensions are: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. Altruism is defined as behaviors that have the effect of helping specific individuals. An example of altruism is an employee helping another employee who has fallen behind his or her work (Schnake et al., 1993), and willingly helps a customer to handle a problem (Podsakoff et al., 1990). Conscientiousness is defined as behavior that goes beyond the minimum role requirements of the organization. Specific examples of conscientiousness include punctuality, not wasting time (Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983; Organ, 1988), and upholding workplace rules and procedures regardless of personal inconveniences (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Sportsmanship refers to negative activities that employees refrain from doing; even though he or she has every right to do so, such as frequently finding fault with other employees, expressing resentment, complaining about insignificant matters, and starting arguments with others (Organ, 1990). Courtesy includes actions aimed at preventing work-related problems with others from occurring. Examples of courtesy include keeping others informed before taking action, warning others of impending actions that might affect them, and consulting others before making decisions (Organ, 1988). Finally, civic virtue is defined as keeping oneself informed on matters that affect the organization and participating responsibly in its decision-making process. Examples of civic virtue include making innovative suggestions to improve a department and keeping abreast of changes in the organization (Organ, 1988).

Recognizing the difficulty of measuring and predicting specific employee actions, OCB in this study is operationalized as an employee’s intent to perform specific organizationally desirable activities. This study used OCB intentions as a proxy for actual OCB in line with the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen &

Fishbein, 1977). Individuals must first intend to perform a behavior before the activity can actually occur. Ajzen and Fishbein theorized that the probability of an actual behavior is determined by the specificity of the behavioral intention. An intended citizenship activity is increasingly more likely if the behavior, the object, the situational context, and the time of the action are specific. In this sense, the more precisely formulated an intention is, for instance, helping (behavior) a coworker (object) in the office (context) during lunch (time) -the more likely the behavior is.

2.2 *Organizational justice and OCB intentions*

Employees are concerned with both the fairness of the outcomes that they receive and the fairness of their treatment within the organization. The first fairness perception, distributive justice, addresses the organizational reward system (e.g., equity theory), whereas the second, procedural justice, involves the organization’s decision-making procedures (Greenberg, 1990). Researchers have suggested that both types of justice perceptions are important determinants of meaningful organizational outcomes (Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011).

Organ (1990) has proposed that distributive justice concerns may influence citizenship according to predictions derived from equity theory (Adams, 1965). If employees perceive unfair compensation, then they may be less likely to perform OCB because such behaviors are discretionary, falling outside an employee’s formal role requirements. According to research involving equity theory, employee job performance may either increase or decrease according to an employee’s perceptions of fair rewards for work performed (Adams, 1965; Greenberg, 1990). On the basis of that line of reasoning, the likelihood of OCB may increase as an employee’s perceptions of the fairness of distributive justice increase.

Organ (1990) also suggested that perceived procedural unfairness alters an employee’s relationship with the organization from one of social exchange (Blau, 1964). Within this context, Moorman (1991) suggested that procedural justice involves the fairness of the procedures to determine the outcomes for employees. According to Moorman (1991), procedural justice is concerned with both the organization’s formal procedures and the employees’ interaction with or involvement in the decision-making process. According to research involving procedural justice, perceptions of procedural fairness may influence a variety of organizational outcomes such as OCB, job performance, and turnover (Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011). The current study intends to examine the extent to which employees’ perceptions of distributive and formal procedural fairness influenced their intentions to perform OCB. This study tested the following hypothesis:

H1: Organizational justice is positively and significantly related to OCB intentions.

- H1a: *Distributive justice is positively and significantly related to OCB intentions.*
- H1b: *Procedural justice is positively and significantly related to OCB intentions.*

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participants

The unit of analysis for this study was individual operational employee working in large hotels located in the states of Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, and Pulau Pinang, Malaysia. For the purpose of this study, operational employee is defined as full-time hotel employees, who have been employed for more than six months, and attached to the front office, housekeeping, food production, and food and beverage service departments. A total of 630 questionnaires were distributed to operational employees attached to 22 large hotels. Of the 630 questionnaires distributed, a total of 411 questionnaires were returned. Of these, 31 responses were found to be non usable. Therefore, only 380 questionnaires (60.3%) were coded and analyzed.

3.2 Measurements

OCB intentions. This study measured the extent to which hotel employees were likely to exhibit specific OCB actions by using the OCB intentions instrument developed by Williams and Wong (1999). For the 11 items, the respondents indicated on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = most unlikely, 7 = most likely) the extent to which they were likely to perform the specific behavior described (higher values indicate greater willingness to perform OCB). In the original study (Williams & Wong, 1999), the reliability coefficient for the 11 items was .62.

Organizational justice. The current study measured the two dimensions of organizational justice by using scales from Moorman (1991). The 7 items tapping formal procedures representing procedural justice dimension, focused on the degree to which there were procedures in place to promote consistency, accuracy, representativeness, and bias suppression. Distributive justice was measured by using the 5-item Distributive Justice Index (Moorman, 1991). The respondents indicated the extent to which they believed they were fairly rewarded for their responsibilities, experience, effort, work, and job stress. Both justice dimensions were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). To reduce the possibility of spurious statistical influence, this study also measured five demographic control variables: age, gender, marital status, education, and organizational tenure.

3.3 Data analysis

Factor analyses were initially conducted to examine the dimensionality of each construct in this

study. The internal consistency of the newly found factors was examined by computing the values of Cronbach Alpha. Descriptive statistics such as mean scores and standard deviations of the study variables were computed to screen and get a good feel of the gathered data. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was computed to examine the nature, directions, and associations among the study variables.

Hypotheses were tested by using hierarchical multiple regression analysis with OCB intentions as well as turnover intentions as the dependent variables (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998). This study entered the five control variables in Step 1 and the organizational justice variables in Step 2. By entering the demographic variables into the regression equation before the variables of interest, one can partial shared variance and determine unique contribution for the justice variables towards OCB intentions or turnover intentions (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Profile of the respondents

The respondents' profile is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1.

Demographic variables	Categories	Frequencies	%	
Gender	Male	217	57.1	
	Female	163	42.9	
Marital Status	Married	232	61.1	
	Unmarried	148	38.9	
Educational Qualification	Without tertiary education	266	70.0	
	With tertiary education	114	30.0	
Organizational Tenure	6 mth–1 year	103	27.1	
	2–3 years	96	25.3	
	4–5 years	60	15.8	
	5 years & more	121	31.8	
Department Attached to	Front Office	88	23.2	
	Food Production	94	24.7	
	Housekeeping	103	27.1	
	F & B Service	95	25.0	
Hotel Location	Kuala Lumpur	97	25.5	
	Selangor	152	40.0	
	Pulau Pinang	131	34.5	
Age (Years)	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
	28.1	7.09	17	54

Note. $N = 380$.

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and intercorrelations of the study variables.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Procedural justice	3.78	0.97	(0.95)		
2. Distributive justice	3.82	1.01	.87**	(0.96)	
3. OCB Intentions	4.60	0.39	.28**	.30**	(0.60)

Table 3. Regression results on the impact of organizational justices on OCB intentions.

Predictors	Model 1 Std. β	Model 2 Std. β
Step 1: Control variables		
Gender ^a	-.01	.02
Age	.05	.04
Marital Status ^b	-.09	-.06
Education	.07	.06
Organizational Tenure	.01	.03
Step 2: Organizational justice		
Procedural Justice		.08
Distributive Justice		.23**
R^2	.01	.10
Adj. R^2	-.02	.06
R^2 Change	.01	.09
F -Change	.41	8.85**

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; Dummy Coded, ^amale = 0, female = 1; ^bsingle = 0, married = 1.

4.2 Descriptive statistic

Table 2 indicates the means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and intercorrelations of the study variables.

As shown in Table 2, the mean value for the two independent variables, procedural justice and distributive justice were perceived moderately by the sample in this study with the mean scores of 3.78 (SD = 0.97) and 3.82 (SD = 1.01) respectively. OCB intentions were slightly on the high side with a mean score of 4.60 (SD = 0.39). In terms of the correlation coefficients, both justice dimensions had significant positive correlations with OCB intentions. All the reliability coefficients for the measures were acceptable since they exceeded the minimum recommended level of 0.60 (Sekaran, 2000).

4.3 Hypotheses testing

Table 3 presents the regression results of this analysis.

As can be seen from Table 3, the five control variables did not make any significant contribution towards the variance in OCB intentions. In Model 2, organizational justice variables were able to explain 9.0 % (R^2 change = .09, F -change = 8.85, $p < .01$) of the observed variations on OCB intentions after

controlling for the effect of the five demographic variables. Of the two justice dimensions, distributive justice ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$) was positively and significantly contributes to the prediction of OCB intentions. Procedural justice, on the other hand was found not significantly related to OCB intentions. Thus, only hypothesis $H1a$ was supported.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study is to examine the influence of distributive and procedural justice on hotel employees' OCB intentions. The results from this study indicated that organizational justice is a significant predictor to hotel employees' OCB intentions. Specifically, distributive justice was significantly and positively related to OCB intentions. Procedural justice, on the other hand, was not related to OCB intentions.

The results implied that hotel employees who felt that they have been fairly and equitably compensated by their organizations were more willing to perform citizenship activities similar to that reported by earlier researchers (Bove et al., 2009; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Podsakoff et al., 1990; Tang & Tang, 2012; Williams et al., 2002; Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011). These earlier researchers have also suggested that employees would display more OCB activities, as their perceptions of justice are more positive. The finding of significant influence of organizational justice with OCB intentions is also consistent with the theoretical reasoning behind social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which suggests that employees perform OCB to reciprocate benefits received from the organization. In addition, in line with equity theory (Adams, 1965), suggests that employees who perceived fair compensation for their work-related input may be more likely to step beyond formal job requirements and to exhibit citizenship behaviors. This result also provided additional empirical support to Ajzen and Fishbein's (1977) Theory of Reasoned Action that proposed that a person's evaluation of an object would stimulate one's attitude towards the object and subsequent behavioral intentions to the object in question.

From practical perspectives, the findings of this and other studies involving organizational justice (Guan-gling, 2011; Moorman, 1991; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011) suggest that hotels must endeavor to allocate organizational rewards as consistently fair as possible across individuals to encourage extra-role behaviors. Results from this study suggest that employees formed higher OCB intentions when they feel that they have been compensated fairly. Thus, hotels should provide fair and equitable compensation benefits to their employees especially those at the operational level. Compensation benefits that take into account the employees' job category, skills, and performance can be implemented. For instance, cooks who are able to demonstrate certain "unique" cooking skills or receptionists or waiters who are able to

demonstrate innovative work procedures should be paid more on top of their basic salary. This could be done by paying a one-time bonus to those employees who showed excellent performance. Further, since the job category of operational hotel employees (e.g. cooks, waiters, maids, and receptionists) are skill-based job, a multiskilled-based pay system may also be introduced. In a skill-based pay plan, employees are compensated for the different skills or increased knowledge they possess rather than for the job they hold in a designated job category. Skill-based pay also encourages employees to acquire training when new or updated skills are needed by the organization. Thus, through this pay scheme, hotel managers could improve staffing flexibility to meet production or service demands and reduced the effects of absenteeism and turnover since managers can assign employees where and when needed.

Additionally, managers concerned with encouraging OCB intentions among their workers need to focus their attention on providing fair supervision, treating employees with respect and dignity, making job decisions in unbiased manner, collecting accurate and complete information before taking any job decisions, and showing sensitivity towards employees' personal needs. A favorable work climate that fosters positive implementations of the organization's formal procedures and from the treatment given by the organization's authorities in enacting those procedures may induce employees to reciprocate by exhibiting positive organizational attitudes and behavioral intentions.

The study's findings of insignificant influence of procedural justice on OCB intentions is somewhat surprising in light of some meta-analyses (Colquitt et al., 2001) suggesting that both procedural and distributive justice predict OCB intentions. The result of the insignificant effects of procedural justice on OCB intentions for the sample in this study could be due to the nature of the job within the hospitality industry. Hospitality literature have frequently reported that operational hotel employees are lowly paid, work long and unsocial hours, and predominantly occupied by minorities (Boella & Turner, 2009). Thus, being in low-paying positions in the hotel industry (Boella & Turner, 2009), perceptions on fairness in reward allocation decisions may not have any impact on OCB intentions for this group of workers. Furthermore, operational hotel employees in this sample may not have enough accesses or information on how processes of reward allocations being determined by their respective organizations. Thus, perceptions of how the rewards are allocated to them might not so important to them as compared to the amount of rewards received.

In summary, the study shows organizational justices pertaining to distributive justice significantly predict hotel employees' behavioral intentions. The findings stressed the importance for hotel organization to ensure fair and equitable compensation system given to their operational employees in order to encourage greater extra-role behaviors that can benefits the organization. Therefore, efforts taken to enhance

employees' positive perceptions of fair treatment on reward decisions as well as fair and equitable reward system relative to work-related inputs will be helpful in encouraging citizenship behaviors.

The findings of this study are subject to several limitations which are common in this type of research. First, the results are specific to hotel employees within the Malaysian hotel industry and may not be appropriate to generalize for other employees from other industries or countries. Second, since all data for the study variables were collected from the same source and at the same time, common method variance may to some extent affects the results. Similarly, any data collected by self-report measures may have been influenced by social desirability response bias. Another limitation of the current study is the absence of moderator and mediating variables. Literature has suggested that the mediating variables such as trust and perceived organizational support help to explain why perceptions of justice result in OCB intentions. Other literature has suggested that the relationship between justice and OCB intentions can be moderated by variables such as equity sensitivity, individualism-collectivism (as individual value), negative affectivity, and agreeableness. Future studies may test if the inclusion of these mediators and moderators in the model changes, or not, the relative importance of the relationship between perceptions of justice and OCB intentions.

REFERENCES

- Adams, J. S. 1965. Inequity in social exchange. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2, 267–299. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. 1977. Attitude-behavior relations: A theoretical analysis and review of empirical research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 84, 888–918.
- Allison, B.J., Voss, R.S., and Dryer, S. 2001. Student classroom and career success: The role of organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Education for Business*, 76(5), 282–288.
- Boella, M., & Turner, S. G. 2009. *Human Resource Management in the Hospitality Industry*. 8th Ed., Oxford, UK: Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann.
- Blau, P. 1964. *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. New York: Wiley.
- Borman, W.C., and Motowidlo, S.J. 1993. Expanding the Criterion Domain to Include Elements of Contextual Performance. In N. Schmitt, W.C. Borman, & Associates, (eds), *Personnel Selection In Organizations* (pp. 71–98). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bove, L. L., Pervan, S. J., Beatty, S. E., & Shiu, E. 2009. Service worker role in encouraging customer organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(7), 698–705.
- Bowen, D.E., and Greiner, L.E. 1986. "Moving From Production to Service in Human Resource Management". *Organizational Dynamics*, 15, 35–53.
- Cohen, J., & Cohen, P. 1983. *Applied Multiple Regression Correlation Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Colquitt, J. A., Conlon, D. E., Wesson, M. J., Porter, & Ng, K. Y. 2001. Justice at the millennium: A meta-analytic review

- of 25 years of organizational research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 425–445.
- Chang, S., Gong, Y., Shum, C. 2011. Promoting Innovation in hospitality companies through human resource management practices. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 30 (4), 812–818.
- Economic Planning Unit – 10th Malaysian Plan 2011–2015. www.epu.gov.my/rmk10
- Greenberg, J. 1990. Looking fair vs. being fair: Managing impressions of organizational justice. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 12, 111–157.
- Guangling, W. 2011. The study on relationship between employees' sense of organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior in private enterprises. *Energy Procedia*, 5, 2030–2034.
- Hair, Jr. J. F., Anderson, R. E., Tatham, R. L., & Black, W. C. 1998. *Multivariate Data Analysis, 5th ed.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Igbaria, M., Iivari, J., & Maragahh, H. 1995. Why do individuals use computer technology? A Finnish case study. *Information and Management*, 5, 227–238.
- Konovsky, M.A., and Organ, D.W. 1996. Dispositional and Contextual Determinants of Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 17, 253–266.
- Moorman, R.H. 1991. Relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviors: Do fairness perceptions influence employee citizenship? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 76 (6), 845–855.
- Nadiri, H., & Tanova, C. 2010. An investigation of the role of justice in turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior in hospitality industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 29(1), 33–41.
- Niehoff, B.P., and Moorman, R.H. 1993. Justice as a Mediator of the Relationship Between Methods of Monitoring and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Academy of Management Journal*, 36(3), 527–556.
- Organ, D.W. 1988. *Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Good Soldier Syndrome*. Lexington: Lexington Books.
- Organ, D.W. 1990. The Motivational Basis of Organizational Citizenship Behavior. In B.M. Staw & L.L. Cummings (eds), *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 12, 43–72. Greenwich: JAI Press.
- Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S.B., Moorman, R.H., and Fetter, R. 1990. Transformational Leader Behaviors and Their Effects on Followers' Trust in Leader, Satisfaction, and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. *Leadership Quarterly*, 1(2), 107–142.
- Rosenberg, M., & Turner, R. H. 1990. *Social Psychology: Sociological Perspectives*. New York: Basic Books.
- Schnake, M., Dumler, M.P., and Cochran, D.S. 1993. The Relationship Between “Traditional” Leadership, “Super” Leadership, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Group & Organization Management*, 18(3), 252–365.
- Sekaran, U. 2000. *Research Methods for Business: A Skill-Building Approach*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Smith, C.A., Organ, D.W., and Near, J.P. 1983. Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Its Nature and Antecedents. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 68(4), 653–663.
- Tang, T. W. & Tang, Y. Y. 2012. Promoting service-oriented organizational citizenship behavior in hotels: The role of high-performance human resource practices and organizational social climate. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31(3), 885–895.
- Tourism Malaysia 2009. *Annual Tourism Statistical Report 2009*. www.tourism.gov.my
- Tourism Malaysia 2010. *Annual Tourism Statistical Report 2009*. www.tourism.gov.my
- Williams, S., & Wong, T. S. 1999. Mood and organizational citizenship behavior: The effects of positive affect on employee organizational citizenship behavior intentions. *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied*, 133, 656–668.
- Williams, S., Pitre, R., & Zainuba, M. 2002. Justice and organizational citizenship behaviour intentions: Fair rewards versus fair treatment. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(1), 33–44.
- Zeinabadi, H., & Salehi, K. 2011. Role of procedural justice, trust, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment in organizational citizenship behavior of teachers: proposing a modified social exchange model. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 29, 1472–1481.

Global versus local HRM practices in the hospitality industry: The case of Greek luxury hotel managers

C. Giousmpasoglou
University of Strathclyde

ABSTRACT: This paper explores the current HRM practices employed in the hospitality industry. More specifically it investigates four key HRM areas regarding the work of General Managers (GMs) in luxury (4 and 5*) hotels in Greece namely: recruitment and selection; training and development (focused in managerial competencies); performance evaluation; networking and communication. The dynamic and complex nature of the management function in hospitality business today and the realization that what works effectively in one country may not be as efficient in another, has led management scholars and practicing managers in continuous efforts to enhance their understanding of this context and its effects on hotel managers. A key theme that emerges from this qualitative study is the critical role of the hotel's ownership status; it is also argued that both divergence and convergence contextual forces co-exist and shape the GMs' work in Greek luxury hotels.

1 INTRODUCTION

The fast growth of the international hotel chains since the early 1990s, has surfaced many challenges for hotel managers from an HRM perspective; opinions in this controversial area concentrating in two opposing poles: one view assumes that all managers should adopt the same practices and behave in the same manner (the 'global' approach), while others suggest that contextual factors such as national and organizational culture, influence managerial work (Nickson 1998, Nickson & Warhust 2001). From the early stages of internationalization in the 1950s, a plethora of empirical studies (i.e. Nailon 1968, Hales & Nightingale 1986, Nebel & Ghei 1993) suggests that work in hotels poses multidimensional challenges for hotel unit general managers (GMs), especially in luxury establishments where there are tremendous pressures for service quality, customer satisfaction, effective people management and outstanding (financial) performance. Despite the plethora of studies on managerial work and the various HRM challenges in hotels, there is a lack of research on the influence of the national context in managerial work and HRM practices. Building on managerial work and comparative HRM studies, this paper argues that luxury hotel general managers (GMs) in Greece, face on-going HRM dilemmas in using similar practices with MNCs, and simultaneously behave differently than their international competitors due to a series of contextual factors such as the organizational structure, ownership status, local and national culture.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Managerial work in hotels*

Since the early 1990s, the rapid growth of international hotel chains and its effects on managerial work, have drawn the attention of researchers (i.e. Gilatis & Guerrier 1994, Nebel et al. 1995, Gilbert & Guerrier 1997, Ladkin & Juwaheer 2000). In this globalised environment, the development of international hospitality managers is seen as being of critical importance for hospitality MNCs. The personality characteristics required of the international hotel managers include people and interpersonal skills, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance, cultural sensitivity and intercultural competence followed by emotional maturity, industry experience, and self-confidence (Gilatis & Guerrier 1994, Feng & Pearson 1999, Kriegl 2000). International etiquette, demonstrating an understanding of international business matters, the ability to work with limited resources and effectively manage stress were judged to be relatively important, while functional and technical skills were rated as the lowest priority for managers. Research also indicates that in an international hospitality organisation building managers' cross cultural skills may be far harder but more important than developing their functional and technical skills (Gilatis & Guerrier 1994, Kriegl 2000).

A consequence of the rapid internationalization, were the efforts to establish generic competencies frameworks for hotel managers. The competencies

movement in hotels appeared in the early 1990s, when a growing number of tourism and hospitality courses aimed to meet the demands of a volatile and changing world (Umbreit 1993); took up the challenge to prepare students by developing and enhancing the management competencies and skills needed to operate successfully. This movement has been supported by the industry's growing demand for suitable qualified managerial staff. Research conducted to identify the right mix of competencies has used a number of frameworks like Katz's hierarchical competency model or Sandwith's (1993) competency-domain model, which builds on Katz's (1974) model and groups competencies into five areas (Conceptual-Creative; Leadership; Interpersonal; Administrative; Technical). It can be argued that the vast majority of the competencies models within the hospitality context (i.e. Tas 1988, Baum 1991, Lockwood 1993, Christou & Eaton 2000, Kay & Russette 2000, Brophy & Kiely 2002; Chung – Herrera et al. 2003) fall in the behavioural approach which assumes that those models can be universally applicable regardless of the manager's background. This is not surprising as this industry is considered as 'results-oriented' and superior performance is believed to be the key to achieve organizational goals. Despite the economic significance and global spread of the international hospitality industry, the majority of hospitality management literature reflects what has happened in the US and the UK since the early 1980s. The ignorance of hospitality managerial work in different contexts has created a gap in the extant literature. Only recently have studies focused on what is happening in the rest of Europe or the world (i.e. Christou & Eaton 2000, Agut et al. 2003, Brophy & Kiely 2002, Dimmock et al. 2003, Matheson 2004, Jauhari 2006, Blayney 2009). The most popular forms of research used to study the hospitality industry outside the Anglo-American context, is the use of country case studies (i.e. Kim 1994, Christou 1999, Agut et al. 2003) and studies within the context of the international hospitality business (D'Annunzio-Green 1997). Despite the relatively slow progress, hospitality research persistently reflects the Anglo-American universalist approach to management. Thus, it can be argued that the changes currently taking place in international hospitality management can be better understood under a cross-cultural management perspective, focusing in local differences.

2.2 *The Greek Context*

The Greek and International literature suggests that Greek management has hardly existed until the early 1980s; all management practices and methods were largely adoption of MNCs practices. Kanelpoulos (1990) has documented a lack of wide diffusion of modern management methods and systems such as formal structures, planning and control systems, human resource management systems, incentive systems, and management information systems. Bourantas & Papadakis (1996) argue that the salient characteristics

of Greek management (in the 1980s and early 1990s) were:

- Concentration of power and control in the hands of top management.
- Lack of modern systems to support strategic decisions.

The question that was raised here was whether Greek management possessed any unique characteristics that distinguish it from other European management styles (e.g., the institutionalized participation of employees in Germany or Sweden and the informal network relationships among small and medium-sized enterprises in Italy). The answer came during the 1990s and the early 2000s through the participation of the country in two international surveys: the Price Waterhouse Cranfield Project (CRANET) concerning Human Resources strategies and policies across Europe (Papalexandris & Chalikias 2002); and the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness) project which provided useful insights for each participative country cultural perspectives in relation to management and leadership (Javidan & House 2001). The findings of these significant surveys indicated the country's differentiation in management practices, due to the existing socio-cultural context.

The results from the CRANET survey revealed that in Greece, as in other European countries, there is evidence of both convergence and divergence in HRM policies and the overall work context (Myloni et al. 2004). The GLOBE project has provided a better insight of the relation between management practices and national culture in Greece. Papalexandris et al. (2002) found that despite the paternalistic family oriented management style there are indications for a strong will to change. Figures from the GLOBE project (House et al. 2002) showed that Greece has low mean scores in 'society as is' and higher scores in 'society should be'; these results confirm the existence of a culture gap found also in previous research studies in Greek organizational culture. According to Bourantas & Papadakis (1996), there is a discrepancy between general organizational culture as perceived by managers and their personally preferred culture. This is considered to be an indication of the desire for change within organizations. The greatest pressures for convergence are coming from the obligations of Greece as a member of the E.U. and several other organizations that require planning ahead and efficient management of the various projects. While this affects mostly the public sector, globalization put pressures for uniform management practices and policies in private sector organizations. Thus, a slow but steady movement towards harmonization of management practices at least with the rest of the E.U. members is observed.

3 RESEARCH PROFILE

This research was conducted as part of a PhD Thesis and served mainly two aims: first to explore the

HRM practices used to help GMs' exercise their roles and competencies in Greek 4 and 5* hotels; and second to investigate the interplay between context and HRM practices regarding managerial work. In total, 16 hotels with 32 participants who were senior managers (16 GMs and their immediate assistants) were chosen – representing 4 and 5* in Athens, Thessaloniki, Rhodes and Crete. The 16 establishments selected for this research, represented two broad hotel types operating in Greece – city and resort. Basic prerequisite for the participating hotels was to be holders of 4 or 5* official rating that is accredited by the Greek Chamber of Hotels. The ownership status of each hotel (family; local chain; national chain; multinational chain) was also considered. The luxury hotels in the selected geographical regions were then shorted / filtered by using the following two criteria:

- I. As a minimum standard the city hotels should provide TV and air conditioning in room and, restaurant and parking facilities. Additionally for resort hotels they should have outdoor swimming pool.
- II. All participant hotels should have more than 150 rooms. This happened in order to ensure that only medium to big companies would participate in this research. This aimed to: a) compare hotels with similar organizational structure, and b) allow replication in other European countries with similar size and structure hotels.

The hotel selection process followed in this research was dictated by the structure of the luxury hotel industry in Greece: given its nature and geographical spread (approximately 1,150 establishments all over Greece) a decision was made to limit the destinations in the most representative and popular places for city and resort hotels respectively. A three-part tool followed by a cover letter explaining the aim of the interview was used, in order to serve the needs of the research. The first part examined demographic data of the company and the participant; the second part was a 14 question semi-structured in-depth interview; and the third part was the Personal Competencies Framework (PCF) Questionnaire, originally developed by Dulewicz & Herbert (1999). Additional qualitative data sources derived from non-participant observation (field notes) and company documents including job descriptions, standard operating procedures (SOPs), brochures and staff newsletters. A major methodological concern for this study was to produce valid and reliable outcomes. A research protocol was used as recommended by Yin (2003). The case study protocol contains procedures and general rules that should be followed in using the research instrument/s and is considered essential in a multiple-case study (Yin, *ibid.*). It was created prior to the data collection phase. In addition, during the data collection tests for the quality of research were employed (Construct and External Validity, Reliability); these tests were followed by the use of two different triangulation methods namely Data and Methodological triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln 2003).

4 THE RESEARCH FINDINGS: THREE TYPES OF LUXURY HOTEL GMS

Three different managerial profiles in luxury hotels in Greece emerged from this research, regarding the key HRM areas used to help GMs develop their managerial roles and competencies. The first labeled the 'native' GM, is employed in family and local hotel chains, which represent the vast majority of Greek 4 and 5* hotels (Hellenic Chamber of Hotels 2007). This is a typical SMTE (small-medium tourism enterprise) owned and essentially co-managed by the leader of the family surrounded by relatives in various positions. Then, the 'glocal' GM, is found in Greek national hotel chains; this type of hotel is a former family business – led very often by a charismatic founder – which expanded gradually its operations nationwide. In addition, this type of hotel has adapted to a certain degree the organizational structure and standards of a multinational hotel chain; there is still however moderate involvement of the owner (or his family) to the management of the company. Finally, the 'Greek global' GM, is found in multinational hotel chains; this hotel type is a foreign brand name, franchised in most of the cases by a Greek businessman. There are only a few cases that the management of the company belongs to the parent company. In this type of hotel, the organization, structure and standards are dictated by the parent company; there are however some variations/deviations due to the Greek socio-cultural context. For example, the standard operating procedures are adapted to the local working patterns and legislation. The 'native' GMs are males between 55-65 years old, speaking on average two foreign languages and have at least a hospitality first degree. Employers in this category are in favor of the 'old school' (over 50-55 years old) for two main reasons: they value more the experience, reputation and seniority than qualifications; in addition 'near retirement' GMs may cost less in the payroll. The recruitment is conducted mainly through recommendations and 'word of mouth', and rarely with internal recruits; the selection process is usually conducted by the owner and in most of the cases is based in subjective criteria (i.e. personal references, reputation and salary). There are limited options for training and development in this type of hotel, and very often is up to the GMs' discretion to recommend which program to attend. In most of the cases, there is no time allocated for training and development activities, in the GMs daily schedule. The job roles performed by the GMs are focused on what Mintzberg (1973) describes as 'figurehead', the person who is there to inspire and lead the staff; they also find the time to communicate with customers and listen carefully to their views. The communication competencies are perceived as the most valuable for successful operations and management. Thus, high contact intensity with various stakeholders (i.e. owner, subordinates, suppliers, customers) is a key aspect of managerial work. GMs in family hotels go through an informal performance evaluation – in most of the

cases conducted by the hotel owner – based primarily on the overall financial performance, and secondarily the levels of customer satisfaction and quality. This type of GMs puts great emphasis in networking, and they work very hard to build networks and a good reputation on the local/regional/national market. Their overall relations with the owners can be described as ‘tolerable’ since the GMs are often faced with unrealistic demands on behalf of the owners. Overall, the level of the owner’s involvement (and his/her family) in the GMs’ work in most of the cases is high (Hofstede 1980, Trompenaas 1993). The Greek context is dominant here, with the ‘in-group collectivism’ dimension to dictate the relationships between the owner, the GM and their subordinates (Papalexandris 2008).

On the other hand, ‘glocal’ GMs employed in national and franchised MNC hotel chains, are males between 45–55 years old, speaking on average two foreign languages and have very good educational attainment including a hospitality first degree and postgraduate studies. This professional background includes the ‘primary’ departments of a medium/big size hotel (Food and Beverage, Front Office – Reservations); in addition, sales, finance and contracting background is a prerequisite for this type of GMs. GMs’ recruitment is conducted through personal recommendations or internal candidates with experience in various hotels of the chain; ‘head hunters’ are rarely used for high profile candidates. Since the recruitment process does not involve a large number of candidates, two or three selection interviews take place with senior managers from/in the Head Office; during the final interview the owner is also present. Throughout the year there are moderate opportunities for training and development; the GMs are free to choose between in-house or outsourced programmes, in Greece and/or abroad. Their job roles are focused on leadership (employee motivation/inspiration) and entrepreneurship (help business grow). The leadership competencies is their primary concern, they value however the remaining managerial competencies (PCF) as integral parts of their competencies framework (Chung – Herrera et al. 2003). This is reflected in their performance evaluation, a formal procedure that takes place once or twice a year depending on the type of the hotel unit (city-resort). The primary targets are mainly financial and the maintenance of high quality standards; there is however a reference to the ‘performance’ of the GMs in areas such as communication, leadership and inter-personal relations. The GMs ‘secondary’ competencies are evaluated through peer reviews, customer satisfaction questionnaires and ‘mystery guest’ audits. Although there is intense networking activity within the corporate limits, GMs maintain their contacts outside the company; in addition, their reputation is mostly heard within the corporate limits. The owners – who in most of the cases occupy the position of the managing director or chairman of the board – have a moderate to low involvement in the GMs’ work, mainly at strategic level. There are however cases of interventions in GMs’ work when owners have personal

interest, i.e. they ‘strongly recommend’ the selection of a particular candidate. It is important to note here that the owners know personally all of their GMs, and maintain regular communication. High contact intensity with key stakeholders inside (owner, senior managers, immediate subordinates, repeating clientele) and outside (local authorities, tour operators) the hotel unit is deemed critical for the manager’s job. It can be argued that, in this type of business Greek context meets corporate culture: the Greek hotel national chains are structured and managed according to the multinational hotel chain model; the Greek context is however evident everywhere and it is very often the case that ‘favors’ and deviations from the standards occur when it is about relatives or friends (Broome 1996, Fukuyama 1995, Triandis et al. 1968). On the other hand, it can be argued that this type of business has embodied the Greek context characteristics in the best way, so their GMs can use it in order to improve performance and efficiency.

The ‘Greek global’ GMs are middle aged (45–55 years old) males with impeccable educational background. They speak on average two languages – including the hotel chain’s parent country language (in case it is not English). Their professional background includes a sales and finance orientation, although they understand hotel operations very well. The recruitment is conducted internally or through the use of ‘head hunters’ who are aiming at high profile recruits. The selection process is rigorous and involves at least three interviews. There are many opportunities for training and development in Greece and abroad on a regular basis. The GMs’ roles in this type of hotels are focused in entrepreneurship and finance – based on Mintzberg’s (1973) typology, decisional roles. Their annual performance evaluation is multi-dimensional, lots of emphasis is put however in achieving agreed (financial) targets.

This corresponds to their preference in the results-orientation competencies cluster. Networking is very important within the corporate limits; outside these limits the GMs maintain only those contacts necessary to ‘do the job’. Their reputation is synonymous with hard work and what is actually on their resume. The Greek culture is something that they cannot ignore – especially in the case of foreigners – the corporate culture however is this, which determines their behaviour. The above profile refers to Greek nationals working in managed Multinational hotel chains. The fact that a such a small number of foreign nationals work as luxury hotel GMs in Greece (less than ten in 2007) may lead to the following arguments: first that a pool of Greek GMs who satisfy the high standards of the multinational hotel chains exists in the country; and second that the Greek context is posing difficulties that foreign nationals cannot cope with (Broome 1996). Table 1 summarises the findings of this research in relation to managerial roles and competencies; the three different profiles identified for Greek luxury hotel GMs are not exclusive and provide a generic context for discussion in this field.

Table 1. The GMs' profiles in Greek 4 and 5* hotels.

Manager & Company Type	The 'Native' GM (Family/ Local Chain)	The 'Glocal' GM (GR National Chain & MNC franchised)	The 'Greek Global' GM (MNC managed)
Average Age	55–65	45–55	45–55
Sex	Male	Male	Male
Education	HE Graduates	HE Graduates & Postgraduate Education	HE Graduates & Postgraduate Education
Professional Background	All Departments (Emphasis in F&B)	All Departments (Emphasis in Finance, Sales & Contracting)	All Departments (Emphasis in Finance, Sales & Contracting)
Recruitment & Selection	Recommendations	Head Hunters & Internally	Head Hunters & Internally
Training & Development	Sporadic – GMs' own discretion	Moderate to High Opportunities	High Opportunities
Job Roles	"Figurehead"	Leader & Entrepreneur	Leader & Entrepreneur
Competencies	Emphasis in Communication	Leadership	Results Orientation & Leadership
Performance Evaluation	Informal Annual	Formal Annual (1 or 2 times)	Formal Annual (1 or 2 times)
Role of Networking	High	Moderate outside High inside	Low outside High inside
Role of reputation	High in local/ national market	High in national marker	High in regional/ international market
Ownership level of involvement	High to Moderate	Moderate to Low	Low
Role of Culture	High	Moderate	Moderate to low

5 CONCLUSION

This paper unearths the importance of contextual variables in managerial work, and demonstrates that there are alternatives to the use of universal (standard) management practices. More specifically the influence of the Greek context on managerial and HRM practices for luxury hotel GMs was explored and explained. There are strong indications that the Greek context affects to a large extent managerial work in family and local chain hotels; on the other hand national hotel chains rely on international standards and practices and exercise management in a manner that incorporates both local and international influences. Multinational hotel chains are preoccupied from strong corporate cultures, which prevent the infiltration of any local/national culture influence. Based on the research findings, three distinctive groups of luxury hotel GMs were identified: the 'native' GM; the 'Glocal' GM; and the 'Greek Global' GM. This research provides evidence for the reasons behind the use of different HRM practices between different types of luxury hotel managers, based on the local culture influences. The wider theoretical contributions include insights on managerial work, HRM and the interplay between managerial work and context.

REFERENCES

- Agut, S., Grau, R., & Peiro, J.M. 2003. Competency needs among managers from Spanish hotels and restaurants and their training demands. *Hospitality Management* 22: 281–295.
- Blayney, C. 2009. Management Competencies: Are they related to Hotel Performance? *International Journal of Management and Marketing Research* 2(1): 59–71.
- Bourantas, D. & Papadakis, V. 1996. Greek Management: Diagnosis and prognosis. *Int. Studies of Management and Organization* 26(3): 13–25.
- Broome, B. 1996. Exploring the Greek Mosaic: A Guide to Intercultural Communication in Greece. Yarmouth: Intercultural Press.
- Brophy, M. & Kiely, T. 2002. Competencies: A new sector. *Journal of European Industrial Training* 26(2–4): 165–176.
- Christou, E. 1999. Hospitality management education in Greece: An exploratory study. *Tourism Management* 20: 683–691.
- Christou, E. & Eaton, J. 2000. Management Competencies for Graduate Trainees. *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(4): 1058–1106.
- Chung-Herrera, B., Enz, C., & Lankau, M. 2003. Grooming Future Hospitality Leaders: A Competencies Model. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 44(3): 17–25.

- D'Annunzio-Green, N. 1997. Developing international managers in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 9(5/6): 199–208.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. 2003. *The Landscape of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Dimmock, K., Breen, H. & Walo, M. 2003. Management Competencies: an Australian assessment of Tourism and Hospitality Students. *Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management* 9(1): 12–26.
- Feng, F. & Pearson, T.E. 1999. Hotel Expatriates in China: selection criteria, important skills and knowledge, repatriation concerns, and causes of failure. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 18(2): 309–321.
- Fukuyama, F. 1995. *Trust: the social virtues and the creation of prosperity*. London: Hamish Hamilton.
- Gilatis, N. & Guerrier, Y. 1994. Managing international career moves in international hotel companies. In C.P. Cooper, & A. Lockwood (Eds.). *Progress in Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality Management* 5: 229–241.
- Gilbert, D. & Guerrier, Y. 1997. UK hospitality managers: past and present. *Service Industries Journal* 17(1): 115–132.
- Hales, C. & Nightingale, M. 1986. What are the unit managers supposed to do? A contingent methodology for investigating managerial role requirements. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 5(1): 3–11.
- Hellenic Chamber of Hotels (2007). *Hotel Sector Statistics*. Available from: <http://www.grhotels.gr> (Accessed: 10/09/2007).
- Hofstede, G. 1980. *Cultures' consequences: international differences in work-related values*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- House, R., Javidan, M., Hanges, P. & Dorfman, P. 2002. Understanding Cultures and implicit leadership theories across the globe: an introduction to project GLOBE. *Journal of World Business* 37: 3–10.
- Jauhari, V. 2006. Competencies for a career in the hospitality industry: an Indian perspective. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 18(2): 123–134.
- Javidan, M.J. & House, R.J. 2001. Cultural Acumen for the Global Manager: Lessons from Globe Project, *Organizational Dynamics*, 29(4): 289–305.
- Kanellopoulos, C. 1990. *Personnel management and personnel managers in Greece*. Athens: Greek Productivity Centre (in Greek).
- Katz, R.L. 1974. Skills of an effective administrator. *Harvard Business Review* 52: 90–102.
- Kay, C. & Russette, J. 2000. Hospitality Management Competencies. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 41(4): 52–63.
- Kim, S.M. 1994. Tourist hotel general managers in Korea: a profile. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 13(1): 7–17.
- Kriegel, U. 2000. International hospitality management. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 41(2): 64–71.
- Ladkin, A. & Juwaheer, D.T. 2000. The career paths of hotel general managers in Mauritius. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 12(2): 119–25.
- Lockwood, A. 1993. *European Management Skills in the Hospitality Industry: based on the final report of the HCIMA's European research 1992–4*. London: Hotel & Catering International Management Association.
- Matheson, D. 2004. Management capability: What it really means. *Management Magazine*. available from: <http://www.management.co.nz>. (accessed 14/12/2009).
- Mintzberg, H. 1973. *The nature of Managerial Work*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Myloni, B., Harzing, A.W. & Mirza, H. 2004. Human Resource Management in Greece: Have the colours of Culture faded away? *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 4(1): 59–76.
- Nailon, P. 1968. *A study of management activity in units of a hotel group*. Unpublished MPhil thesis: University of Surrey.
- Nebel, E. C. & Ghei, A. 1993. A conceptual framework of the hotel general manager's job. *Hospitality Research Journal* 16(3): 27–37.
- Nebel, E.C., Lee, J. & Vidakovic, B. 1995. Hotel general manager career paths in the United States. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 14(3/4): 245–260.
- Nickson, D. 1998. A Review of Hotel Internationalisation with a Particular Focus on the Key Role Played by American Organisations. *Progress in Tourism and Hospitality Research* 4: 53–66.
- Nickson, D. & Warhust, C. 2001. From globalization to internationalization to Americanization: the example of "Little Americas" in the hotel sector. In M. Hughes & J. Taggart. (Eds) *Multinationals in a New Era – International Strategy and Management*: 207–225. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Papalexandris, N. & Chalikias, J. 2002. Changes in training, performance management and communication issues among Greek firms in the 1990s: intercountry and intracountry comparisons. *Journal of European Industrial Training* 26(7): 342–352.
- Peterson, R.B. 2004. Empirical research in international management: A critique and future agenda. In R. Marschan-Piekkari & C. Welch (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for International Business*: 25–55. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Sandwith, P. 1993. A hierarchy of management training requirements: the competency domain model. *Public Personnel Management* 22(1): 43–62.
- Tas, R. 1988. *Teaching Future Managers*. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 29(2): 41–43.
- Triandis, H.C, Vassiliou, V, & Nassiakou, M. (1968). Three cross-cultural studies of subjective culture. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology Monograph Supplement* 8(4): 1–42.
- Trompenaars, F. 1993. *Riding the waves of culture*. London: Nicholas Brealy.
- Tsui, A.S. 2004. Contributing to global management knowledge: A case for high quality indigenous research. *Asia Pacific Journal Of Management* 21(4): 491–513.
- Umbreit, T. 1993. *Essential Skills: What graduates need to succeed*. *Hosteur* 3(1): 10–12.
- Yin, R.K. 2003. *Case Study Research – Design and Methods*. 3rd Edition. London: Sage.

Assessment of service quality dimensions in the fast food restaurants

Z. Mohi, R.P.S. Raja Abdullah, L.B. Jipiu & A.A. Abd Majid

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, MARA University of Technology, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

H.C. Wu

Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism Management, Macau University of Science and Technology, Avenida Wai Long, Taipa, Macau, China

ABSTRACT: In marketing literature, the study of service quality has focused on customer overall evaluation. The knowledge of the customer perceptions with regards to this complex construct constitutes powerful information on the measurement of company performance and management of strategic projects in the fast food restaurant industry. The development of a valid tool for measuring perceived service quality in the fast food restaurant industry has been proposed using a multi-dimensional and hierarchical model, where service quality is viewed as a higher-order constructs underlying three primary dimensions, which are defined by 10 sub dimensions.

Keywords: service quality dimensions, fast food restaurant, multi-dimensional and hierarchical model.

1 INTRODUCTION

Service quality has been considered to be an important marketing strategy in any organization, as well as playing a key role in measuring the organizational success (Keith & Simmers, 2011). Over several decades, the conceptualization and measurement of service quality perceptions have been one of the most debated and controversial topics in the services marketing literature. Researchers (see: Brady & Cronin, 2001; Dabholkar, Thorpe, & Rentz, 1996; Grönroos, 1984; Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, 1985, 1988; Rust & Oliver, 1994) have endeavoured to conceptualize and to measure the service quality and attempted to gain an understanding of customer behaviour.

In terms of the literature in the hospitality industry, as well as in the fast food restaurants (FFRs), a large amount of significant attention has been paid to the issue of service quality; i.e., from measuring the customer's perception of service quality to the developing of the service quality model that relates to the restaurants' customer satisfaction, expectation and perception (Chang, 2009). A large number of researchers (Bojanic & Rosen, 1994; Cronin & Taylor, 1994; Knutson, Stevens, & Putton, 1995; Lee & Hing, 1995; Raajpoot, 2002; Ryu & Jang, 2008; Stevens, Knutson, & Patton, 1995) have presented SERVQUAL, SERVPERF, DINESERV, TANGSERV and DINESCAPE instruments for the restaurant industry. However, perhaps there has not been a specific comprehensive measurement in the restaurant

industry to capture the service quality construct for FFRs.

In FFRs operations, the term "fast" refers to the service rather than the food itself (Chou & Liu, 1999). Nowadays, it has been referred to as "quick-service" to attach true meaning to it (Khan, 1990); for example, the customers entering FFRs do not expect to wait a long time to receive services (Chou & Liu, 1999). Service quality has been identified as the core value to attract the customers in the FFRs (Tsai, Shih, & Chen, 2007), and therefore, service appears to play an important role in promoting its quality in the FFRs. In addition, fast food is a general term used to refer to the restaurant offering limited and specialized menu (e.g., burger and fried chicken) that lend itself to production-line techniques (Bender & Bender, 1993; Davies & Smith, 2004). Therefore, in order to help FFRs increase their competitiveness and market share, this study proposed to develop a multi-dimensional and hierarchical model of service quality in the FFRs based on the customer's point of view (Cronin & Taylor, 1994; Ueltschy & Krampf, 2001).

Several researchers (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Clemes, Gan, & Kao, 2007; Clemes, Wu, Hu, & Gan, 2009; Dabholkar et al., 1996) suggest that service quality is a multi-dimensional and hierarchical construct in nature. However, few efforts have been made to examine the multi-dimensional and hierarchical conceptualization of the service quality construct in the FFRs on the basis of the customer perception. Thus, in light of the problems associated with those

measurements, the aim of this study is to develop a measurement adopting a multi-dimensional and hierarchical model taking the specific characteristics of the FFRs into account.

2 METHODOLOGY

The multi-dimensional and hierarchical method is adopted in this study because service quality has been viewed as a higher-order factor that is defined by three primary dimensions, each of which in turn consists of several sub dimensions (Brady & Cronin, 2001). The three primary dimensions are similar to hierarchical model developed by Brady and Cronin (2001), however the number of the corresponding sub dimensions need to be identified. The number and the nature of service quality dimensions are directly related to the service under investigation (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Dabholkar et al., 1996; Mohi, Clemes, & Hu, 2011). Therefore, to accomplish this goal, focus group discussions were conducted to identify the factors determining the customer perception of service quality in the FFRs (Cox, Higginbotham, & Burton, 1976; Mohi et al., 2011; Tucci & Talaga, 2000).

The existing literature perhaps has not identified instruments that measure customers' actual overall perceptions of service quality in the FFRs. It was therefore, deemed valuable to develop a multi-dimensional and hierarchical measurement instrument in accordance with the procedure for scale development as suggested by Churchill (1979). In addition, the generation of a list of items was developed by adapting the items of existing generic scales as suggested by several researchers (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Dabholkar et al., 1996) and specific restaurants' scales (Fu & Parks, 2001; Huam, Seng, Thoo, Rasli, & Abd Hamid, 2011; Qin & Prybutok, 2008; Shaharudin, Wan Mansor, & Elias, 2011).

Therefore, after taking all information from the focus groups discussions and the findings from the literature into account, this study proposed three primary dimensions and 13 sub-dimensions as components of service quality for FFRs. The first primary dimension is interaction quality. Several researchers (Grönroos, 1982; Leblanc, 1992; Soriano, 2002) indicate the importance of interaction quality in the delivery of services and identify it as having the most significant effect on service quality perceptions. Accordingly, four sub-dimensions; attitude, behaviour, problem solving and expertise were identified (Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988; Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990; Dabholkar et al., 1996; Keung, 2000; Kuo, 2007).

The second primary dimension is the physical environment quality, which is defined by six sub-dimensions; restaurant ambience, facility aesthetics, dining equipment, cleanliness, layout and design, and menu design (Barber & Scarcelli, 2009; Bitner, 1992; Bowen & Morris, 1995; Knutson et al., 1995; Raajpoot, 2002; Ryu & Jang, 2008; Stevens et al., 1995). Lastly, the third primary dimension,

the outcome quality, focuses on the outcome of the service act and indicates what customers gain from the service; in other words, whether outcome quality satisfies customers' needs and wants (Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994; McDougall & Levesque, 1994; Powpaka, 1996; Richard & Allaway, 1993). The outcome quality is defined with three sub-dimensions: waiting time, valence and food quality (Auty, 1992; Brady & Cronin, 2001; Hwang & Lambert, 2008; Kim, Hertzman, & Hwang, 2010; Namkung & Jang, 2007; Taylor, 1994).

2.1 Data collection

The sample size determined in this study is based on two types of data analyses techniques; exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and structural equation modeling analysis (SEM). Several authors (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Kline, 2005; Pallant, 2007) recommend a minimum sample size of 100 or larger for conducting EFA with at least five times as many observations as the number of measured items to be analyzed and a more acceptable size of 10 to 1 ratio. Thus, after considering those recommendations, a minimum sample size of at least 275 respondents was deemed appropriate. The ideal sample size used to employ SEM should be between 200 and 400 observations for moderate complexity and Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) (Chinna, 2009; Hair et al., 2010; Tanaka, 1993). Accordingly, the minimum sample size in this study was set as 475 usable questionnaires. However, 580 questionnaires were distributed for the actual data collection to guarantee at least 475 usable questionnaires after considering that 100% completed questionnaires was highly unlikely (Hair et al., 2010).

The data were collected using the convenience sampling method. Cooper and Emory (1995) and Starmass (2007) indicate that the obvious advantages of adopting convenience sampling are low cost and saved time. Between April 15 and June 15, 2011, questionnaires comprising a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from "1 (strongly disagree)" to "7 (strongly agree)" were distributed to 580 college and graduate students aged 18 years and above in Taiwan. These students were selected as respondents because they represent large and growing customers in the FFRs (Bougoure & Neu, 2010; Kueh & Boo, 2007; Qin & Prybutok, 2008) and they spend billions of dollars in FFRs industry each year (Knutson, 2000).

3 DATA ANALYSES AND RESULTS

3.1 Demographic profiles

Of those 580 colleges and graduate students, only 575 students (99.1%) returned the survey. However, the final sample consisted of 571 responses (98.4%), as four responses were unusable and, therefore, removed from this study. There were 328 (57.8%) females

and 243 males (42.6%). 261 respondents were aged between 21 and 23 (45.7%), and a majority of respondents attended college or university (93.5%). In addition, 530 respondents were single (92.8%), 513 were Taiwanese (89.8%) and 312 were Buddhist (54.6%).

The main purposes for which respondents were dining out were an outing with friends (79.9%), followed by a family outing (15.8%). The largest proportion of respondents dined out with friends (58.7%), followed by family (19.8%) and partners (13.0%). Of the respondents, 43.1% spent approximately between NT\$100 and NT\$150 for dining-out per person and 37.5% dined out at least once a month.

3.2 Analyses procedures

Once the descriptive statistics was completed, the data were randomly split into two sets of data for further analyses, in order to perform two-stage process of the data analyses (i.e., EFA and SEM). The objectives of the data splitting procedure are to validate the EFA results and then move to the SEM analyses (Hair et al., 2010; Kline, 2005; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). Therefore, each group sample is required to meet a minimum size requirement.

In the first-stage process of data analysis, the first subsample data set was used to conduct EFA. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, EFA was performed to obtain a robust and reliable factor structure, and the most common approach in the application of marketing research, and therefore would be considered to be an appropriate analysis before SEM is performed (Bindu, Chandrasekharan, & Sai, 2008; Dagger, Sweeney, & Johnson, 2007; Hair et al., 2010; Kline, 2005; Lu, Zhang, & Wang, 2009; Pallant, 2007; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004; Stewart, 1981). In the second-stage of data analysis, the second subsample data set was used to reassess the EFA results using SEM analysis via AMOS, employing the two-step approach (measurement model and structural model) to conduct confirmatory factor analysis and to test the relationships among the constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

3.3 Exploratory assessment of the measures

To extract the sub-dimensions of service quality, principal component analysis with VARIMAX rotation method was performed. In this study, the items whose factor loadings were less than 0.50 and any item with high loadings crossed two factors were removed from the item pool (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2007). Eigenvalues for the extracted 10 sub-dimensions were greater than one, indicating that a component could account for a meaningful amount of variance, and was worthy of being retained (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2007).

The remaining factors were renamed; Model 1 explaining 68.7% of total variance in interaction quality with three sub-dimensions (interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills and professional skills), Model

2 explaining 67.2% of total variance in physical environment quality with four sub-dimensions (restaurant ambience and aesthetics, dining equipment and cleanliness, layout and design, and menu design), and Model 3 accounted for 68.5% of total variance in outcome quality with three sub-dimensions (dining experience, food quality and menu variety). These three models were later subject to the second-stage of data analyses.

The remaining factors were also subjected to a reliability test by employing the Cronbach alpha (Cronbach, 1951). The level of internal consistency in each sub-dimensions was acceptable with Cronbach alpha estimates ranging from 0.803 to 0.921 and exceeding the cut-off value of 0.70, which indicated the internal consistency of the measured items in the exploratory study (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Also, the factor loadings for all items ranged from 0.503 to 0.866, which were well above the acceptable value of 0.50 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; 2010; John & Reve, 1982) and all were statistically significant at the .001% level of significance.

4 CONCLUSIONS

This paper presents preliminary results of quantitative study in the fast food restaurants addressing the issues of service quality dimensions as perceived by Taiwanese restaurant patrons in fast food restaurants. However, the conclusions and the limitations of the study have not been included in this study, as SEM analysis is currently being carried out.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, E. W., Fornell, C., & Lehmann, D. R. 1994. Customer satisfaction, market share, and profitability: Findings from Sweden. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3), 53–66.
- Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. 1988. Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 103(3), 411–423.
- Auty, S. 1992. Consumer choice and segmentation in the restaurant industry. *Service Industries Journal*, 12(3), 324–339.
- Barber, N., & Scarcelli, J. M. 2009. Clean restrooms: How important are they to restaurant consumers? *Journal of Foodservice*, 20(6), 309–320.
- Bender, A. E., & Bender, D. A. (Eds.). 1993. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Bindu, N., Chandrasekharan, R., & Sai, L. P. 2008. Scales to measure and benchmark service quality in tourism industry. *Benchmarking*, 15(4), 469–493.
- Bitner, M. J. 1992. Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of Marketing*, 56(2), 57–71.
- Bojanic, D. C., & Rosen, D. L. 1994. Measuring service quality in restaurants: An application of the SERVQUAL Instrument. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 18(1), 3–14.
- Bougoure, U. S., & Neu, M. K. 2010. Service quality in the Malaysian fast food industry: An examination

- using DINESERV. *Services Marketing Quarterly*, 31(2), 194–212.
- Bowen, J. T., & Morris, A. J. 1995. Menu design: Can menus sell? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 7(4), 4–9.
- Brady, M. K., & Cronin, J. J. 2001. Some new thoughts on conceptualizing perceived service quality: A hierarchical approach. *Journal of Marketing*, 65(3), 34–49.
- Cadotte, E. R., & Turgeon, N. 1988. Key factors in guest satisfaction. *Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 28(4), 44–51.
- Chang, D. Y. 2009. Service quality assessment of a Chain Steakhouse in Taiwan. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 10(4), 255–278.
- Chinna, K. 2009. Structural equation modeling using AMOS. Paper presented at lecture for AMOS workshop, 19–20 January 2009, University Technology MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia.
- Chou, C. Y., & Liu, H. R. 1999. Simulation study on the queuing system in a fast-food restaurant. *Journal of Restaurant & Foodservice Marketing*, 3(2), 23–36.
- Churchill, G. A. J. 1979. A paradigm for developing better measures of marketing constructs. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 16(1), 64–73.
- Clemes, M. D., Gan, C. E. C., & Kao, T. H. 2007. University student satisfaction: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 17(2), 292–325.
- Clemes, M. D., Wu, J. H. C., Hu, B. D., & Gan, C. 2009. An empirical study of behavioral intentions in the Taiwan hotel industry. *Innovative Marketing*, 5(3), 30–50.
- Cooper, D. R., & Emory, C. W. 1995. *Business research methods*. Chicago, IL: Irwin.
- Cox, K. K., Higginbotham, J. B., & Burton, J. 1976. Applications of focus group interviews in marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 40(1), 77–80.
- Cronbach, L. J. 1951. Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16(3), 297–334.
- Cronin, J. J., & Taylor, S. A. 1994. SERVPERF versus SERVQUAL: Reconciling performance-based and perceptions-minus-expectations measurement of service quality. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(1), 125–131.
- Crosby, L. A., Evans, K. R., & Cowles, D. 1990. Relationship quality in services selling: An interpersonal influence perspective. *Journal of Marketing*, 54(3), 68–81.
- Dabholkar, P. A., Thorpe, D. I., & Rentz, J. O. 1996. A measure of service quality for retail stores: Scales development and validation. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 24(1), 3–16.
- Dagger, T. S., Sweeney, J. C., & Johnson, L. W. 2007. A hierarchical model of health service quality: Scale development and investigation of an integrated model. *Journal of Service Research*, 10(2), 123–142.
- Davies, G. J., & Smith, J. L. 2004. Fast food dietary perspective. *Nutrition & Food Science*, 34(2), 80–82.
- Fu, Y. Y., & Parks, S. C. 2001. The relationship between restaurant service quality and consumer loyalty among the elderly. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 25(3), 320–326.
- Grönroos, C. 1982. An applied service marketing theory. *European Journal of Marketing*, 16(7), 30–41.
- Grönroos, C. 1984. A service quality model and its marketing implications. *European Journal of Marketing*, 18(4), 36–44.
- Hair, J. F. J., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. 2010. *Multivariate data analysis: A global perspective* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Huam, H. T., Seng, S. M., Thoo, A. C., Rasli, A., & Abd Hamid, A. B. 2011. Consumers' purchase intentions in fast food restaurants: An empirical study on undergraduate students. *International Journal of Business & Social Science*, 2(5), 214–221.
- Hwang, J., & Lambert, C. U. 2008. The interaction of major resources and their influence on waiting times in a multi-stage restaurant. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 27(4), 541–551.
- John, G., & Reve, T. 1982. The reliability and validity of key informant data from Dyadic relationships in marketing channels. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 19(4), 517–524.
- Keith, N. K., & Simmers, C. S. 2011. Measuring service quality perceptions of restaurant experiences: The disparity between comment cards and DINESERV. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, 14(1), 20–32.
- Keung, S. W. C. 2000. Tourists' perceptions of hotel frontline employees' questionable job-related behaviour. *Tourism Management*, 21(2), 121–134.
- Khan, M. A. 1990. *Concepts of foodservice operations and management* (2nd ed.). London, England: Van Nostrand Reinhold International Company Limited.
- Kim, Y. S., Hertzman, J., & Hwang, J. J. 2010. College students and quick-service restaurants: How students perceive restaurant food and services? *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, 13(4), 346–359.
- Kline, R. B. 2005. *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Knutson, B. J. 2000. College students and fast food: How students perceive restaurant brands. *Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 41(3), 68–74.
- Knutson, B. J., Stevens, P., & Putton, M. 1995. DINESERV: Measuring service quality in quick service, casual/theme, and fine dining restaurants. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 3(2), 35–44.
- Kueh, K., & Boo, H. V. 2007. Culture and service quality expectations: Evidence from Generation Y consumers in Malaysia. *Managing Service Quality*, 17(6), 656–680.
- Kuo, C. M. 2007. The importance of hotel employee service attitude and the satisfaction of international tourists. *Service Industries Journal*, 27(8), 1073–1085.
- Leblanc, G. 1992. Factors affecting customer evaluation of service quality in travel agencies: An investigation of customer perceptions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 30(4), 10–16.
- Lee, Y. L., & Hing, N. 1995. Measuring quality in restaurant operations: An application of the SERVQUAL instrument. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 14(3–4), 293–310.
- Lu, Y., Zhang, L., & Wang, B. 2009. A multidimensional and hierarchical model of mobile service quality. *Electronic Commerce Research & Applications*, 8(8), 228–240.
- McDougall, G. H. G., & Levesque, T. J. 1994. A revised view of service quality dimensions: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Professional Services Marketing*, 11(1), 189–209.
- Mohi, Z., Clemes, M. D., & Hu, B. 2011. The development of service quality dimensions for moderate upscale restaurant in Malaysia: Proceedings of the 9th Asia-Pacific Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (APacCHRIE) Conference: Hospitality and tourism education: From a vision to an icon, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, 2–5 June 2011.
- Namkung, Y., & Jang, S. S. 2007. Does food quality really matter in restaurants? Its impact on customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 31(3), 387–409.
- Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. 1994. *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

- Pallant, J. 2007. *SPSS survival manual: A step-by-step guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows (Version 15)* (3rd ed.). Maidenhead, England; New York: McGraw Hill/Open University Press.
- Parasuraman, A., Berry, L. L., & Zeithaml, V. A. 1985. A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. *Journal of Marketing*, 49(4), 41–50.
- Parasuraman, A., Berry, L. L., & Zeithaml, V. A. 1988. SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12–40.
- Powpaka, S. 1996. The role of outcome quality as a determinant of overall service quality in different categories of services industries: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 10(2), 5–25.
- Qin, H., & Prybutok, V. R. 2008. Determinants of customer perceived service quality in fast food restaurants and their relationship to customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. *Quality Management Journal*, 15(2), 35–50.
- Raajpoot, N. A. 2002. TANGSERV: A multiple item scale for measuring tangible quality in foodservice industry. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, 5(2), 109–127.
- Richard, M. D., & Allaway, A. W. 1993. Service quality attributes and choice behavior. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 7(1), 59–68.
- Rust, R. T., & Oliver, R. L. 1994. *Service quality: New directions in theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.
- Ryu, K., & Jang, S. S. 2008. DINESCAPE: A scale for customers' perception of dining environments. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, 11(1), 2–22.
- Schumacker, R. E., & Lomax, R. G. 2004. *A beginner's guide to structural equation modeling* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Shaharudin, M. R., Wan Mansor, S., & Elias, S. J. 2011. Food quality attributes among Malaysia's fast food customer. *International Business & Management*, 2(1), 198–208.
- Soriano, D. R. 2002. Customers' expectations factors in restaurants: The situation in Spain. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 19(8/9), 1055–1067.
- Starmass. 2007. Your key to business success in China. Retrieved from http://www.starmass.com/en/research_sampling_method.htm
- Stevens, P., Knutson, B. J., & Patton, M. 1995. DINESERV: A tool for measuring service quality in restaurants. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 3(2), 35–44.
- Stewart, D. W. 1981. The application and misapplication of factor analysis in marketing research. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 51–62.
- Tanaka, J. S. 1993. Multifaceted conceptions of fit in structural equation models. In K. A. Bollen, & J. S. Long (Eds.), *Testing structural equation models* (pp. 10–39). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Taylor, S. 1994. Waiting for service: The relationship between delays and evaluations of service. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(2), 56–69.
- Tsai, M. C., Shih, K. H., & Chen, J. C. H. 2007. A comparison of the service quality of fast food chain franchises. *International Journal of Services & Standards*, 3(2), 222–238.
- Tucci, L. A., & Talaga, J. A. 2000. Determinants of consumer perceptions of service quality in restaurants. *Journal of Food Products Marketing*, 6(2), 3–13.
- Ueltschy, L. C., & Krampf, R. F. 2001. Cultural sensitivity to satisfaction and service quality measures. *Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice*, 9(3), 14–31.

This page intentionally left blank

Effects of emotional labor on customer outcomes: Tourists' perspectives

Lee Shin Yiing, Yuhanis Abdul Aziz, Samsinar Md. Sidin & Rosli Saleh
University Putra, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Research on service employee emotions has gained much attention since the quality of service delivery relies heavily on frontline employees. The impact of frontline employees' emotions on customer outcomes as well as service organizations' financial and long-term benefits may be the reasons of the attention. The main purpose of the current study is to investigate the associations of customer perceived emotional labor strategies and customer outcomes, specifically, customer satisfaction and word-of-mouth recommendation in the travel and tourism industry. Data for this study was collected from international tourists who used group package tours with tour guide services during their visits in Malaysia. The results point out that all three emotional labor strategies have significant effects on customer satisfaction and word-of-mouth recommendations. The results suggest significant implications for service managers and organizations.

Keywords: emotional labor strategies, customer satisfaction, tour guide

1 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia's diverse cultural and traditional backgrounds offer various tourist attractions. Recognizing the great potential of Malaysia as the world's tourist destination, the government has intensified its effort to shift the country's economy focus from manufacturing to tourism industry. In 1987, Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board or Tourism Malaysia, formerly known as Tourist Development Corporation of Malaysia (TDC) was appointed to promote Malaysia as a tourist spot domestically and internationally (Ministry of Tourism, 2009). As a result, Malaysia is ranked ninth as the most travelled to destination in 2009 with international tourist arrivals of 23.6 million (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2009). At the same time, the earnings from tourism recorded about RM51 billion and provided over one million employment opportunities to the workforce (Ministry of Tourism, 2010).

In order to ensure that the Malaysian tourism industry continue to flourish, government has invested in training of front liners and expand tourism events in the country. From the recent data announced by Ministry of Tourism Malaysia (2011), in 2010, the total tourist arrivals to Malaysia hit 24.6 million or 3.9% higher compared to 2009. Singapore is the biggest tourist generating market (13 million arrivals), followed by Indonesia (2.5 million arrivals), Thailand (1.45 million arrivals), China (1.13 million arrivals), and Brunei (1.12 million arrivals). In 2011, the ministry forecasts 25 million arrivals and RM60 billion in tourism receipts.

To achieve the target of tourist arrivals and receipts in 2011, other than allocating funds for the industry, the government plays its role to promote Malaysia's tourism from time to time in international conferences and events. In addition, the Ministry of Tourism organizes various events and programs for example, eco-tourism programs, home-stay programs, cultural and festive events (Ministry of Tourism, 2011) to heighten the potential of foreign tourists paying their visits to Malaysia. The government also initiated incentives for tourists, such as import duty-waived to promote Malaysia as shopping paradise. From the above evidence, it is proven that the tourism industry has great potential in generating income, creating jobs, earning foreign currencies and attracting investments for Malaysia, whereby it helps in improving Malaysia's balance of payments.

The nature of travel and tourism industry is people-based in which customers greatly interact with tour guides in group package tours, in most cases, tour guides are the services. Tour guide embodies the services being sold and is inextricably linked with the quality of travel package (Sharpe, 2005). Prior researches had proven the importance of frontline employees' emotional displays during service interactions to create positive quality impressions which in turn contribute to customer satisfaction and positive customer behavioral outcomes. Apparently, most of the frontline service jobs mandate employees to portray positive emotions during their interactions with customers. Frontline employees are required to hold to the organization's display rules when they express their emotions during services although their actual

feelings differ from the display rules at that particular time (Groth et al., 2009). In this case, frontline employees apply the concept which known as “emotional labor” by Hochschild (1983) to comply with display rules.

Seeing the importance of service employee’s emotional displays on customer and service transaction, there is a dearth of research on the relationships between frontline employee’s emotional display and its effects on marketing consequences, especially investigation from customer perspectives remain sparse. Thus, there is a need to study whether customers can detect the difference between the emotional labor strategies, namely surface acting, deep acting and naturally felt emotions, the way they perceived each strategy, in turn leads service organization and service employees to know customer evaluation and impressions on emotional displays of the employees.

The main purpose of the current research is to investigate the association of customer perceived service employees’ emotional labor strategies with customer outcomes, specifically, customer satisfaction and word-of-mouth recommendation.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The groundbreaking work of Hochschild (1983) on emotional labor has been the influential cornerstone for various emotional researches in services and workplace. Emotional labor was coined by Hochschild (1983) and it refers to the management of feelings to create publicly observable facial and bodily displays; it is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value. Hochschild’s approach toward emotional labor was elaborated via compensation and exchange value in performing the work of emotional labor. Emotional labor is treated as the process of regulating feelings and expressions of emotions in order to achieve organizational goals (Grandey, 2000). Drawing upon Grandey’s definition, emotional labor is a process of emotional regulations using different mechanisms. Emotional labor occurs when an employee must purposefully alter his or her emotions in order to comply with an occupational or organizational demand. In this case, tour guides who make tourists feel welcome are paid to manifest a specific emotional state within the tour are said to exert emotional labor in their job roles.

Service organization pay attention to the way employees behave toward customers as these interpersonal interactions will affect organizational success. Emotional displays are an important aspect of the interactions, so, organizations prescribe how emotions should be presented to others through the use of display rules (Diefendorff and Richard, 2003).

The purpose of display rules is to ensure that the service employees will project the desired image of the organization to the public, in which the image will elicit desired response from customers.

Much of the researches in emotional labor strategies had been framed in terms of surface acting

and deep acting. Recently, Diefendorff et al. (2005) introduced another emotional labor strategy which is known as “expression of naturally felt emotions” in which service employees expressed positive emotions that matched with their true feelings without modifications.

3 HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Past research had found negative association between surface acting and customer satisfaction as well as word-of-mouth recommendation (Groth et al., 2009; Van Dijk et al., 2011). Contrary to surface acting, deep acting produced image of authentic and sincere in customers’ impressions. Groth et al. (2009) contended customers who perceived frontline employees who engaged in deep acting were more satisfied with the service received. Van Dijk et al. (2011) also found that visitors who perceived tour guide to be in deep acting will spread positive word-of-mouth. Empirical evidence on the relationship between naturally felt emotions and customer outcomes is limited. Yuhani and Zaiton (2010) proposed that naturally felt emotion has positive relationship with customer satisfaction, as well as word-of-mouth recommendations in their study. However, their findings on the relationships were not significant. Following suit, this study develops the following hypotheses to be tested:

- H1a Surface acting is negatively related to customer satisfaction
- H1b Surface acting is negatively related to word-of-mouth recommendations
- H2a Deep acting is positively related to customer satisfaction
- H2b Deep acting is positively related to word-of-mouth recommendations
- H3a Naturally felt emotions is positively related to customer satisfaction
- H3b Naturally felt emotions is positively related to word-of-mouth recommendations

4 METHODOLOGY

The constructs of emotional labor strategies suggested by Grandey (2000) which are surface acting and deep acting are being examined. Meanwhile, an additional emotional labor strategy which is naturally felt emotion is included as the third construct. Finally, customer satisfaction and word-of-mouth recommendation are proposed as outcomes in this study. The evaluation of service employee’s emotional labor strategies will be solicited from customers.

Using the primary data collection method, questionnaires were distributed to tourists who participate in group package tour during their visits to Malaysia via tour guides from travel agencies. Travel agencies were identified from the directory provided by Ministry of Tourism Malaysia. A total of 13 travel agencies

had agreed to participate in this study. For agencies that located in Perak, Penang and Selangor areas, survey questionnaires were sent to them personally by the researcher, and the rest were sent via mail, inclusive of return postage envelope for them to return the completed questionnaires.

The data was then computed and analyzed using appropriate software. The software opted for this study was SPSS. To comprehend the general description and understanding of the data collected, descriptive analyses was used to examine the means, distributions and correlations.

5 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

5.1 Profile of the respondents

From a total of 650 target respondents, 398 tourists (61.23%) completed the survey and provided usable responses. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the basic features and demographic characteristics of the data collected in this study.

As can be seen from Table 1, the respondents were 53.3% females while male accounted for 46.7%. In terms of the region where the respondents were from, majority of them were from Asia, which accounted for 57.8% from 398 respondents, followed by Australasia with 13.6%, and Europe with 9.3%. Besides, there were 6% of the respondents who were from North America as well as 5.5% who were from Middle East. The other 7.8% of respondents were from other regions which included South America and Africa. The percentage of respondents from each region is in line with the Malaysian tourist arrivals population in 2010 where majority of them are from ASEAN countries and China. According to the statistics released by Ministry of Tourism Malaysia, about 87% from the total tourists were from Asia.

Most of the respondents were from the age group of 46 to 55 years old (24.6%). Then, respondents from 36 to 45 of age group and above 55 of age group have the same percentage of 20.6%. This reflected that elder travelers prefer to travel by package group compared to the younger travelers. Table 5.5 shows that respondents whose age below 18 only accounted 1.8%, whereas 13.1% of the tourists were between 18 and 25 years old. About 19.3% of the tourists were aged 26 to 35 years old.

On the marital status of the respondents, there were about 62% of the respondents who were married and 35.7% who were single. Another 2.3% were in the other status. When asked on the educational level of the respondents, 53.8% indicated that they do have a bachelor's degree, while 18.1% of the respondents indicated that they possess a postgraduate qualification. On the other hand, 22.4% of the respondents had secondary or high school education and only 5.7% of the tourists having a diploma.

With regards to the respondent's monthly gross income (USD\$), 154 of the respondents (38.7%) do

Table 1. Respondents' profile.

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Region		
Asia	230	57.8
Australasia	54	13.6
Europe	37	9.3
North America	24	6.0
Middle East	22	5.5
Others	31	7.8
Gender		
Male	186	46.7
Female	212	53.3
Age		
Below 18	7	1.8
18–25	52	13.1
26–35	77	19.3
36–45	82	20.6
46–55	98	24.6
Above 55	82	20.6
Marital status		
Single	142	35.7
Married	247	62.0
Others	9	2.3
Education level		
Secondary school/ High school	89	22.4
Diploma	23	5.7
Bachelor degree	214	53.8
Master's degree	65	16.3
PhD	7	1.8
Monthly income (USD \$)		
None	53	13.3
2000 or below	78	19.6
2001–4000	154	38.7
4001–6000	71	17.8
6001–8000	31	7.8
Above 8000	11	2.8

enjoy a monthly gross income of \$2001 to \$4000. Meanwhile, only 11 tourists (2.8%) earn a monthly gross income of more than \$8000.

5.2 Correlation analysis

The relationships between three emotional labor strategies (surface acting, deep acting and naturally felt emotions) and the outcome variables (customer satisfaction and word-of-mouth recommendations) were investigated by using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. A correlation coefficient of 0 indicates no relationship at all, while a correlation of +1.00 indicates a perfect positive correlation, whereas a correlation of -1.00 indicates a perfect negative correlation. The summary of correlations among the constructs is shown in Table 2.

As depicted in Table 2, the strongest relationship was identified to exist between deep acting and customer satisfaction ($r = .64, p = 0.00$). The correlation coefficient of .64 indicates a positive relationship which means when customer perceived tour guide

Table 2. Summary of correlations among the constructs.

N = 398	Surface acting	Deep acting	Naturally felt emotions	Customer satisfaction	Word-of-mouth recommendations
Surface acting	1				
Deep acting	-.424**	1			
Naturally felt emotions	-.666**	.089	1		
Customer satisfaction	-.321**	.640**	.215**	1	
Word-of-mouth recommendations	-.380**	.630**	.229**	.944**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

exhibiting deep acting emotions, the rating for service satisfaction increases. Additionally, the strength of the relationship is strong, and the relationship was significant at 0.01. Next, surface acting was found to have negative and moderate relationship with customer satisfaction ($r = -.321, p = .000$) and word-of-mouth recommendations ($r = -.380, p = .000$). Both negative relationships were significant at 0.01. A significant relationship at 0.01 level of significance means that there is a much smaller likelihood of the relationship occurred purely by chance. On the other hand, the correlation coefficients of deep acting and customer satisfaction ($r = .64, p = 0.00$) indicates a strong and positive correlation. It was also identified that deep acting has a strong and positive relationship with word-of-mouth recommendations ($r = .63, p = 0.00$) at 0.01 level of significance. Unlike deep acting, naturally felt emotions has relatively weak but positive relationship with customer satisfaction ($r = .215, p = 0.00$) and word-of-mouth recommendations ($r = .229, p = 0.00$).

6 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Service managers and service employees continuously find ways to improve their services to customers. This study has highlighted the significance emotional displays during service interactions. In future, managers can look into these aspects when tailoring their customer service strategies. This study indicates that when customers perceived employees are making an effort in modifying or experiencing the required emotional displays (deep acting), it appears that customers are more satisfied with the services. Therefore, there is a need for managers to monitor the performance of service employees when it comes to the management of employees emotions during service delivery. Managers should recognize and reward the effort of employees who have successfully perform deep acting to provide quality and genuine services to customers.

Secondly, this study's findings also contribute to the employee training policies of organizations. The results in this study demonstrated that the three dimensions of emotional labor differentially influence customer outcomes. When customers perceived employees are surface acting, it will exert negative

effects on customer outcomes. In other words, as long as customers do not perceive or recognize it as surface acting, it will not have negative effects on customer outcomes. Therefore, in training of service employees, managers should encourage deep acting strategies by employees. Managers should also address this issue by suggesting skills or ways to engage effectively in deep acting or portray of naturally felt emotions to the customers, instead of surface acting which viewed as fake by customers, and thus maximizing the chances of customer perceiving it as deep acting.

The role and importance of customer perceptions on service employees' emotional labor strategies in the travel and tourism industry has been elucidated in this study. On a final note, since inaccurate perceptions on emotional labor by customer influence customer outcomes, service managers are advised to manage the appearance and aesthetic quality of service employees (Groth et al., 2009) to influence customers' perceptions of employees' emotional display.

REFERENCES

- Diefendorff, J. M., Croyle, M. H., & Gosserand, R. H. 2005. The dimensionality and antecedents of emotional labor strategies. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 66, 339–357.
- Diefendorff, J. M., & Richard, E. M. 2003. Antecedents and consequences of emotional display rule perceptions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(2), 284–294.
- Grandey, A. A. 2000. Emotion regulation in the workplace: A new way to conceptualize emotional labor. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5(1), 95–110.
- Groth, M., Hennig-Thurau, T., & Walsh, G. 2009. Customer reactions to emotional labor: The roles of employee acting strategies and customer detection accuracy. *Academy of Management Journal*, 52(5), 958–974.
- Hochschild, A. 1983. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*: Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Ministry of Tourism Malaysia 2009. *Malaysia Key Performance indicators 2009*. Kuala Lumpur: Government Publication.
- Ministry of Tourism Malaysia 2010. *Global Brand Plan – Stage 2: Tourism Malaysia Brand Optimisation Programme*. Available online at: http://www.motour.gov.my/en/download/cat_view/46-ringkasan-eksekutif-laporan-kajian.html. Retrieved on May 6, 2011.
- Ministry of Tourism Malaysia 2011. *Facts & Figures*. Available online at: <http://www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my/>

- corporate/research.asp?page=facts_figures. Retrieved on May 6, 2011.
- Sharpe, E. K. 2005. "Going above and beyond:" The emotional labor of adventure guides. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37(1), 29–50.
- United Nations and World Tourism Organization (2009). *WTO news*, 2009, 3. Available online at: <http://unwto.org/>. Retrieved on September 19, 2011.
- Van Dijk, P. A., Smith, L. D., & Cooper, B. K. 2011. Are you for real? An evaluation of the relationship between emotional labour and visitor outcomes. *Tourism Management*, 32, 39–45.
- Yuhanis, A. A., & Zaiton, S. 2010. The impact of empowerment on emotional labour: A structural equation modeling approach. *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology*(66), 1641–1653.

This page intentionally left blank

Meal pace experience, customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention at casual dining restaurants in Kuala Lumpur

H. Ismail, S. Amirhonarvari & S.M. Radzi
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This study was conducted to test the effect of meal pace experience on customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention at casual dining restaurants in Kuala Lumpur. This study employed the quantitative approach and questionnaires were designed to collect the required data for testing the effect of meal pace experience. All respondents were casual dining customers. A total of 364 questionnaires were distributed while 204 questionnaires were returned to analyze the data which has been collected from the customers within casual dining restaurants at Golden Triangle area in Kuala Lumpur. The researcher has selected 20 respondents to take part in the pilot survey. The reliability test was used to measure if the questionnaire is free from random error. In this study, the simple linear regression was used to test the proposed hypotheses. The findings found that customer meal pace experience had positive relationship with customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention.

Keywords: meal pace experience, customer satisfaction, revisit intention, casual dining restaurant

1 INTRODUCTION

In today's world, most organizations have become conscious about the importance of customer center attitudes. One of the main challenges is how the managers or leaders control meal pace which holds a great importance to customer satisfaction and customer experiences. However, customer service is the product and service which the organization delivers to obtain customer satisfaction, and organizations with satisfied customers have the benefit of higher margins, greater profits, and customer revisit intention within the organizations (Haksever, 2000). As a result of this opportunity, the important support of restaurants is to manage customer expectations and attain customer satisfaction in the direction of meal pace delivery as well as presenting variety of food and beverages in fascinating and unique ways to the customers. Over the past few years, with the rise of restaurant types such as fast foods and family styles, casual dining restaurants is the most commonly sit down restaurant with standard table services for the customers (Brown, 2007). Product, service, and the type of restaurants are three most important issues which have a large effect on customer satisfaction and customer experiences within the organization (Murdick, 2004). Therefore, the hospitality and tourism industry especially food and beverage associations have offered new methods that creates a center of attention to the customers and supply consumers to make different experiences toward product

and services which is provided by the organizations (Kim, Magnini & Singal, 2010).

The advantage of reducing meal pace during peak demand periods is to reduce the unnecessary waits and improving the quality of the service to the customers which may increase the organizational profits (Tom & Lucey, 1997; Noone et al. 2007). Most of the research that has been done in relation to time aspect, found that negative experiences regarding meal pace or increasing the pace, make customers dissatisfied and organizations losing customers (Kimes, Wirtz & Noone, 2002). In restaurants, meal pace is one of the most important services within customer value proposition and casual dining restaurants (Noon, Kimes, Mattila & Writz, 2007). Most of the organizations focus more on service delivery and forget to highlight meal pace in their customer service standards. Hence, restaurants come into trouble and lose customers within today's competitive marketplace. Nevertheless, customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention are two other issues which are strongly important to the restaurant industry (Hansemark & Albinson, 2004). Also, both factors should be considered as the main tools to gaining new customers and remaining satisfied customers which is essential to the management of a successful business in today's competitive marketplace (Han, Back & Barrett, 2009). Therefore, the aim of this research is to investigate the meal pace experience, customer revisit intention, and customer satisfaction within casual dining restaurants in Kuala Lumpur.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Meal pace experience

Restaurant operators who seek to increase the organizational profits and accomplish the managerial goals, highlight on different items such as service delivery, service quality and meal pace as ways to raise the table turns during peak periods (Kimes, Writz & Noone, 2002). Therefore, with an increasing number of people dining out, the goal of casual dining restaurant management is to maximize the revenue where service are sold to the customers in different ways at the right time, and at the right place (Susskind, 2002).

Despite the consequences of restaurant types, dining experiences can vary significantly on the way to obtain satisfied customers within the organization (Lee, Kim & Ko, 2011). Restaurateurs often utilize to control the dining duration from the meal itself to the speed during check settlement which has a direct effect on customer satisfaction. Restaurants may diminish customer satisfaction and lose customers by delivering standard service and the time that customers are forced to wait for the meal or check settlements (Kimes, Writz & Noone, 2002). However, restaurant managers need to recognize the effective aspects such as meal pace, service quality, and meal quality perceived by the customers to have a successful business within the competitive market place. A focus on meal pace and reducing dining duration may have an effect on customer experience and customer satisfaction as well (Tom & Lucey, 1997). In this term, many researchers found that the pace of meal and service may have a direct effect on customers experience and create a positive or negative background in customers mind (Tom & Lucey, 1997; Kimes, Writz & Noone, 2002; Anderson & Mossberg, 2004).

2.2 Effect of meal pace experience on customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction

Due to the escalating numbers of customers in Casual Dining Restaurants (CDR), restaurateurs or CDR Managers are tolerating high quality products with superior service to obtain customer satisfaction. However, organizations need to develop the service quality and it is important to fully understand the customer expectations and perceptions. Customer satisfaction is often used to return the customers back to the restaurant. Customer satisfaction and customer dissatisfaction has direct effects on the organizations which lead to several positive and negative consequences regarding organization's profitability, customer retention, and customer revisit intention.

3 METHODOLOGY

The population of the study consisted of customers within casual dining restaurants in the area of Golden Triangle/Kuala Lumpur. Therefore, a questionnaire was deemed the most appropriate tool to be used. In

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of meal pace dimensions.

Meal pace dimenions (Stage)	Mean	SD
Meal pace experience S1	2.37	0.715
Meal pace experience S2	2.29	0.682
Meal pace experience S3	2.24	0.713

this study the survey method was used to accomplish information regarding customer meal pace experience and meal pace processes to identify the customers' expectations on meal pace experience, customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention in casual dining restaurants at Golden Triangle area. A total of 364 questionnaires were distributed to the customers within casual dining restaurants in the selected area.

The questionnaire covers three main parts of casual dining service operations such as the aspects relating to the effects of Meal Pace Experience, Customer Satisfaction, and Customer Revisit Intention. This items were based on 5-point of Likert scale (1 = extremely fast, 2 = fast, 3 = average, 4 = slow, and 5 = extremely slow). Based on the previous studies in the relation of meal pace at different types of restaurants, especially casual dining and fine dining restaurants, the questionnaires were distributed during dinner time (Anderson & Mossberg, 2004; Davis & Maggard, 1994; Hansemark & Albinson, 2004; Hui & Tse, 1996; Maister, 1985). For the purpose of this study, we asked the respondents to rate their meal pace experiences during dinner time, because most of the customers at casual dining restaurants in Kuala Lumpur spend their time more for dinner than lunch time. On the other hand, many customers during lunch time feel unduly rushed and take less time for the meal, while during dinner time customers can enjoy the meal and spend more time with their family or partners within a casual environment as well as get pleasure from the products and services within the casual dining restaurants.

4 FINDINGS

In this part, the independent variables of meal pace dimensions on those customers within casual dining restaurants were examined. The information were based on level of meal pace experience of those customers who have experience in using casual dining products and services within casual dining restaurants at Golden Triangle area in Kuala Lumpur. The items of the three dimensions (stages) were tabulated in Table 1.

4.1 Meal pace experience: Stage one

For items in first stage meal pace dimensions, consumers somehow was satisfied with the first stage of meal pace dimensions ($M = 2.37$). Customers also somewhat agreed with the pace of the meal in the first stage offered by casual dining restaurateurs ($M = 2.42$) at that particular time and the length of the meal meet customers' expectations with the mean score of

Table 2. Factors influencing customer satisfaction.

Dimensions (Stages)	Mean	SD
<i>Customer Meal Pace Experience</i>		
<i>Stage one</i>		
How would you describe the pace of the first stage of your meal;	2.42	.721
How would you describe the length of the first stage of your meal	2.62	.716
I was pleased with meal pace experience at this stage	2.22	.704
How were you greeted by the staffs	2.24	.784
When you submitted an order, how would you rate the timeliness of processing your order	2.35	.771
<i>Customer Meal Pace Experience</i>		
<i>Stage Two</i>		
How would you describe the pace of the second stage of your meal	2.38	.743
How would you describe the length of the second stage of your meal	2.49	.691
I was pleased with meal pace experience at this stage	2.21	.612
How would you rate the meal pace at this stage	2.20	.631
When you submitted an order, how would you rate the timeliness of processing your order	2.30	.697
The process of clearing plates/glasses was done smoothly	2.20	.718
<i>Customer Meal Pace Experience</i>		
<i>Stage Three</i>		
How would you describe the pace of the third stage of your meal	2.32	.711
How would you describe the length of the third stage of your meal	2.44	.703
I was pleased with meal pace experience at this stage	2.25	.681
How would you rate the meal pace at this stage	2.30	.676
How would you rate the billing process of this restaurant	2.03	.762
The process of clearing dessert plates was done smoothly	2.10	.750

(1 = extremely fast, 2 = fast, 3 = average, 4 = slow, and 5 = extremely slow).

2.62. What is more interesting is that customers were somehow pleased with the meal pace experience at the first stage (M = 2.22) and were agreed that the customers was being greeted by the staffs as well (M = 2.24). However, the timeliness of proceeding the order of the first stage of meal pace dimensions was agreed by customers perspectives (M = 2.35). Table 2 shows the distribution of frequencies and percentages of each item in the first stage of meal pace experience individually.

4.2 Meal pace experience: Stage two

At the second stage of meal pace dimensions, customers tend to slightly agree with pace of the second

stage of the meal (M = 2.38). However, customers slightly agreed with the length of the meal in the second stage with the mean score 2.49 and the standard deviation of 0.691. In this case, customers were slightly satisfied with the timeliness of the processing the order in the second stage of meal pace dimensions (M = 2.30). Also, customers rated the second stage of meal pace dimensions at the particular casual dining restaurant at Golden Triangle area (M = 2.20) which is inclined to good. Casual dining restaurants offered a value meal pace, proven through the outcomes rated by the customers (M = 2.21). The customers somehow agreed that in general the process of clearing plates/glasses was done smoothly (M = 2.20).

4.3 Meal pace experience: Stage three

For other items in the third stage of meal pace dimensions, customers agreed that the pace of the third stage of the meal was fast (M = 2.32) and the length of the third stage of meal was short enough (M = 2.44) for the customers who experienced having he meal at casual dining restaurants. Customers also were satisfied with the billing process at casual dining restaurants (M = 2.03). Moreover, high score in customers rating for the pace of the meal in the third stage stated in the same item which indicated (M = 2.30) inclined to be satisfied with the meal pace at stage three. Clearing and cleaning are two important items within hotels and restaurants which have a direct effect on customers' experiences. In this case, most of the customers were satisfied with the process of clearing dessert plates.

4.4 Descriptive analysis for customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention

In this section, the dependent variables of customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention within casual dining restaurants were examined. The information were based on level of customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention of those customers who have experience the pace of the meal within the casual dining restaurants at Golden Triangle area in Kuala Lumpur. The Items of customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention are tabulated in Table 3.

As shown in table 3, the respondents were satisfied and rated the overall impression of the meal at M = 2.04. The respondents were also satisfied with the overall services provided (M = 2.19), overall meal pace experience (M = 2.25), overall pace of their meal (M = 2.28), and finally overall length of their meal recorded the lowest satisfaction level (M = 2.44). As for customer revisit intention, most respondents agreed that they will patronize the restaurant again (M = 2.03), and they will recommend the restaurant to others (M = 2.01).

Pearson Correlation was used to test the relationships between the independent variables (Meal Pace Experience) and dependent variable (Customer Satisfaction) as shown in Table 4. The results revealed that there is a significant relationship between meal

Table 3. Factor influencing customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention.

	Mean	SD
<i>Customer Satisfaction</i>		
How satisfied are you with the value of assistance or information you received	2.28	.786
Overall, how satisfied are you with the services provided	2.19	.657
How satisfied are you with meal pace experience	2.25	.672
How would you rate the OVERALL impression of the meal	2.04	.781
How would you rate OVERALL pace of your meal	2.28	.713
How would you rate the OVERALL length of your meal	2.44	.770

(1 = very satisfied, 2 = satisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = dissatisfied, and 5 = very dissatisfied).

<i>Customer Revisit Intention</i>		
I will recommend others about the casual dining restaurant	2.01	.695
I have positive perception about using casual dining products /services	2.00	.567
How likely are you to recommend this restaurant to others	2.11	.676
Will you patronize the restaurant again	2.03	.802

(1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree).

Table 4. Correlations of meal pace experience on customer satisfaction.

	CS	MPE
<i>Customer satisfaction</i>		
Pearson correlation	1	0.762
Sig.(2-tailed)		0.001
N	204	204
<i>Meal pace experience</i>		
pearson correlation	0.762	1
Sig.(2-tailed)	0.001	
N	204	204

pace experience and customer satisfaction at 0.762. That means the more positive meal pace the customer experienced; the more customers will be satisfied with that casual dining restaurant. Thus, meal pace experience is important to the organizations within the hospitality and restaurant industry in order to attain customer satisfaction and have a successful business within today's competition marketplace.

Table 5 illustrated the Pearson Correlation relationship between meal pace experience (MPE) and customer revisit intention (CRI). It is significant at 0.639. The results revealed that there is a significant relationship between meal pace experience and customer revisit intention.

Table 5. Correlations of meal pace experience on customer revisit intention.

	CRI	MPE
<i>Revisit Intention</i>		
Pearson correlation	1	0.639
Sig.(2-tailed)	0.001	
N	204	204
<i>Meal pace experience</i>		
Pearson correlation	0.639	1
Sig.(2-tailed)	0.001	
N	204	204

5 DISCUSSION

Most of the respondents had clear pacing expectations within casual dining restaurants which showed that customers are aware about the service operations within different type of restaurants. With pace expectations, customers are more sensitive to the pace of dining experiences. This finding was found to be consistent with the study by Noone et al. (2007). Understanding about how to deliver high quality meal pace to the customers plays an important role to obtain satisfied customers, because too slow or too fast meal pace influence the pace of dining experience of the customers and will diminish customer satisfaction as well (Hansemark & Albinson, 2004; Noone et al. 2007).

Apart from that, positive experience about meal pace dimensions will enhance the concept of customer satisfaction and spread their satisfied feeling to other people. According to Jaksa et al. (1999), customers are more likely to spend more time and money in those restaurants where offer high quality meal pace and high value products. It could be concluded that meal pace experience significantly influence customer satisfaction and has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction at casual dining restaurant.

The findings also indicated that meal pace experience positively related with customer revisit intention. It is important to identify what customers experienced regarding the pace of dining within the casual dining restaurants from the beginning of the meal pace process until the customers leave the restaurant, in order to bring customers back into the organization. The Meal Pace Experience (MPE) which revolved around three dimensions could influence the customers to revisit (Noon et al. 2007; Kimes et al. 2002).

REFERENCES

- Anderson, T.D., & Mossberg, L. 2004. The dining experience: do restaurants satisfy customer needs? *Food Service Technology*, 4(4), 171-177
- Brown, D.R. 2007. *The Restaurant Managers Handbook* (4th ed.), Florida, USA: Atlantic Publishing Group Inc.
- Davis, M. M. & Maggard, M. J. 1994. Zero waiting time: A model for designing fast and efficient service

- delivery systems. In *Advances in services marketing and management—Research and practice*
- Hair Jr, J. F., Money, A. H., Samouel, P. & Page, M. 2007. *research methods for business*. England: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd
- Haksever, C. 2000. *Service Management and Operations*, New Jersey, USA: Prentice Hall, Inc
- Halstead, D., Hartman, D., & Schmidt, S.L. 1994. Multiscore Effects on the Satisfaction Formation Process. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22, 114–129
- Hansemark, O.C. & Albinson, M. 2004. Customer Satisfaction and Retention: The Experiences of Individual Employees, *Managing Service Quality*, 14(1), 40–57
- Han, H., Back, K.J. & Barrett, B. 2009. Influencing factors on restaurant customers revisit intention: The roles of emotions and switching barriers. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, (28), 563–572
- Hui, M.K. & Tse, D. 1996. What to tell consumers in waits of different lengths: An integrative model of service evaluation. *Journal of Marketing*, 60(2), 81–90 <http://www.wyf.org.my/impact.htm>
- Jaksa, K., Robert, I. & John, R. 1999. Consumer research in the restaurant environment, Part1: a conceptual model of dining satisfaction and return patronage. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 11(5), 205
- Kim, D., Magnini, V.P. & Singal, M. 2010. The Effects of customer perceptions of brand personality in casual theme restaurants. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*
- Kimes, S. E., Wirtz, J. & Noone, B. M. 2002. How long should dinner take? Measuring expected meal duration for restaurant revenue management. *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management* 1 (3), 220–33
- Lee, J.H., Kim, H.D., & Ko, Y.J. 2011. The influence of service quality on satisfaction and intention: A gender segmentation strategy. *Sport Management Review*, (14), 54–63
- Maister, D.H. 1985. *The Psychology of Waiting Lines*. USA: Harvard Business School, 5(84), 2 <http://www.Malaysiaco.com>
- Murdick, R.G. 2004. *Service Management*, New Jersey, USA: Prentice Hall, Inc
- Noon, B.M., Kimes, S.E., Mattila, A.S. & Wirtz, J. 2007. The Effect of Meal Pace on Customer Satisfaction. 48(3), 231–245
- Susskind, A.M. 2002. I told you so!: Restaurant customers word of mouth communication patterns. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 43 (2), 75–85
- Tom, G., & Lucey, S. 1997. A field study investigating the effect of waiting time on customer satisfaction. *Journal of Psychology*, 131 (6), 56–59.

This page intentionally left blank

The moderating effect of environmental variables on business strategy and performance of hotels in Batam Island, Indonesia

A. Riyadi

Trisakti Institute of Tourism, Indonesia

S.M. Radzi

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The increase of hotel industry in Batam City in recent decades pre-empted a growth in national and international hotel chains, and lately the emergence of global chains. The growth has not only occurred in the number of chains, but also in their size and segment market especially from Singapore and Malaysia. The highly volatile and competitive business environment has encouraged the hotel industry in Batam to provide high standards of quality services to the customers. This paper focuses on the moderating effect of environmental variables on the business strategy and performance relationship among one to four star hotel categories in Batam City. Focus respondents were selected from the total population of 44 hotels in Batam City. Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) was conducted to test the hypothesis. Results indicated that the moderating effect of environmental variables on business strategy and performance relationship is significant.

Keywords: business strategy, environmental variables, performance, hotel industry, Batam City.

1 INTRODUCTION

During the transition from a manufacturing to a service economy in Batam, tourism provided a needed boost to the economy by creating jobs and promoting regional economic development. Bonnet (1993) suggested the tourism strategy as a basis for entrepreneurial activity by using tourism as a means of drawing the outside market into the local economy. As more tourists visit the state, more opportunities can be created for business development and job creation in hotels, restaurants, and various service businesses. The highly volatile and competitive business environment has encouraged the hotel industry in Batam to be more practical in its employee's performance so as to provide a high standard of quality services to the customers. Harrington (2004) and Slattery and Olsen (1984) indicated that the hospitality industry is highly complex and volatile, relative to many other industries. Although these environmental variables have been defined and assessed in a variety of ways, one relatively consistent conceptualization of environmental uncertainty is that it is described as a higher order construct of two lower level environmental constructs: dynamism and complexity (Duncan, 1972).

Additionally, empirical studies consistently showed that environmental variable (Bstieler & Gross, 2003) have more influence on their strategy and performance. In general, it was postulated that strategically driven measures for performance evaluations provide

both management and employees with the means to identify with the success of the strategy, and track their own contributions to its achievement (Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Lynch & Cross, 1991; Simons, 1995). It is further assumed that certain strategies will produce better results than others under varying environmental conditions. Thus, strategy is viewed as an adaptive mechanism to be utilized for achieving optimal performance. Perhaps, more importantly, it is argued that the strategy that will produce the best results is dependent on existing environmental circumstances (Miles & Snow, 1978).

Besides that, the environment can be expected to affect organizational choices because the maintenance of organizations depends upon some degree of exchange with outside partners (Child, 1972). An organization being dependent on the environment is not in itself a problem, as long as the flow of required resources is stable and assured. Problem arise when the flow of resources become uncertain. The environmental uncertainty has been defined as the extent to which future states of the world cannot be anticipated and accurately predicted (Preffer & Salancik, 1978). This condition is similar with Batam city where many investors in hospitality expand globally, environmental force become more complex, dynamic, uncertain and turbulent (Teare & Olsen, 1992). Thus, this study intends to investigate moderating effects of environments on the relationships between business strategy and performance.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Business strategy, environmental variables, and performance relationship*

According to Child (1972) performance is not a dependent variable and thus it is not the end product. Even though the level of performance is discovered to have a relationship with a feature of organization that does not mean that there is a causal effect of performance. Strategists and strategic management scholars generally agree that both large and small firms that align their competitive strategies with the requirements of their environment outperform firms that fail to achieve such alignment (Beal 2000). The bulk of the studies investigating the relationship between environment, strategy and performance indicate that the influence of environment on performance is higher in heavily regulated industries. The relationship between the firm and its environment, in the strategy-making context, has two major dimensions. First, the firm's basic mission or scope should match its environment. Second, it should aim at having a competitive edge with other firms that are also trying to get that match. With any significant change in the level of environment, a change in strategy is necessary to keep the organization in harmony with its environment and most likely the organization will be more successful (Mohd Radzi, 2004). A mismatch between environmental variables and firm strategic orientation reduces revenues and/or increase cost (Jabnoun et al. 2003).

2.2 *Moderating effects of environments*

Prescott (1986) in his study of 1638 firms using data from the Profit Impact of Market Share (PIMS), developed a typology of environments (emerging, fragmented, fragmented with auxiliary services, global importing, global exporting, stable, mature, and declining) and strategy (cost efficiency, asset parsimony, and scale-scope). He points out that environment moderate the strength of relationships between business unit strategies and their performance. According to him, if environment does not change the form of relationships between strategy and performance, perhaps changing environmental situations require changes in relative emphases of strategies rather than changes in strategies.

Hitt et al. (1982) in their study examined separately the moderating effects of two variables, grand or corporate strategy and type of industry, on the strategic importance of functional areas and company performance. Their results indicated that both grand strategy and type of industry had separate, significant moderating effects on the relationship between functional areas and performance. An attempt to examine the three way interaction of industry type and grand strategy simultaneously on the relationship between functional importance and performance was not possible because their samples were small. Thus, the question of whether grand strategy and industry type simultaneously have an interacting effect on the relationship

between functional importance and performance was left unanswered.

Based on these empirical and theoretical contemplations, it is proposed that:

- H1. Environmental moderate the strength of the relationship between business strategy and performance
 - H1.1 Environmental moderate the strength of the relationship between low cost and performance
 - H1.2 Environmental moderate the strength of the relationship between differentiation and performance
 - H1.3 Environmental moderate the strength of the relationship between focus and performance

3 METHODOLOGY

This study was correlational in nature and a self-administered survey questionnaire was used for primary data collection. The relevant unit of analysis for this study was the strategic business unit (hotel). The prospective respondent was that of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or any members of the top management. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism Department and Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (IHRA) uses the Star Rating System for classifying hotels of similar attributes. The rating ranges from 5 star indicating an upscale type accommodation and facilities to 1 star hotel with minimum standard of accommodation and facilities. From the information gathered, there are a total of 44 hotels ranging from 4-star hotels to 1-star hotels in Batam City (BIDA-Batam, 2005).

3.1 *Instrumentation*

The questionnaire contained a total of 46 questions. It encompassed a mixture of structured questions; some required "tick in the box" answers, while others were measured using a five point Likert scale to ascertain strength of feelings, after respondent circled or crossed a number on a scale, ranging from "(1) very low to (5) very high.

3.2 *Data collection method*

The questionnaire and a request in the context of a cover letter were mailed to the Chief Executive Officer or the General Manager. The cover letter described the nature of the research and a request for cooperation. The respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which a number of characteristics are related to their environment and business strategy. Each questionnaire was self addressed and had a reply paid stamp for ease of return. A reminder postcard was mailed one week after the first mailing and was followed by telephone follow up calls to those general manager or

Table 1. Results of T tests for differences in perceptions between business strategy, environmental variables and moderating effects.

$$(ROS \text{ or } ROA \text{ } t) Y = \alpha + \beta^1 (\text{Business Strategy}) + \beta^2 (\text{Environmental Variables}) + \beta^3 (\text{Interaction BS and EV})$$

$$ROS = 2.802 + 0.156 (\text{Business Strategy}) + 0.016 (\text{Environmental Variables}) - 0.250 (\text{Interaction BS and EV})$$

$$ROA = 2.810 + 0.152 (\text{Business Strategy}) + 0.043 (\text{Environmental Variables}) - 0.252 (\text{Interaction BS and EV})$$

Variables (1)	Results							
	Return on Sales (ROS)				Return on Assets (ROA)			
	Coefficients (2)	t-values (3)	Sig. (4)	VIF (5)	Coefficients (6)	t-values (7)	Sig. (8)	VIF (9)
(Constant)	2.802	50.969	0.000	2.810	41.336	0.000		
Business Strategy (X ¹)	0.016	0.257	0.798	3.314	0.043	0.565	0.575	3.314
Environmental variables (X ²)	0.156	2.574	0.014	3.197	0.152	2.028	0.049	3.197
BS * EV (X ³)	-0.250	-2.671	0.011	1.099	-0.252	-2.175	0.036	1.099
R ²		0.442				0.378		
F values		10.582	0.000			8.091	0.000	
N		44				44		

Note: ROS is estimated by dividing net income by total sales; ROA is estimated by dividing net income by total assets; VIF is variance inflation factor to examine multicollinearity.

Dependent variable: Financial performance.

*p < .05.

top level manager, which resulted in additional usable questionnaires.

3.3 Testing of hypotheses

Hypothesis testing in this study was assessed using moderating regression analyses (MRA). An F test was used to know how independent variable significantly influences toward dependent variable according to stimulant. Formula to F test is based on (Gujarati, 2003:258):

$$I = \frac{R^2/k - 1}{(1 - R^2)/(n - k)}$$

where,

R² = determinant coefficient

n = sample size

k = total independent variable

Calculation result (F_{test}) then compared with (F_{table}) with confidence level 95% (α = 0.05). Gujarati (2003) suggested that the assumptions to be examined are as follows:

- If F_{test} ≤ F_{table}: H₀ accepted or H_a rejected
- If F_{test} > F_{table}: H₀ rejected or H_a accepted

3.4 Reliability analysis

Prior to hypotheses testing, the data were assessed for reliability analysis using the Cronbach's Alpha values (Cronbach, 1951). Cronbach's Alpha first independent variable of business strategy was .932.

Internal consistency reliability of the second independent variable of environmental variables had reliability coefficients of .942. The third variable of performance was .952 as the highest value. Generalizing from the results, the Cronbach's Alpha values for the internal consistency of all study variables were considered acceptable.

3.5 Hypotheses testing

The purpose of the hypothesis is to determine the moderating effect of environmental variables on the relationship between business strategy and performance. To test this hypothesis, the multiple regression analysis using absolute difference method was undertaken (Frucot and Shearon, 1991). First, business strategy and environmental variables were measured by standardized value. Then, each standardized value from business strategy and environmental variables measure were computed to resulting absolute difference variable. This method better reflects the relationship among the three variables and reduces multicollinearity. While the performance measures were computed by taking the average return on sales (ROS) and return on assets (ROA).

As can be seen from table 1, the effect of interaction between business strategy and environmental variables on performance relationship were significant (ROS t = -2.671, p = 0.011 < 0.05 and ROA t = -0.252, p = 0.036 < 0.05). Each t statistic from ROS and ROA were less than the critical value of 2.021 with confidence level of 95% (α = 0.05) Gujarati (2003).

Table 2. Results of T tests for differences between low cost, environmental variables and moderating effects on performance.

Variables (1)	Results							
	Return on Sales (ROS)				Return on Assets (ROA)			
	Coefficients (2)	<i>t</i> -values (3)	<i>Sig.</i> (4)	VIF (5)	Coefficients (6)	<i>t</i> -values (7)	<i>Sig.</i> (8)	VIF (9)
(Constant)	2.732	48.764	0.000		2.730	40.158	0.000	
Zscore (Low Cost)	-.047	-.805	0.425	2.622	-.049	-.688	0.495	2.622
Zscore (Environmental variable)	0.204	3.491	0.001	2.620	0.224	3.154	0.003	2.620
Absolute (LC*EV)	-.094	-1.080	0.286	1.002	-.075	-.710	0.482	1.002
<i>R</i> ²		0.368				0.321		
<i>F</i> values		7.78	0.000			6.313	0.001	
N		44				44		

Note: ROS is estimated by dividing net income by total sales; ROA is estimated by dividing net income by total assets; VIF is variance inflation factor to examine multicollinearity.

Dependent variable: Financial performance.

**p* < .05.

Table 3. Results of T tests for differences between differentiation, environmental variables and moderating effects on performance.

Variables (1)	Results							
	Return on Sales (ROS)				Return on Assets (ROA)			
	Coefficients (2)	<i>t</i> -values (3)	<i>Sig.</i> (4)	VIF (5)	Coefficients (6)	<i>t</i> -values (7)	<i>Sig.</i> (8)	VIF (9)
(Constant)	2.782	45.868	0.000		2.792	37.862	0.000	
Zscore (Differentiation)	0.022	0.352	0.727	3.112	0.046	0.611	0.544	3.112
Zscore (Environmental variable)	0.150	2.458	0.018	2.987	0.149	2.004	0.052	2.987
Absolute (Differentiation*EV)	-.192	-1.942	0.059	1.122	-.199	-1.657	0.105	1.122
<i>R</i> ²		0.397				0.349		
<i>F</i> values		8.771	0.000			7.139	0.001	
N		44				44		

Note: ROS is estimated by dividing net income by total sales; ROA is estimated by dividing net income by total assets; VIF is variance inflation factor to examine multi-collinearity.

Dependent variable: Financial performance.

**p* < .05.

To further investigate the nature of the relationship, a one-way analysis of variance was conducted to test the three sub-hypothesis. Each variable was measured by the absolute difference (Frucot and Shearon, 1991). These hypotheses examine the contention that employing different strategies in hotels in Batam city. The results of this analysis were presented in Table 2–Table 4.

The result in table 2 above showed that “Low Cost and ROS” relationship is moderated by environmental variables, the parameter estimated was 0.42 with *t*-statistic of -0.805 and confidence level of 95 percent ($\alpha = 0.05$). While for “Low Cost and ROA” relationship is moderated by environmental variables, the parameter estimated was 0.49 with *t*-statistic of -0.688 , $p > 0.05$. The results revealed that the effect of moderating variables between “Low Cost and environmental variables” on performance (ROS and ROA) was not strong.

As can be seen from Table 3 above, the effect of moderating variable between “differentiation and environmental variables” on performance relationship was partially significant (ROS *t*-statistic = -1.942 , $p = 0.05 = 0.05$), and (ROA *t* = -1.657 , $p = 0.10 > 0.05$). This results showed that partially strong interaction between “differentiation and environmental variables” on performance.

The ANOVA results in Table 4 showed that the effect of interaction between “focus and environmental variables” on performance relationship were partially strength with the statistical test of the β coefficient (ROS *t* = -2.675 , $p = 0.01 < 0.05$) and (ROA *t* = -1.749 , $p = 0.08 > 0.05$). However, based on the overall model fit, the result proved that there is significant or strong moderating effect between business strategy and environmental variables on performance.

These current findings also add support to the previous studies that suggest environment as a

Table 4. Results of T tests for differences between focus, environmental variables and moderating effects on performance.

Variables (1)	Results							
	Return on Sales (ROS)				Return on Assets (ROA)			
	Coefficients (2)	t-values (3)	Sig. (4)	VIF (5)	Coefficients (6)	t-values (7)	Sig. (8)	VIF (9)
(Constant)	2.819	46.722	0.000		2.803	36.929	0.000	
Zscore (Focus)	0.044	0.775	0.443	2.847	0.073	1.009	0.319	2.847
Zscore (Environmental variable)	0.162	3.092	0.004	2.372	0.154	2.335	0.025	2.372
Absolute (Focus*EV)	-.244	-2.675	0.011	1.326	-.201	-1.749	0.088	1.326
R ²		0.441				0.355		
F values		10.521	0.000			7.324	0.001	
N		44				44		

Note: ROS is estimated by dividing net income by total sales; ROA is estimated by dividing net income by total assets; VIF is variance inflation factor to examine multicollinearity.

Dependent variable: Financial performance.

* $p < .05$.

moderator variable. Studies by Fredrickson and Mitchell (1984), Hitt and Ireland (1986), Li and Simerly (1998) also reported the moderating effect of environment on the relationship between business strategy and performance in large firms.

4 DISCUSSION

The hypothesis tested posits that environmental variables as measured for business strategy formulation, significantly moderate the relationship between business strategy and performance. These findings suggest that environmental variables have some moderating effect on the business strategy-performance relationship and it may lead to better performance if the degree of environment is stable. These findings suggest that environmental variables moderate the relationship between business strategy and performance and it is consistent with the contingency theory. The contingency theorists viewed environmental variables as an important moderating variable that can influence a firm's performance (Arnold et al., 1982). Rapid market changes in Batam City, increasing complexity and uncertainty are creating a new competitive environment. The result implied that hotels must formulate strategic plan that are consistent with their performance.

Environmental variables as a moderating variable did not influence the low cost strategy and performance relationship, which indicated that an emphasis on a differentiation strategy will have a greater impact on the performance than an emphasis on a low-cost strategy (Pelham, 2000). This evidence is also in line with the general view that in order to survive in the business environment, firms need to develop and implement business strategies that can cope with the forces in the environment such as those related to threats of new entry, substitution and the bargaining power of suppliers and competitors (Porter, 1980).

REFERENCES

- Arnold, H. J. 1982. Moderator variables: A Clarification of Conceptual, Analytic and Psychometric Issues. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 29, 143-174.
- Batam Industrial Development Authority. 2007. Daftar Hotel and Resort: BIDA.
- Beal, R. N. 2000. Competing Effectively: Environment Scanning, Competitive Strategy, and Organizational Performance in Small Manufacturing Firms. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 38(1), 27-47.
- Bonnet, T.W. (1993). Strategies for Rural Competitiveness: Policy Options for State Governments. Washington DC: Council of Governor's Policy Advisors.
- Bstieler L., & Gross, C. W. 2003. Measuring The Effect Of Environment Uncertainty On Process Activities, Project Team Characteristic, and New Product Success. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 37(2), 410-425.
- Child, J. 1972. Organization Structure, Environment and Performance: The Role Of Strategic Choice. *Sociology*, 63(1), 2-22.
- Duncan, R.B. (1972). Characteristic of Organisational Environments and Perceived Environmental Uncertainty. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 17(3), 313-327.
- Frederickon, J. W., & Mitchell, T. R. 1984. Strategic Decision Processes: Comprehensive and Performance in an industry with an Unstable Environment. *Academy of Management Journal*, 27, 445-466.
- Frucot, V., & Shearon, W. T. 1991. Budgetary participation, locus of control, and Mexican managerial performance and job satisfaction. *The Accounting Review*, 66, 80-99.
- Gujarati, D. N. 2003. *Basic Econometrica* (4ed). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Harrington, R.J. (2004). The Environment, Involvement, and Performance: Implications for the Strategic Process of Food Service Firms. *International Journal of hospitality Management*, 23(4), 317-341.
- Hitt, M. A., & Ireland, R. D. 1986. Relationship Among Corporate Competencies, Diversification Strategy, Corporate Structure and Performance. *Journal of Management Studies* (July), 401-416
- Hitt, Michael, A., Ireland, Duanne, R., & Palia, K. A. 1982. Industrial Firms' Grand Strategy and Functional Importance: Moderating Effects of Technology and Uncertainty. *Academy of Management Journal*, 25(2), 265-298.

- Jabnoun, N., Khalifah, A., & Yusuf, A. 2003. Environment Uncertainty, Strategic Orientation, and Quality Management: A Contingency Model. *The Quality Management Journal*, 10(4), 17–31.
- Kaplan, R., & Norton, D. 1992. The Balanced-Scorecard: Measures that Drive Performance. *Harvard Business Review*, 71–79.
- Li, M., & Simerly, R. L. 1998. The Moderating Effect of Environment Dynamism on the Ownership and Performance Relationship. *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 19: 169-179.
- Lynch, R. L., & Cross, K. F. 1995. *Measure Up! Yardsticks for continuous improvement*: Canbridge: Basil Blackwell.
- Miles, R. E., & Snow, C. C. 1978. *Organization Strategy, Structure and Process*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Mohd Radzi, S. 2004. *Relationship Between Organizational Strategy, Structural Orientation and Performance of Hotel in Malaysia*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Universiti Putra Malaysia.
- Pelham, A. M. 2000. Market orientation and other potential influences on performance in small and medium-sized manufacturing firms. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 38(1), 48–67.
- Porter, M. 1980. *Competitive Strategy* (Chapter 7 ed.). New York: Free Press.
- Preffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. 1978. *The External Control of Organizations: A resource Dependence Perspective* (Vol. 67) London: Harper & Row.
- Prescott, J. E. 1986. Environments as Moderators of the Relationship between Strategy and Performance. *Academy of Management Journal*. 29(2), 329–346
- Slattery, P. & Olsen, M. (1984). Hospitality Organizations and Their Environment. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. 3(2), 55–61.
- Simons, R. 1995. *Levers of control*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Teare, R., & Olsen, M. 1992. *Corporate Strategy in Practise* (Vol. 4). London: Pitman Publishing.

The impact of perceived commercial hospitality on perceived service fairness and behavioral intentions

Monizaihasra Mohamed

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia

Ahmad Azmi Mohd Ariffin

Graduate School of Business, Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Perceived service fairness is increasingly emerging as a strategy for hospitality-related establishments that strives to retain loyal customers and generate positive future behavioral outcomes in today's highly competitive environment. However, a limited number of studies have investigated perceived service fairness within this context as well as within and outside service failure. Therefore, applying theories and principles rooted in consumer behavior including perceived justice theory and equity theory, this current study presents a conceptual paper to explain the relationship between perceived service fairness (interactional, procedural, outcome and price) and future behavioral intentions of customers in the context of airlines. The mediating effect of perceived commercial hospitality on the relationship is also discussed in this conceptual paper. More specifically, the aim of this study is to explore the interrelationship between perceived service fairness, perceived commercial hospitality and behavioral intentions.

Keywords: perceived service fairness, perceived commercial hospitality, behavioral intentions, airline

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Background of the study*

In today's world of globalization, travelling by air transport is gaining popularity over any other mode of transportation. Based on records, demand for airline travel has been increasing. 1950 through 1960 marked a trend when the yearly growth was consistent at approximately 15%. Airline industry showed growth ranging between 5% to 6% consistently in the 80s and 90s (Economy Watch, 2010).

The airline industry is changing quickly and competition in the airline industry is ever increasing as airlines try to acquire and retain customers. For decades, price is initially and commonly used as the primary competitive weapon. However, airline providers soon discover that competition on price alone represents a no-win situation in the long-run. There are also no competitive advantages based on price alone (Toosi and Kohanali, 2011). It is because, airlines are relatively efficient in responding to competitors' price changes (Jones and Sasser, 1995) and air travelers also have meaningful choices among airlines. Therefore, there is an increasing need among airline firms to differentiate themselves by meeting the needs of customers better than the competition.

1.2 *Problem statements*

For decades, past studies showed that scholars and practitioners in services marketing have shown considerable attention towards service quality as a service evaluation framework (Brady et al., 2001; Fisk et al., 1993). It is because, the key to sustainable competitive advantage lies in delivering high quality service that will in turn result in satisfied customers (Ismail, et al., 2009). In today's global competition for service industry, the topic of fairness which is firstly proposed by Clemmer (1993) as an axiom for evaluating services offered is continuing to gain more focus from marketing practitioners as well as scholars (Seiders and Berry, 1998). Unfortunately, the studies were focusing more on the context service failure and service recovery as well as the role of different facets of fairness in understanding customer reactions to a firm's service failure and recovery process (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001; Mattila and Cranage, 2005). Indeed, fairness perceptions are always present in the consumption experiences and customers may have the occasion to observe services from a fairness perspective beyond services failures and recovery process. Since fairness perceptions are context-dependent (Brady and Dunn, 1995; Colquitt, 2001), the conceptualization of fairness in an all-inclusive service delivery process would

not be congruent with the service failure context. Therefore, despite the fact that consideration of all service delivery situations (with or without service failure) provides a richer portrait of service fairness (Bowen et al., 1999), the significance of perceived service fairness in a more general context has often been sparse until recently and has lacked empirical support especially in the context of airline industry.

Although past studies had provided the evidences for the positive relationship between customers' perception of fairness and behavioral, very few studies thus far have factored in the impact of other intervening variable like hospitality. In the study by Chih-Ching (2011), the comments from respondents implied that commercial hospitality providers could generate an authentic atmosphere by applying hospitality in the domestic settings. Although hospitality can be said as to be one of the most prominent aspects of airline service, but it has been criticized as offering less than authentic hospitality.

Therefore, this study is unique in the sense that it is not only focuses to provide better understanding on how perceived service fairness may influence customers' behavioral intentions, but also how mediating effect of customers' perceptions of hospitality in commercial context (airline industry) can be enhanced in a set of service processes.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Service fairness concepts*

The concept of fairness has its foundations in social psychology (Adams, 1965 and Homans, 1961) and investigation into fairness perceptions has developed from early work relating to social exchange (Gielissen et al., 2008). Perception of fairness has been intensively used to explain an individual's judgment about whether they are fairly treated by others in various contexts.

According to Seiders and Berry (1998), service fairness can be defined as a perception of the customers towards the level of justice in a service firm's behavior. Customers will judge the service that they receive from the service provider is injustice or uniquely fair behavior when their experience conflicts with their fairness standard.

2.2 *Service fairness dimensions*

In this study, service fairness has been viewed into four dimensional construct inclusive of price fairness, procedural fairness, outcome fairness and interactional fairness (Namkung et al., 2009).

2.2.1 *Interactional fairness*

Interactional fairness is viewed as interpersonal treatment received by customer from the service provider during the service process or performance of procedures (Bies and Shapiro, 1987; Gilliland, 1993). According to Parasuraman et al. (1985), interpersonal

interactions are an integral part of service encounters especially for hospitality services which are characterized by a high level of interaction between customers and service providers.

2.2.2 *Procedural fairness*

Procedural fairness indicates the processes, rules and procedures used to reach decision or to generate outcome (Folger and Cropanzo, 1998). Drawing from social exchange theory, Thibaut and Walker (1975) argued that individuals preferred fair procedures because they were more likely to result in fair outcomes. Timeliness and efficiency of a service system is a part of procedural fairness seeks by customers in service delivery. It is because waiting time and delays in service are perceived as a loss (Namkung and Jang, 2010) especially to business travelers.

2.2.3 *Outcome fairness*

According to Namkung and Jang (2010), outcome fairness refers to the consumer's subjective assessments about tangible details of the service delivered. Based on the past study of early justice research, it is assumed that reactions in social settings were largely based on the favorability of the outcomes received (Adams, 1963). Individuals or customers seek to have a relationship with a firm that aims to provide an excellent core product or service to their customer and they will also attempt to maximize long-term net benefits over the course of a relationship.

2.2.4 *Price fairness*

Perceptions of price fairness can be defined as customers' judgment regarding the differences between what they expected and what they accepted (Kahneman et al., 1986b). Customers usually view price is unfair when they discovered they price that they pay is imbalance with that they receive. For example, customer will perceive customers perceive price differences as unfair when they discover the difference is to their disadvantage (Bolton, Warlop, and Alba, 2003; Haws and Bearden, 2006).

2.3 *Behavioral intentions*

According to Warshaw and Davis (1985), behavioral intentions can be defined as the degree to which a person has formulated conscious plans to perform or not perform some specified future behavior. Behavioral intentions are commonly operationalized as a surrogate indicator of actual behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

Specific signals of favorable behavioral intentions involve recommending the company to others (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990), providing positive word-of-mouth (Boulding et al., 1993), and remaining loyal to the company (Rust and Zahorik, 1993). Whereas avoiding repeat custom, by spreading negative word-of-mouth recommendations or even using violence (Bougie et al., 2003) can be used as an indicator of unfavorable or negative future behavioral intentions.

2.4 *Perceived commercial hospitality*

Hospitality is very important in creating superlative and memorable experiences for a customer. It also has been categorized it as a way to enhance service factors in service industries (Lovelock et al., 2005) because the study of hospitality as a human phenomenon directly deals and essentially involves the relationship between host and guest (M. Ariffin, Maghzi and Aziz, 2011).

From the social context, hospitality can be referred to as the act of being hospitable while from the commercial perspective, hospitality can also be regarded as a sub-sector of the service industry (M. Ariffin et al., 2011). Applying hospitality concepts to service delivery, businesses can stimulate interactions between receivers and providers, where provision involves a complex blend of food, drinks and accommodation (Lockwood and Jones, 2000). However, according to Lashley and Morrison (2000), hospitality requires the guest to feel that the host was being hospitable through feelings of generosity, a desire to please and a genuine regard for the guest as an individual. Hospitality is therefore more than just about the host providing food and accommodation to the guests but also about entertaining the guests.

In the context of commercial hospitality interaction, Lashley (2008) recommended that hosts play an important role in the interaction in which hosts should understand and satisfy the customers' needs and expectations through appropriate hosting performance and delivery transactions. Thus, the failure of the hosts to adhere to the good interaction and positive exchange experience with the customers may significantly influences customer perceptions of hospitality, despite the focus on the tangible product and service provided.

2.5 *Relationship between perceived service fairness and perceived commercial hospitality*

According to Brotherton (2005) and Lashley (2008), hospitality behavior can be referred to as staffs' hospitable attributes and service behavior such as exhibit welcoming, warm, sincere, friendly as that influence customer hospitality experience..

In the same vein, according to Lashley (2008), an acceptance of all guests as equally valued individual irrespective of guests' characteristics is one of the hosting quality that host should pay close attention to under the culture of hospitality. A culture of hospitality would reject uneven and unfair treatment of individual on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or any other prejudgments. It means that customer will accept the service that they receive is fair when service providers have no biases or discrimination towards their customer based on that basis. In other words, the greater the level of service fairness displayed by a firm, the more hospitable the service is as perceived by the customer. The study by Chih-Ching (2011) also showed that perceived fairness is

a significant determinant of the guest experience. The experience in this study is referring to the experience of the hospitality that customer receive from the service provider.

Hence, it is assumed that customers' perception on commercial hospitality is dependent on their judgment towards the fairness of the service they received.

2.6 *Relationship between perceived commercial hospitality and behavioral intentions*

According to Chih-Ching (2011), customer evaluations towards pleasant commercial hospitality are dependent on the ability of host employees, service design and service delivery to meet diverse customers' needs and expectations. For example, Winsted (2000) indicated that service behaviors, such as offering a prompt greeting, demonstrating social manners, and adopting a sincere expression, are critical to customer satisfaction with service transactions. Customer satisfaction has a positive influence on attitude change in the post-purchase period (Westbrook and Oliver, 1991) and, in turn, enhances repurchase intentions (Yi, 1990). Thus, in keeping with the arguments, it is assumed that behavioral intentions are dependent on the customers' judgment towards perceived commercial hospitality.

2.7 *Relationship between perceived service fairness and behavioral intentions*

For both non-profit organizations and commercial organizations, perception of fairness plays an important role in customers' subsequent behavior (Oliver and Swan, 1989; Bei and Chiao, 2001). For the service firms, whose product is intangible and relatively hard for customer to evaluate, the perception of service fairness played an important role. It is because previous studies have found that, when service organization lack perceived service fairness, several negative future behavioral outcomes will occur.

In the context of this study, the notion that perceived service fairness precedes behavioral intention is supported by a number of studies. For instance, Swan and Mercer (1983) noted that perceived equity leads to behavioral consequences such as complaining/complimenting, intentions, word-of-mouth and repurchase/avoidance. Similarly, Clemmer (1993) also revealed that service fairness significantly predicted re-patronage intentions. Based on Seiders and Berry (1998), customers have different kinds of reaction towards unfairness due to the fact that they generally expect for fair treatment when dealing with service provider. As such, customers may spread negative word-of-mouth recommendations or even using violence (Bougie et al., 2003). Research by Kahneman et al. (1986) showed that customers are even willing to disadvantage themselves to punish a seller who, they perceived, acted unfairly. Therefore, it is formulated that perceived service fairness has a positive relationship with behavioral intentions.

2.8 *The impact of perceived commercial hospitality on the relationship between perceived service fairness and behavioral intentions*

Finally, given that the perceived service fairness is expected to predict perceived commercial hospitality and perceived commercial hospitality predict behavioral intentions, it is possible that perceived commercial hospitality mediated the relationship between perceived service fairness and behavioral intentions.

It is important to study the impact of perceived commercial hospitality because in the study by Chih-Ching (2011), respondents implied that commercial hospitality providers could generate an authentic atmosphere by applying hospitality in the domestic settings. In addition, Lovelock et al. (2005) mentioned that the quality of the hospitality provided by service provider can help to increase or decrease the level of satisfaction with the core service provision as well as viewed as one of the “enhancing supplementary services” that surrounds the core service (M. Ariffin et al., 2011). As a result, it is expected that perceptions of commercial hospitality partially mediates the relationship between customers’ perceptions of the service fairness and customers’ behavioral intentions.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 *Scope of study*

For this present study, the area of study is limited to the airline industry in Malaysia. The target population of this study is both local and foreign passengers that have experienced flying with Malaysian-based airlines such as Malaysian Airlines and Air Asia.

3.2 *Data collection method*

The study will be based on cross sectional survey where the primary data will be gathered and accumulated through a structured questionnaire survey to be administered at the airports. This method could help and satisfy the researcher to gain first hand information from a sample of passengers as well as large number of passengers that can be reached to facilitate quantitative analysis. Indirectly, it could greatly increase the number of questionnaires that can be obtained and significantly reduces the cost of data collection.

3.3 *Data analysis*

All the relationships or hypotheses will be tested using Structural Equation Model (SEM). In addition, factor analysis, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis will also be tested.

REFERENCES

Adam, J.S. 1965. Inequity in social change. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2, 267–299.

- Adams, J. S. 1963. Toward an understanding of inequity. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67, 422–36.
- Berry, L.L., 1995. *On great service: A Framework for Action*. Free Press, New York, NY.
- Birtner, M.J., Booms, B.M., and Tetreault, M.S. 1990. The service encounter: diagnosing favorable and unfavorable incidents. *Journal of Marketing*, 54, 71–85.
- Bougie, R., Pieters, R., Zeelenberg, M., 2003. Angry customers don’t come back, they get back: the experience and behavioral implications of anger and dissatisfaction in services. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 31 (4), 377–393.
- Boulding, W., Kalra, A., Staelin, R., and Zeithaml, V. A 1993. A dynamic process model of service quality: From expectations to behavioral intentions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 30(1), 7–27.
- Bowen, D.E., Gilliland, S.W. and Folger, R. 1999. HRM and service fairness: how being fair with employees spills over to customers. *Organizational Dynamics*, 27 (3), 7–23.
- Brady, F.N. and Dunn, C.P. 1995. Business Meta-ethics: An Analysis of Two Theories. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 5 (3), 385–98.
- Brady, M.K., Cronin, J.J., Brand, R.R., 2001. Performance-only measurement of service quality: a replication and extension. *Journal of Business Research* 51 (1), 17–31.
- Brotherton, B., 2005. The nature of hospitality: customer perceptions and implications. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning and Development* 2 (3), 139–153.
- Chih-Ching, T., 2011. Commercial hospitality in restaurants and tourist accommodation: Perspectives from international consumer experience in Scotland. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 30, 866–874.
- Clemmer, E.C., 1993 in Cropanzano, R. (Ed.), *Justice in the workplace: approaching fairness in human resource management*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, NJ.
- Colquitt, J.A. 2001. On the dimensionality of organizational justice: a construct validation of a measure. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86 (3), 386–400.
- Colquitt, J.A., Conlon, D., Wesson, M., Porter, C. and Ng, Y., 2001. Justice at the millennium: a meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86 (3), 425–45.
- Economy Watch. 2010. <http://www.economywatch.com/world-industries/airline/>
- Fishbein, M., and Ajzen, I. 1975. *Belief, attitude, intention and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Fisk, P.R., Brown, S.W., Bitner, M.J., 1993. Tracking the evolution of the services marketing literature. *Journal of Retailing* 69 (1), 61–103.
- Folger, R. and Cropanzano, R. 1998, *Organizational Justice and Human Resource Management*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Gielissen, R., Dutilh, C.E., Graafland, J.J., 2008. Perceptions of price fairness: an empirical research. *Business and Society* 47 (3), 370–389.
- Gilliland, S.W. 1993. The perceived fairness of selection systems: An Organizational Justice Perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, 18 (4), 694–734.
- Haws, K. L., & Bearden, W. O. 2006. Dynamic pricing and consumer fairness perceptions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 33(3), 304–311.
- Homans, G.C. 1961. *Social behavior: Its Elementary Forms*, Harcourt, Brace, and World, New York, NY.
- Jones, T. O. and W. E. Sasser 1995. “Why satisfied customer defects?”. *Harvard Business Review*, (November–December): 88–99.

- Kahneman, D., Knetsch, J.L. and Thaler, R. 1986b. Fairness and the assumptions of economics. *Journal of Business*, 59 (4), S285–S300.
- Kwortnik R. J., and Han X. 2011. The influence of guest perceptions of service fairness in lodging loyalty in China. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 52 (3), 321–332.
- Lashley, C and Morrison, A. 2000. In search of hospitality: theoretical perspectives and debates, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
- Lashley, C. 2008. Studying hospitality: insight from social sciences. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 8 (1), 69–84.
- Lockwood, A., Jones, P. 2000) Managing hospitality operations. In: Lashley, C., Morrison, A. (Eds.), *In Search of Hospitality: Theoretical Perspectives and Debates*. Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, pp. 157–175.
- Lovelock, C, Wirtz, J, and Keh, HT 2005. *Services marketing in Asia*, 4th edn, Prentice-Hall, Singapore.
- M.Ariffin, A. A., Maghzi, A., and Aziz, N., A. 2011. Understanding hotel hospitality and differences between local and foreign guests. *International Review of Business Research Paper*, 7(1), 340–349.
- Mattila, A.S. and Cranage, D. 2005. The impact of choice on fairness in the context of service recovery. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 19 (5), 271–9.
- Namkung, Y. and Jang S.C.S. 2009. The effects of interactional fairness on satisfaction and behavioral intentions: mature versus non-mature customers. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28, 397–405.
- Namkung, Y., and Jang, S.C.S. 2010. Effects of perceived service fairness on emotions, and behavioral intentions in restaurants. *European Journal of Marketing*. 44 (9), 1233–1259.
- Namkung, Y., Jang, S., Almanza, B., and Ismail, J. 2009. Identifying the underlying structure of perceived service fairness in restaurants. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 21 (1), 375–392.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A., & Berry, L.L. 1985. A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. *Journal of Marketing*, 49 (4), 41–50.
- Reichheld, F., and Sasser, Jr., W.E. 1990. Zero-defections: Quality comes to service. *Harvard Business Review*, 68(5), 105–111.
- Rust, R. T., and Zahorik, A.J. 1993. Customer satisfaction, customer retention and market share. *Journal of Retailing*, 69(2), 193–215.
- Seiders, K., Berry, L.L. 1998. Service fairness: what it is and why it matters. *Academy of Management Executive* 12 (2), 8–20.
- Selwyn, T. 2000. An anthropology of hospitality. In: C. Lashley & A. Morrison (Eds.). *In Search of Hospitality: Theoretical Perspectives and Debates* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann).
- Swam, J.E., and Mercer, A.A., 1983. Consumer satisfaction as a function on equity and disconfirmation. In Day, R.L., and Hunt, H.K. (Eds). *Consumer Satisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, Indiana University School of Business, Bloomington, IN, pp. 2–8.
- Thibaut, J.W. and Walker, L. 1975. *Procedural justice: a psychological analysis*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, NJ.
- Toosi, N. M., and Kohanali, R. A. 2011. The study of airline service quality in the Qeshm free zone by fuzzy logic. *Journal of Mathematics and Computer Science*, 2 (1), 171–185.
- Warshaw PR, and Davis FD. 1985. Disentangling behavioral intention and behavioral expectation. *Journal of Exp Social Psychology*, 21, 213–28.
- Westbrook, R.A., Oliver, R.L. 1991. The dimensionality of consumption emotion patterns and consumer satisfaction. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18, 84–91.
- Winsted, K.F. 2000. Service behaviors that lead to satisfied customers. *European Journal of Marketing*, 34 (3/4), 399–417.
- Yi, Y. 1990. A critical review of consumer satisfaction. In: Zeithaml, V.A. (Ed.), *Review of Marketing*. American Marketing Association, Chicago, pp. 68–123.

This page intentionally left blank

The impact of food safety practices on organizational performance

Mazni Saad, Toh Poh See, Mohamed Azam Mohamed Adil & Debbie Ferdinand Moginon
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Food service is an on-going business dealing with the preparation and service of food and beverage outside the home. To date, the trend of eating out has become a new concept globally. The current scenario has caused the food service industry to continuously be in demand. However, the demand in food service industry has certain challenges including food safety that is likely to cause business interruptions including caterers' retention. Parallel to the good practices in the workplace, literature to-date contextualize food safety practices as prevention practices in preparing and accomplishing food handlers' work tasks related to food preparation. Food handlers have a primary role to play for the future of the foodservice industry. This paper conceptually discusses the link on food safety practices and organizational performance.

Keywords: food hazard, food safety, food safety practices, organizational performance

1 INTRODUCTION

Food service is an on-going business dealing with the preparation and service of food and beverage outside the home. As the current scenario of eating out is continuously in demand, it is understood that it has to include food safety, quality, and security. In simple terms, the food is expected to be safe to eat. Consistently, the operator necessitates being aware on essentials of food safety and sanitation. Eleven factors were outlined: (1) hazards to food safety, (2) factors that affect foodborne illness, (3) acceptable food product process according to specifications, (4) capable in dealing with safety assurance process of hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP), (5) awareness of appropriate facilities, (6) equipment and utensils, and (7) know the principles of cleaning and sanitizing operations (McSwane, Rue, & Linton, 2000). Besides, Mc Swane et al. (2000) added that it is crucial for operators (8) to alert on environmental sanitation and maintenance, (9) accident prevention and crisis management, (10) education and training, and (11) food safety regulations. One means of food service operator's role in food safety is to assure the food safety between production and consumption.

On the other hand, the impact of eating good food from religious perspective has been recorded in the Quran, *surah al-Mukminum* verse 51: "O ye apostles! Enjoy (all) things good and pure, and work righteousness: For I am well-acquainted with (all) that ye do" (Yusuf Ali, 2011). As food safety remains critical in the purchase, storage, and preparation, there is a need to adapt a certain measure to guarantee correct practices on hygiene and food safety.

Economic wise, the emerging food safety has created a viable business. A number of food safety

organizations that has the ultimate goal to produce and serve safe and wholesome food were proven better in food service and as a result becoming more competitive in the industry (C.J. Griffith, Livesey, & Clayton, 2010). In line with the notion, this paper conceptually discusses the link on food safety practices and organizational performance.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Food safety practices

The safe practices are vital in food safety. A practice according to Webster's New World Dictionary and Thesaurus (2006) is "the actual doing of something," "to do or engage frequently," "to make the habit of," or "to perform repeated to proficient." By not practicing appropriate attitudes in food handling it creates unpleasant consequences such as foodborne illness and injury, or at worst a fatal case. From a thorough view, the *Surah* also implies on the importance of the good practices. In total, the Quran emphasizes us to ethically perform (good practices) in 370 *ayats* (Ismail, 1999). Among the *ayats* are: *an-Nisaa*: 29 & 145, *al-Jumua*: 9, *al-Maidah*: 1 (Yusuf Ali, 2010).

"O ye who believe! When the call is proclaimed to prayer on Friday (The Day of Assembly), hasten earnestly to the remembrance of God, and leave off business (and traffic): that is best for you if ye but knew!" (al-Jumua:9)

"O ye who believe! Fulfill (all) obligations lawful unto you (for food) are all four-footed animals, with the exceptions named: but

animals of the chase are forbidden while ye are in the Sacred Precincts or in pilgrim garb: for God doth command according to His Will and Plan" (al-Maidah: 1)

To date, awareness towards food safety is highly appreciated in society as the food plays a major role. Somehow, the recent outbreaks of foodborne illness form a great loss and burden to the nation (Khan, 2010; Schillhorn van Veen, 2005; Yasuda, 2010). Among the outbreaks, statistics suggests that food poisoning cases reported to fluctuate unstably at a high rate (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2008). On average, the eight years incidence rate of food poisoning per 100,000 populations reported by the Ministry of Health Malaysia (2008) was 25.56 (from 1999 to 2006). The unchanged trend of high incidence rate of food poisoning in fact was also reviewed and highlighted for year 1988 to 1997 by Mehtahuddin (2002). On closer examination of the statistics depicts that food safety remains a major challenge faced by Malaysian Ministry of Health. As a result, the government has heightened awareness in providing safe food to food operators, foodhandlers, and consumers.

Studies suggested that preventative food safety management is able to contribute significant impact on food safety. In spite of the presented statistics, numerous prevention efforts have been implemented in food establishments. In modern food safety practices among the approaches exercised by practitioners are the application of good manufacturing practice (GMP), good hygiene practice (GHP), ISO9000, Total Quality Management (TQM), and ISO 22000 or Food Safety Management System (Aruoma, 2006; Arvanityannis & Varzakas, 2009).

These management systems standards or guidelines comprise all chain processes from farmers to catering businesses. At least five advantages of the ISO 22000 highlighted by Arvanityannis and Varzakas (2009), they are: (1) optimum distribution of resources inside the food chain organization, (2) effective communication of suppliers, clients, authorities and other authorities involved, (3) focus on the prerequisite programs, conditions and hygiene measures, planning of preventive actions with the aim of eliminating any possible failures, (4) better documentation, and (5) creation of trust with the prerequisite the credibility of the management system based on the provision of the conditions for the accomplishment of solid results, i.e. the management processes and provision of resources and visual operations. Hence, the incorporation of the elements of food a safety practice is believed will greatly enhance the efficiency of the food establishments and will help in its success.

Literatures however evidenced that HACCP itself acts as an important component of food safety assurances (Hua, 2006). HACCP acts as a preventive measure to identify hazard, analyze and assess its associated risk and then apply the suitable control measures (Vladimirov, 2011). As the criteria lies in the food handling practices of HACCP, the HACCP practices were distinguished able to be an effective

corrective course of action (Kivela, Lam, & Inbakaran, 2002) and therefore the system has turned out to be a safety fundamental priority for food companies (Grigg & McAlinden, 2001).

In general, it is well accepted that the adaptation of basic food safety practices i.e. food hygiene, intervention of Acts and regulations, or adoption of voluntary food safety international standards do contribute to food safety attributes to a certain extent. However, with the increasing global availability of food products, food safety faces an exclusive challenge because it's direct and perceptible impact on the morbidity and the mortality of consumers.

2.2 Food hazard

Hazard refers to "a source or a situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these" (Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia, 2008). Among essential practices to deal with the risks, it is important to keep an eye on contaminated equipment, food from unsafe sources, improper holding times and temperature, inadequate cooking, and poor personal hygiene (Murphy, DiPietro, Kock, & Lee, 2011). Absence of food safety behavior was also identified as a contributory factor in food establishments (Christopher J. Griffith, 2006). Scientifically, studies have shown that the foodborne diseases could also be caused by microbiological hazards. In the present certain microorganisms cause food poisoning as they are main agent of food "going off," i.e. food spoilage (Gaman & Sherrington, 1990).

Gaman and Sherrington (1990) stated that pathogens and spoilage organisms are two groups in the microorganisms that are a threat to food safety including food poisoning. Classified into three types; chemical, biological and bacterial, the food poisoning is an illness that results from eating harmful or contaminated food. Foodborne pathogen is a risk to food safety and therefore the adherence to correct food hygiene practices need to be applied for the best prevention of outbreaks (Luyt, 1996).

Indirectly, the consequences of unsafe food practices may impair performance and causes discomfort and thus, effect on the organizational performance. The foodborne outbreak in the food establishment shall strike and subsequently it shall jeopardize the business reputation.

In minimizing these losses, enforcement or control authorities for food safety often rely upon consumers. In Malaysia, the Food Safety and Quality Division of the Ministry of Health promotes the principal food law through the Food Act 1983 (Act 281 of the Laws of Malaysia) and its regulations, the Food Regulations 1985, Food Hygiene Regulations 2009, and Disease Control Act 1988. The premises involved in the outbreaks are subjected to be imposed temporary closure notice and instructed total cleaning and briefed on food safety, control, and prevention actions.

2.3 Organizational performance

Practices have been a critical issue to performance. However, the socio-technical theory underlined that in resulting particular performance, the practices that recognize both human (socio) and technical (technology) factors are needed to comprehend this understanding (Mazni, Zahari, & Mohamad Najib, 2011). Thus, the food safety practices that consist of the social sub-system of the theory (workers at all levels; and the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and needs) and the technical sub-system (devices, tools, and techniques) together makes up and transforms a practice to achieve the organizational performance (Akbari & Land, 2005). As the survival and success of an organization depends on the performance (Asree, Zain, & Razalli, 2010), the operators must meet the objectives of the performance by determining the impact of the food safety practices. Food safety consciousness apparently would give some impact to one's performance. Failure to perform the food safety to a certain degree would effect on the retention of the caterers' business.

To remain competitive, food establishments must measure performance that gauge their status. The performance can be measured on implementations' effectiveness towards the goal, or to which the unit is successful versus its planned performance. (Bond, 1999; Juran & Godfrey, 2000; Otley, 1999). Inversely, poor performance is defined as to be caused by roles having incompatible elements in the expectations (Martins, 2007). It is also plausible that the food operators measure their performance on the financial measures such as operating income, return on investment, profit margin, net or gross profit, sales and sales growth that define the long run objectives of the business and provide clear appearance to the shareholders (Asmayatim, 2004; Brown, 1994; Kaplan & Norton, 1992; Smallman & John, 2001). Or, the measures can be on broader matrix or non-financial measures but to consider workers well-being, personnel development, waste reduction, resource conservation, or ethical principles i.e. trust, trustworthiness, and co-operation (Cua, McKone, & Schroeder, 2006; McKone, Schroeder, & Cua, 2001; Smallman & John, 2001). Aligning organizational performance through food safety practices is critical for the food business to stay competitive.

3 CONCLUSION

All over the world, retention has been recognized as most crucial and unfinished issue (Ghiselli, La Lopa, & Bai, 2001). One of the major contributions to the caterers' retention is the organizational performance related to food safety. From media articles such as Utusan Malaysia and preliminary interviews with several experts, little is known as to what extent of hygiene attitudes and practices of food handlers in Malaysian food establishments. The food poisoning

and outbreak is always a public interest to the country (Siti Mariam Md. Zain, 2008; Utusan Malaysia, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c), and because of that, the issues of penalties on unsafe practices do reflect the food-handlers' attitude problems. Being excessively focused on quantity and on-time-serve, inadequate awareness of food safety is believed has become an additional reason which causes the termination of the business contract.

A considerable amount of literature to date has tended to focus on the importance to adopt food safety management systems or food safety practices in food establishments. Despite of the realized advantages on the systems and practices, yet its level of success had not been at its peak. On the other hand, the trend of food poisoning for the past two decades seems to indicate it has reached the 'plateau stage.' Ergo, it has raised another question if either the food operators do not fully comprehend some of the most important messages or they fail to use food safety measures.

For this reason, there is an issue to find out what are the key elements in facilitating and implementing the right attitude of food safety practices among food operators. Then again, which combination of sub-social and sub-technical elements of food safety practices work well for organizational performance? Is there any other factor that will drive the food safety practices to do well and give greater impact for the performance? Or, is the impact of food safety practices only a myth for organizational performance?

The impact of food safety practices will need to be assessed as a critical factor necessary for the food caterers to retain their business's contract. To answer such highlighted problems besides creating literature and lay the groundwork, it necessitates discover some empirical evidences on the underlined issues.

REFERENCES

- Akbari, H., & Land, F. 2005. Theories used in IS research. *Socio-technical theory* Retrieved 3 April, 2007, from <http://www.istheory.yorku.ca/sociotechnicaltheory.htm>
- Aruoma, O. I. 2006. The impact of food regulation on the food supply chain. *Toxicology*, 221, 119-127.
- Arvanitoyannis, I. S., & Varzakas, T. H. 2009. Application of ISO 22000 and comparison with HACCP on industrial processing of common octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*) – Part 1. *International Journal of Food Science and Technology*, 44, 58-78.
- Asmayatim, A. 2004. Pengenalan kepada Balanced Scorecard. *Samudera TLDM*, 1, 42-43.
- Asree, S., Zain, M., & Razalli, M. R. 2010. Influence of leadership competency and organizational culture on responsiveness and performance of firms. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(4), 500-516.
- Bond, T. C. 1999. The role of performance measurement in continuous improvement. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 19(12), 1318.
- Brown, M. G. 1994. Is your measurement system well balanced? *The Journal for Quality and Participation*, 17(6), 6.

- Cua, K. O., McKone, K. E., & Schroeder, R. G. 2006. Improving performance through an integrated manufacturing program. *The Quality Management Journal*, 13(3), 45–60.
- Gaman, P. M., & Sherrington, K. B. 1990. *The Science of Food: An introduction to food science, nutrition and microbiology*: Pergamon Press.
- Ghiselli, R. F., La Lopa, J. M., & Bai, B. 2001. Job satisfaction, life satisfaction and turnover intent. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 42(2), 28–37.
- Griffith, C. J. 2006. Food safety: where from and where to? *British Food Journal*, 108(1), 6–15.
- Griffith, C. J., Livesey, K. M., & Clayton, D. 2010. The assessment of food safety culture. *British Food Journal*, 112(4), 439–456.
- Grigg, N. P., & McAlinden, C. 2001. A new role for ISO 9000 in the food industry? Indicative data from the UK and mainland Europe. *British Food Journal*, 103(9), 644–656.
- Hua, B. L. S. 2006. *The impact of HACCP implementation on the performance of Malaysian food industries*. Master of Science, USM, Penang.
- Ismail, N. 1999. *Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.: The paragon of excellence*. Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publications and Distributors Sdn. Bhd..
- Juran, J. M., & Godfrey, A. B. 2000. The Quality Control Process. In L. Ludwig (Ed.), *Juran's Quality Handbook* (Fifth ed., pp. 4.1–4.29). Singapore: McGraw-Hill Book Co.
- Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. 1992. The Balanced Scorecard – Measures That Drive Performance. *Harvard Business Review*, 70(1), 71.
- Khan, S. 2010. Food security and sustainability: community food initiatives in London. *Environment and Social Justice*, 18, 115–139.
- Kivela, J., Lam, M. L., & Inbakaran, R. 2002. Food safety in school catering in the People's Republic of China. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 14(6), 301–312.
- Luyt, S. A. 1996. *A study to assess the changes in hygiene of food premises following a specific health education programme*. Masters Diploma in Technology (Public Health), Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town.
- Martins, L. P. 2007. A holistic framework for the strategic management of first tier managers. *Management Decision*, 45(3), 616–641.
- Mazni, S., Zahari, M. S. M., & Mohamad Najib, A. R. 2011. *Occupational Safety and Health Practices and Operational Performance: Malaysia Manufacturing Sector*. Saarbrücken, Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing.
- McKone, K. E., Schroeder, R. G., & Cua, K. O. 2001. The impact of total productive maintenance practices on manufacturing performance. *Journal of Operations Management*, 19, 39–58.
- McSwane, D., Rue, N., & Linton, R. 2000. *Essentials of Food Safety & Sanitation* (2nd edition ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Mehtahuddin, T. 2002. Review of the trends and causes of food borne outbreaks in Malaysia from 1988 to 1997. *Med J Malaysia*, 57(1), 70–79.
- Merriam-Webster. 2006. Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary Retrieved 15 January 2007, from <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/practices>
- Ministry of Health Malaysia. 2008. Malaysia Health Statistic: Food Poisoning, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis Retrieved 7 May, 2012, from <http://micpohling.wordpress.com/2008/03/28/malaysia-health-statistic-food-poisoning-tuberculosis-hepatitis/>
- Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia. 2008. *Guidelines for Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Risk Control (HIRARC)*. (JKKP DP 127/789/4–47). Putrajaya: Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia.
- Murphy, K. S., DiPietro, R. B., Kock, G., & Lee, J. S. 2011. Does mandatory food safety training and certification for restaurant employees improve inspection outcomes? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 30, 150–156.
- Otley, D. T. 1999. Performance management: A framework for management control system design. *Management Accounting Research*, 10, 363–382.
- Schillhorn van Veen, T. W. 2005. International trade and food safety in developing countries. *Food Control*, 16, 491–496.
- Siti Mariam Md. Zain. 2008. PLKN: Pemeriksaan kesihatan diwajibkan, *Utusan Malaysia*, p. 25.
- Smallman, C., & John, G. 2001. British directors perspectives on the impact of health and safety on corporate performance. *Safety Science*, 38, 227–239.
- Utusan Malaysia. 2008a. Pelatih PLKN meninggal, *Utusan Malaysia*, p. 8.
- Utusan Malaysia. 2008b. Pelatih PLKN menyenal keracunan makanan berulang, *Utusan Malaysia*, p. 27.
- Utusan Malaysia. 2008c. PLKN: Wajib periksa kesihatan?, *Utusan Malaysia*, p. 3.
- Vladimirov, Z. 2011. Implementation of food safety management system in Bulgaria. *British Food Journal*, 113(1), 50–66.
- Yasuda, T. 2010. Food safety regulation in the United States. *The Independent Review*, 15(2), 201–225.
- Yusuf Ali. 2010. The Holy Quran, Text, Translation and Commentary Retrieved 7 May 2012, from <http://www.sacred-texts.com/isl/yaq/yaq005.htm>
- Yusuf Ali. 2011. Internet Sacred Text Archive Retrieved 7 May 2012, from <http://www.sacred-texts.com/isl/quran/02304.htm>

The relationship between occupational culture, organization tenure and occupational commitment of chefs in 4 and 5-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur

F.A. Hanan & A. Zainal

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Culture was “collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another”. On the other hand Occupational culture can be defined as norms, customs or traditions. It is not produced for them; it is produced by them and they interact with one another. Moreover, its members continually reproduce a culture. Thus, the patterns, expectation and norms emerge as meaning, and are negotiated and re-negotiated as members enter and exit the social structure. Occupational culture is believed to be the result of similar occupational backgrounds and experiences by different groups of organizational members. In particular, occupational culture (or subculture) develops through social interaction, shared experience, common training and affiliation, mutual support, associated values and norms, and similar personal characteristics of members of a particular occupational group.

Occupational turnover is a serious and prolonged issue within the hospitality industry and chefs’ profession in particular, every little details of it had been thoroughly analyzed by many researchers over the years, and occupational culture is a novel approach in addressing this matter. By looking from this perspective, the commitment of chefs to their profession may be increase and at the same time help in coping with turnover problem.

The main purpose of this study was to offer an integrated approach to understand the moderation effect that job tenure has on the relationship between occupational culture of chefs and their occupational commitments. A total of one hundred and thirty six (136) Chef de Partie and Sous Chefs from four and five stars hotels located in the Golden Triangle of Kuala Lumpur participated in this study. This study initially established that all three dimensions of occupational culture are significantly related to all three dimensions of occupational commitment such as normative, continuance and affective commitment. Self-efficacy emerged to have the most impact on occupational commitments ($\beta = .39, p < 0.01$), followed by pervasiveness ($\beta = .22, p < 0.05$), and esoteric knowledge ($\beta = .15, p < 0.01$). Then when organization tenure was introduced as a moderating variable in such relationship, the results shows a different beta that proven the existence of moderating effect on initial variable on the outcome variable.

Keywords: organizational tenure, occupational culture, occupational commitments, chef

1 INTRODUCTION

Travel and tourism industry that includes hotel industry in Malaysia still shows sign of growth although it was heavily hit by the worldwide economic recession in 2009. The Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006 – 2010) and Tenth Malaysia Plan (2011 – 2015) stated that employment for the tourism industry in Malaysia grew at an average annual rate of 2.9 per cent from 390,600 in 2000 to reach 451,000 in 2005. This report further explains that until 2008, the tourism industry as a whole employs 1.7 million workers or approximately 16% of the total employment. In hotel industry, direct employment shows an increment by 1.6 per cent from 84,171 in 2000 to 91,156 in 2005. Notably the number of hotels expanded by 51.2 per cent from 1,492 in 2000 to 2,256 in 2005, while the supply of hotel rooms rose by 37.3 per cent from 124,413 in 2000 to 170,873 in

2005. Between 2006 until 2009, revenue from tourism industry increased 67.1% to RM53.4 billion (Tenth Malaysia Plan, 2010).

However, just as the problem faced by the travel and tourism industry worldwide, this development had been embittered by the huge turnover rate in the hotel industry that plays extreme parts in the travel industry. Labor turnover or “the movement of employee in and out of occupation” (Denvir and McMahon, 1992), may be due to the sizeable toll cooking exerts on employees physically, mentally, and emotionally (Fine, 1990), or to the image of cooking occupations as an easy job to get and to leave (Dornenburg & Page, 2003). Some foodservice companies admit to having exacerbated the chronic migration of workers to other industries (Hayes, 1998). In one case noting that “cooks’ intent to leave the industry was affected in large part by their working experiences in hospitality organizations ...

all too often [they] move out of the industry completely as a result of negative experiences” (Rowley & Purcell, 2001, p. 183). Thus, occupational turnover is a serious and prolonged issue within the hospitality industry and chefs’ profession in particular. Every little details of it had been thoroughly analyzed by many researchers over the years, and occupational culture is a novel approach in addressing this matter.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Occupational and organizational culture*

In today’s society, we commonly speak about national culture (e.g. Malaysian culture, Indonesian culture), ethnic or racial cultures (e.g. Indian culture, Chinese culture), regional culture and more specifically focused cultures (e.g. institutional culture). In each of these instances, people interacting in these social structures create their culture. Our culture is not produced for us; rather it is produced by us and we interact with one another, thus, continually reproduce a culture. According to Schein (1999), the most obvious manifestations of culture are common language and common way of acting. We see this most clearly when we travel to other places and suddenly faced difficulties to get along in these foreign countries if we don’t know their language or how to behave in accord with local customs.

“Culture” in this context refers to the ideologies, belief, cultural forms and practices of those that are currently working as a chef in Hotels. Occupational culture is a broader construct. It is believed to be the result of similar occupational backgrounds and experiences of different groups of organizational members. In particular, occupational culture (or subculture) develops through social interaction, shared experience, common training and affiliation, mutual support, associated values and norms, and similar personal characteristics of members of a particular occupational group. Like organizational culture, occupational culture develops distinct jargon that only people within the industry will understand or familiar with (such as cooking terms for chef) and shapes perceptions of reality by developing classification systems to describe experiences and concepts (Hansen, 1995).

While it is often assumed that organizational culture is homogenous, evidence exist to suggest that organizational culture often contain numerous distinctive subgroup that manifest the distinction in cultural form and ideologies. In addition to that Trice (1993) explained further that, occupational subcultures consist of distinctive clusters of ideologies, belief, cultural forms and other practices that emerge among identifiable groups of people within an organization.

2.1.1 *Occupational subcultures*

An occupation is more likely to arouse workers participation and to adopt a feeling of specialness when the members of that profession feel like they possess *esoteric knowledge*, skills, and ability that only

an “insider” of that particular job could understand of. Such belief and feeling are created from thorough socialization and by emphasizing that the knowledge, skills and abilities are not simply learned by just anyone and that they require a special learning experience and a special person to grasp them. The process include when training takes place somewhere distant from members who are joining the job; when there is doubt whether the newcomer will make the rank and be allowed to become full – fledge members; and when the newcomer experiences a great deal of peer pressure to do things as how the other members do it (Van Maanen and Schein 1979).

Pervasiveness can be defined as the numbers of activities inside or outside the occupation for which the occupation sets the norms (Trice, 1993). Some career will establish norms and values for their members through wide range of activities; others require nothing beyond the execution of specialized tasks during a set period of time. In explaining this scenario, Janowitz (1960), stated, “The military is more than an occupation; it is a complete set of lifestyle. The officers are members of the community whose claim over their daily existence extend beyond their official duties.” Other studies of architect (Salaman, 1974), information technology personnel (Guzman et al., 2008) construction workers (Applebaum, 1981), detail the development of non-work lives that had been deeply influenced by occupation ideologies and practices. In other words, members of these occupations build their daily lives around their works. These members of such occupation had been identified as extending their working relationship into their non – work life because they prefer to be friends with their colleague, they spend their leisure time together, tend to have other members of the occupation as “best friends,” live close to one another and encourage their kids to follow the same job.

There are four main sources of influence that will help a person in developing his belief about his *self – efficacy* (Bandura, 1977). Mastery experience is the most effective way of creating a strong sense of efficacy. Through success a person will develop a robust personal efficacy and failure will undermine it, especially if failure happens before a strong and firm sense of efficacy is established. An indirect experience provided by social models is the second way of creating and strengthening self-beliefs of efficacy is. By observing how other people manage to achieve success by sustained efforts raises a person’s belief that he too has the capabilities in succeeding. Social persuasion is a third way of strengthening people’s beliefs that they have what it takes to succeed. People who are convinced verbally that they possess the capabilities to master given activities are likely to activate greater effort and sustain it than if they possess self-doubts and dwell on personal shortages when problems arise. The fourth way of modifying self-beliefs of efficacy is to reduce people’s stress reactions and alter their negative emotional proclivities and misinterpretations of their physical states (Bandura, 1977).

2.2 Occupational commitment

Since Meyer and Allen (1991) introduced their model of organizational commitment, it has received a great deal of research attention, and the three-component approach has been extended to occupational commitment (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993; Irving, Coleman & Cooper, 1997; Snape & Redman, 2003). All commitments are concerned with the binding of individuals to specific courses of action. For organizational commitment, this action is relevant to an employing organization, whereas for occupational commitment, the action is relevant to certain occupation in particular (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Occupational commitment specifically, is defined by Meyer et al (1993) as a “commitment to a particular line of work” (p. 540).

Western researchers have suggested that occupational commitment underpins the intention to remain in an occupation and to actively join in professional activities, by attending professional meetings and participating in professional development, for example (Irving et al., 1997; Meyer et al., 1993; Snape & Redman, 2003).

A strong relationship between occupational commitment and intention to leave the profession had been revealed by some empirical research (Blau & Lunz, 1998; Lee et al., 2000; Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993). Thus this study will see how occupational cultures are effecting occupational commitments.

The first component from the proposed three-component model of organizational commitment is *affective commitment* that refers to a person's desire to remain in the occupational role (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This dimension was developed based on emotional identification with the work goals and desirable working familiarity (Lee et al., 2000). *Continuance commitment* that is the second dimension refers to individuals that stay in their existing occupation due to perceived high cost of leaving (Irving et al., 1997). As individual growth in their career world, they would need to invest substantial resource and these resources would be lost upon exit (eg. high occupational status) (Langfield-Smith, 2005). Last dimension is normative commitment that refers to chef's feeling of obligation to stay in their occupation (Irving et al., 1997), this sense of loyalty were developed as a result of pressure to remain in the occupation from colleague, friends or family (Hall et al. 2005).

2.3 Organization tenure

Several definitions of organizational tenure had appeared in the literature, however almost all of this definition can be concluded by Groth et al., 2002, that defined organizational tenure as the total length of time an individual is employed within a given organization. Lok and Crawford (2004) emphasized that literature had established the significant impact that demographic variables such as years in organization, level of education, age, the duration of leadership and level of education can have towards organizational

commitment. By looking at Korean subjects, Sommer et al. (1996) revealed the significant of position, tenure and age with employee commitment. The researchers proved that, those with higher positions, who are older and had been in the same job longer, had a superior level of commitment. However, Chen and Francesco (2000) postulated that only job position would have a significant relationship with commitment while all other demographic variables are not. Notably, Lok and Crawford (2004) revealed that there is no significant difference between the Australian (western) and Hong Kong (Asian) workers in their commitment with the effect of demographic variable age, sex, tenure and education levels on organizational commitment.

Based on the literature, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: Occupational culture significantly influence occupational commitment of chefs
 - H1a: Esoteric knowledge significantly influence occupational commitment of chefs
 - H1b: Pervasiveness significantly influence occupational commitment of chefs
 - H1c: Self-efficacy significantly influence occupational commitment of chefs
- H2: Job Tenure Moderates the relationship between occupational culture and occupational culture of chefs

3 METHODOLOGY

A total of one hundred and thirty –six (136) Chefs de partie and Sous Chefs from five and four star hotels located along Golden Triangle, Malaysia participated in this study. Data were gathered through self-administered survey questionnaires that were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, and hierarchical multiple regression. The reliability of the scales used was also analyzed using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient score, and all scales registered moderate to fairly high reliability scores. All underlying assumptions of multiple regressions have also been addressed prior to conducting the regression analyses. Occupational cultures and occupational stress were both entered as the criterion variables in the multiple regression models while occupational commitment was treated as predictors.

The questionnaire comprised of three sections namely occupational culture (independents variable), occupational commitment (dependent variable). The instrument for occupational culture (section I) was adapted from Guzman et al., (2008 & 2009). Section II measures the occupational commitments dimensions that were adapted from Meyer & Allen (1991).

4 RESULTS

Table 1 illustrates the job and organization tenure of chefs in their current hotels. It is worth comparing it in identifying the pattern of the figures that shows,

Table 1. Job and organization tenure of the respondents.

Variable	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<i>Job tenure</i>		
<1 year	5	3.6
2-3 years	12	8.8
4-6 years	36	26.5
7-9 years	33	24.3
>10 years	50	36.8
Total	136	100%
<i>Organization Tenure</i>		
<1 year	12	8.8
2-3 years	49	36.0
4-6 years	57	41.9
7-9 years	11	8.1
>10 years	7	5.2
Total	136	100%

Table 2. Results of the hierarchical regression of occupational culture on occupational commitments.

Predictors	Model 1 (Std. β)	Model 2 (Std. β)
<i>Step 1: Demographic Variable</i>		
Organization tenure	.19	-.11**
<i>Step 2: Occupational culture</i>		
Esoteric knowledge (ESKW)		.15**
Self-efficacy (SLEF)		.39*
Pervasiveness (PRVS)		.22**
R ²	.19	.68
Adj. R ²	.14	.73
R ² change	.20	.77
F Change	5.77**	70.60**

* $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$.

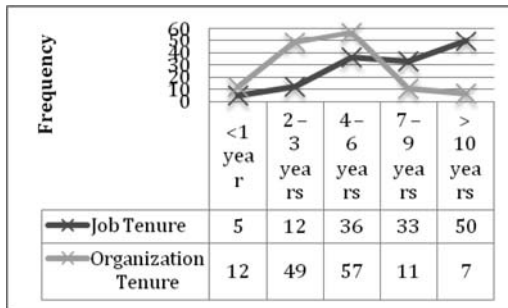


Figure 1. Comparison of job and organization tenure.

although majority of the samples has been working in this profession for a long time (>7 years), they tend to move from one organization to another as majority have been attached with their current organization for less than 6 years. The comparison of these findings can clearly be seen from Figure 1.

The findings of this study show that three dimensions of occupational culture namely esoteric knowledge ($\beta = .15, p < 0.01$), self-efficacy ($\beta = .39, p < 0.01$) and pervasiveness ($\beta = .22, p < 0.05$), have a strong relationship with all the dimension of occupational commitment namely affective, continuance and normative commitment (Table 2). Esoteric knowledge was reported to have the highest beta value among all three dimensions as chefs felt that the knowledge they gain from the occupation is “sacred” and “special”. Therefore, this study provides empirical evidence for hotels, and educationalist in managing occupational culture in relation to the commitment of chefs.

This result is in line with the study done by Guzman et al. (2008) in assessing the cultural fits of newcomers to the information technology, the result of this study shows that the overall regression equations were statistically significant in predicting commitment as the dependent variable. Conversely, when these occupational cultures of chefs increase it will also bring an increment to the occupational commitments of chefs’ to their profession.

The feeling of “special” that arises in chefs when they realize that they possess a set of skills, knowledge and information that are esoteric and occult will most probably make them happier to keep on working in this profession. In addition to that, Bandura (1997, 1993) has proven in his study that when a person (chefs) belief that they have the capabilities in accomplishing certain task given to them with the expected standard that is on the same par with other person (chefs) they would be encourage to do the task again in the future. In line with this, chefs feel that the self-efficacy has a relationship to their commitment to the profession. From pervasiveness or the involvement of occupational activities in non-work period, chefs would feel accepted to the community. From this sense of belonging chefs would most probably develop their own loyalty feelings if not to the organization, to the profession or job itself.

Lindley & Walker, 1993, posited that a moderator variable may reduced or enhanced the direction of the relationship between a predictor and dependent variable, or it could even change the direction of the relationship between the two variables. From Table 1, it is clear that the beta reading of organizational tenure is decreasing and the direction had also been altered from positive to negative, this has thus established the moderating effect. However, the negative relationship of the result shows that when chefs work longer in one organization, their occupational culture becomes mundane thus feeling less committed to the occupation. This finding is in line with Wright and Bonnet (2002) that found that employee tenure had a very strong nonlinear moderating effect on the commitment performance correlation, with correlations tending to decrease exponentially with increasing tenure.

5 IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The body of evidence concerning the effect of occupational culture and occupational commitments has grown substantially over the years (Cameron, 2001). There are many studies conducted on many setting

such as the occupational culture of pub workers (Riley et al., 1998), information technology personnel (Guzman et al., 2008) health profession (Cregler, 1999) and nurses (Law and Arthur, 2003; Gambino, 2010), however chefs' vocation is still under the lime-light. Essentially the results of this study indicate that there is a relationship between occupational culture and occupational commitments, by assessing chefs that are already holding a post in hotels. The theoretical relationships has proven by that some dimension of occupational culture do influence occupational commitment of the chefs in the Malaysia setting.

Likewise this study might also help in assisting the management of hotel organizations to be aware of the occupational culture of chefs in order to reduce the issues of turnover. Managers need to understand the stress factors of chefs and be able to reduce it thus encouraging the socialization of norms and culture from chefs to their subordinates and trainees. This is supported by (Guzman and Stanton, 2008) that posited new comers in an organization absorb the norms, patterns and culture of an organization quickly – generally, within three month or less. In line with this, the academic world of culinary need to prepare the students for the “real” work culture of a chef so as to prepare them for the job realm thus, able to fit better with the environment of the kitchen.

Although several limitations existed but in Malaysian context, this study will enhance the body of knowledge on hospitality industry generally and chef's profession specifically. First limitation is closely related to the management of four and five stars hotels in Golden Triangle, Klang Valley, Malaysia. Some hotel organizations explicitly or implicitly declined to participate in this study and refused to see this as an issue. Second limitation is related to contextual setting of the study. Since the data were collected among chefs from the city hotels (Central Region) the results therefore, cannot be generalized to other samples across the hospitality industry such as resort hotels, hotel apartments and others. Hence, a larger sample size taken from the North and South regions would provide conclusive information about “chefs at work”.

Thirdly, the sample of this study is chefs that are holding the post of Chef de Partie and Sous Chef and mostly had been working in the hotels for certain duration. However, it would be beneficial to the education system and hotel industry if the respondents were taken from potential chefs (students, trainees and kitchen commis). Perhaps the cultural variables for the newcomers will differ significantly from the chefs. The understanding of how young people perceived the culture embedded in this occupational community, as they become part of it can be assessed and enable for an unmarked outlook on how occupational culture of the chef profession might influence their commitments.

6 CONCLUSION

It is suffice to conclude that this study is rooted in the occupational culture and occupational commitments

of chefs in four and five stars hotels in Kuala Lumpur who have worked for a certain duration in one organization. Hotel managements are looking for a better strategy that will provide them with the promise in reducing occupational turnover of chefs within the industry. By looking into occupational culture this study is actually looking at a fresher perspective on this notorious and prolonged issue that may lead to a dropping in turnover rate of chefs. By studying the pattern of organizational tenure, handling the perception on esoteric knowledge, high level of self-efficacy and encouraging pervasiveness among chefs the affective, continuance and normative commitments of chefs will increase. Therefore, to retain skillful chefs in the organization it would help if managers rethink the importance of occupational culture towards the acculturation of occupational commitment norms in hotel industry.

REFERENCES

- Applebaum, A. H. (1981). *Royal Blue, the Culture of Construction Workers*. Holt, Boston, US: Rinehart and Winston Publisher.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. *Educational Psychologist*, 28: 117–148.
- Blau, G.J., & Lunz, M.E. (1998). Testing the incremental effect of professional commitment on intent to leave one's profession beyond the effects of external, personal, and work-related variables. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 52, 260–269.
- Cameron, D. (2001). “Chefs and Occupational Culture in a Hotel Chain: A Grid-Group Analysis,” *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 3(2), pp. 103.
- Denvir A., and McMahon, F. (1992). Labor Turnover in London Hotels and the Cost Effectiveness of Preventive Measures. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 11(2):143–54.
- Dornenburg, A., & Page, K. (2003). *Becoming a chef*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Guzman, I.R., Stam, K.R. and Stanton, J.M. (2008), “The occupational culture of IS/IT personnel within organizations”, *The DATA BASE for Advances in Information Systems*, Vol. 39 No. 1, pp. 33–50.
- Guzman, I.R., Stam, K.R. and Stanton, J.M. (2008), “The occupational culture of IS/IT personnel within organizations”, *The DATA BASE for Advances in Information Systems*, Vol. 39 No. 1, pp. 33–50.
- Hansen, C. D. (1995). Occupational Cultures: Whose Frame Are We Using? *The Journal for Quality and Participation*, 18, 60–67.
- Hayes, J. (1998). Labor retention panel: Works' growing clout altering personnel strategies. *Nation's Restaurant News*, 32(40).
- Hofstede, G. (2001), *Culture's Consequences: Comparing values, behavior, institutions, and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Irving, P. G., Coleman, D. F., & Cooper, C. L. (1997). Further assessments of a three-component model of occupational commitment: Generalizability and differences across occupations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82, 444–452.

- Kroeber, T., Kluckhohn, C. (1952). *Culture: A critical review of concepts*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Langfield-Smith, K. (2005). What do we know about Management Control Systems and Strategy In C.S. Chapman (ed) *Controlling Strategy: Management, Accounting, and Performance Measurement*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Lee, K., Carswell, J.J., & Allen, N. (2000). A meta-analytic review of occupational commitment: relations with person- and work-related variables. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85(5), 799–811.
- Meyer, J. P., & Herscovitch, L. (2001). Commitment in the workplace. Toward a general model. *Human Resource Management Review*, 11, 299–326.
- Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J., & Smith, C. A. (1993). Commitment to organizations and occupations: Extension and test of a three-component conceptualization. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78, 538–551.
- Meyer, J.P. and Allen, N.J. (1991), "A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment", *Human Resource Management Review*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 61–89.
- Rowley, G., & Purcell, K. (2001). "As cooks go, she went": Is labour churn inevitable? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 20, 163–185.
- Sackmann, S.A. (1991). *Managing organizational Culture: Dreams and Possibilities*. In J.A. Anderson (Ed.) *Communication Yearbook 13* (pp. 114–148). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Salaman, G. (1974). *Community and Occupation*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Schein, E.H. (1999). *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Snape, E., & Redman, T. (2003). An evaluation of a three-component model of occupational commitment: Dimensionality and consequences among United Kingdom human resource management specialists. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88, 152–159.
- Trice, H. (1993). *Occupational Subcultures in the Workplace*, ILR Press, Ithaca, NY.
- Unit PerancangEkonomi (2006). Ninth Malaysian plan. Retrieved 1 Mac 2011, from <http://www.epu.gov.my>
- Unit PerancangEkonomi (2011). Tenth Malaysian plan. Retrieved 1 July 2011, From <http://www.epu.gov.my>
- Van Maanen, J. and E. H. Schein (1979). Toward of Theory of Organizational Socialization. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 1, 209–264.
- Weaver. Gary R.(1986). *Understanding and coping with cross-cultural adjustment Stress. Cross-cultural orientation. New conceptualizations and applications*. Lanham MD: University Press of America.
- Wright, A. & Bonnet, G (2002). The moderating effects of employee tenure on the relation between organizational commitment and job performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(6).

Innovation

This page intentionally left blank

The relationship between product innovation and fusion cuisine in food and beverage establishments: A discussion on Turkish cuisine

B. Erdem, M. Doğdubay & M. Sarıođlan

University of Balıkesir, The School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Balıkesir, Turkey

ABSTRACT: The competition nowadays in globalization process deeply influences the tourism industry as well as the other industries. The increasing differentiation in demands and expectations of tourists forces tourism establishments to find out new seekings. In recent years, innovation is regarded as a fact which is widely used by tourism establishments in this process. By means of innovation, establishments are able to stay more competitive by creating differentiation in their products and services they offer. In this study, the innovation effect is reviewed in scope of food and beverage establishments – one of the sub units of tourism industry and the subject concentration is on “fusion cuisine”. In this context, a discussion is made on Turkish cuisine and the relationship between Turkish cuisine and fusion cuisine is reviewed by sectoral samples.

1 INTRODUCTION

Today, being able to stay competitive for the establishments depends on mainly to define themselves completely distinctive, re-create their basic strategies, rediscover the sector they are in and make difference in all their goods and services. In this respect, the most important element that makes an organization successful for a long term is to be innovative (Zerenler et al., 2007). In this context, innovation is regarded as one of the main sources to obtain competitive advantage (Deveciođlu, 2008; Gemlik et al., 2009; Güleş and Bülbul, 2004; Porter, 1998; Makridakis, 1998; Higgins, 1999).

If an establishment is closed to innovation, it has difficulties to adapt the circumstances required by the time and environment, its capacity to change and adaptation decreases and accordingly, it considerably loses its power of development and survival. Therefore, innovation generates an important criteria for an organization to be able to adapt new requirements and environmental conditions (Zerenler et al., 2007). Among five factors which Porter (1992) determined to get a competitive superiority and keep it on, he emphasized on the importance of innovation in the following : “The competitive superiority, fundamentally, originates from development, making innovation and variation. For most firms, the challenge is to increase their skills of developing and making innovation (p. 578)”.

Innovation, like in all the sectors, shows its affect in food and beverage industry as well (Cousins et al., 2010). The rapid growing of food and beverage sector from the second half of the twentieth century accompanied with the developing of the establishments active in that sector in the meantime (Görkem and Öztürk,

2011). The purpose of innovation enterprises is to increase the service quality and products’ efficiencies, and to create unique tastes in innovative and creative cuisines.

Innovation is the process of transformation of new ideas into a commercial benefit. Namely, the combination of creativity with the commercial skills. In this context, a new application called “Fusion Cuisine” is seen in food and beverage establishments in recent years. Fusion cuisine includes the combination of food stuff in one dish by cuisine techniques of different nations still in which a single nation characteristic does not become prominent in the dish, and the use of this newly created product as a commodity. Thus, in the literature fusion cuisine is defined as the renewal and differentiation of products in food and beverage establishments and presenting them to consumers in an attempt to obtain a commercial income. In this respect, it is possible to say that innovation and fusion cuisine concepts are quite interrelating with each other.

The main reason why the Turkish Cuisine has been preferred as the sample for fusion cuisine is that the stuff variation used in Turkish cuisine is much more than the ones used in other cuisines. Thus, Turkish cuisine is ranked as one of the prominent world cuisines in terms of the stuff variation used both in product (food-beverage) and production. In Turkish cuisine, there are 2300 kinds of main courses along with local flavours, 1850 kinds of hors d’oeuvre (starters), 480 kinds of desserts, 335 kinds of soups, hundreds of warm starters and hundreds of local beverages (i.e. turnip, boza, ayran) available. Such abundance of Turkish cuisine affects the variety of stuff used in food and beverages, and enables the fusion-innovation relationship to be implemented. In this respect, it is considered that the study will make contribution to the literature.

2 THE CONCEPT OF INNOVATION

2.1 A general perspective

There are many definitions available for the innovation concept in the related literature (e.g. Guile and Quinn, 1988; Sarikaya, 2002; Sundbo and Fuglsang, 2002; Terziovski, 2004; Van Riel, 2005; İraz, 2005; Ögüt et al., 2007). The common point at all these definitions is that the innovation is a result of ideas which are produced and realized by individuals or groups (Yeloğlu, 2007). But, we meet mostly the same definition as the development and application of ‘some new things’. Schumpeter was the first person to improve a theory of innovation. He makes definition of innovation as ‘new ways of doing things, or (as) better, unique combinations of the factors of production’ (Ottenbacher and Gnoth, 2005).

In terms of organizations, the importance of the innovation may be explained with a simple sample as follows (Aksoy, 2009):

“Every product or service that is purchased by paying money indicates a value for the customer. A value presented from a good restaurant is obviously the food it presents, but at the same time, the district it is located in, its atmosphere, music, waiters’ services, people coming to the restaurant and what is talked about. An entrepreneur who opens a restaurant and becomes successful may not need to analyse his reasons of success. However, as the business becomes dull, innovation should be made to remake the restaurant a favourite place. Usually, a customer does not know what he/she wants and therefore cannot state the thing that he/she does not know. Therefore, the establishment should definitely study the customer, find out his/her expectations and so to say, enter into his/her life. The vital and importance of the innovation underlies here.”

Innovation is a process. This process includes a set of stages starting from generating ideas to implementation of such ideas (Sezgin et al., 2008; Örücü et al., 2011).

As seen in Figure 1, the first stage of the innovation process is to generate idea. All the innovations are originated from generating ideas as well as implementing and realising them (Jong and Vermeulen, 2003; Eren and Gündüz, 2002; Eraslan et al., 2008). Inspiration and imagination are important factors in creating new ideas (Örücü et al., 2011).

The second step of innovation process is to check the compliance of the developed ideas with the purposes of establishment. In other words, it is quite important for the innovations to comply with the purpose. For example, in a study, it was detected that the food companies in Spain failed in result of only making product differentiation for increasing their product range, instead of giving priority to their customers’ needs (Çalıpınar and Baç, 2007).

The last step for the innovation process is to check the feasibility of the ideas complying with the purposes of the establishments, and commercialize them. Intrinsically, innovation is to acquire commercial success and create added value. Many innovations have

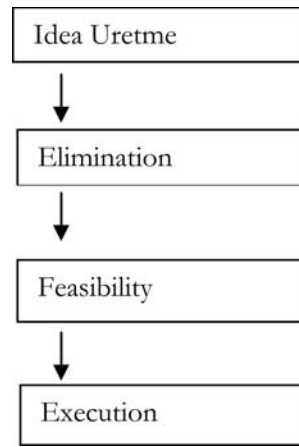


Figure 1. Innovation process.

Source: Majaro, S., (1998), *Managing Ideas for Profit*. McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead. Adapted: Sezgin et al., 2008: 132.

to expire before acquiring a commercial income success. Therefore, the innovative applications which do not create an important economic added value are not deemed as innovations (Insel ve Sarıdoğan 2009). Likewise, Zerenler et al (2007) asserted that an activity which is entered in an organization might be successful and innovative when it is able to be commercialized.

There are many dimensions of innovation. (Bakkalbaşı, 2003). Montes et al. (2005) defined innovations as the introduction of new ideas, products, services, systems, policies, programs and processes earlier than other firms in the environment. In other words, Ottenbacher and Gnoth (2005) defined them in an idea, practice, process or product. However, in this study, innovations have been defined mostly in new products in hospitality and especially food and beverage firms. Also, this study has focused on product innovations in food and beverage enterprises.

2.2 Food and beverage firms perspective

Food and beverage establishments are under economic and social management discipline, which accept to meet the peoples’ refreshment needs as a profession with its material and social values such as its structure, technical equipments, comfort and maintenance status as well as its qualitative elements such as service quality of the personnel (Atak, 2009).

Food and beverage motive is one of the most important basic needs of human being. Au and Low (2002) stated that due to being the basic requirement of life, the demand towards food and beverage services in the tourism industry is not flexible against the prices. Wolf (2005: 10) asserted that almost every travelling person eats outside food and beverage service is one of the three most demanded activities (Görkem and Öztürk, 2011).

The growing of food and beverage sector day by day, and high profitability causes the increase in innovative investments in this field and makes the competition conditions tougher. Following the food-beverage cultures of the other countries, tracing the new developed cooking and preparing methods and trying to modernize, make important contributions both to the customers and food and beverage establishments (Sezgin et al., 2008). The product innovation in food and beverage sectors might be defined as creating a new, different product, which has not been made before and might yield profit by developing the existing products for new expansions.

Haktanir and Harris (2005) identified in their study on an independent hotel in Northern Cyprus that the term “innovation” is widely perceived to relate to the entertainment activities and variations in food and beverage products in order to increase in-house sales. These authors determined that innovative activities are mostly related to food and beverage department’s operations, and are seen in terms of revisions to food menus, beverage choices, and variety in bar operations and banqueting.

Food and beverage establishments in the tourism industry are the service areas where innovation and creativity come to the forefront. The change in demands and expectations of customers lead to diversities in the presented food-beverage services. In this context, innovation plays a key role in competition strategies of many countries. For example, creativity and innovation is supported personally by entrepreneurs in France which has 47% of the world’s luxury restaurant market. The big restaurants’ chefs, who are the founder or owner of the establishment at the same time, play an important role in presenting France food culture worldwide. These chefs and their colleagues spare most of their times by forming a creative process, and for food presentation and customer services (Sezgin et al., 2008).

On the other hand, Oliver Chaleil – the Executive Chef of Çırağan Palace Kempinski Hotel in İstanbul – points out that 10% of the job needs to be reserved for innovation and discovery in every discipline and cuisine. Although Chaleil states that the Turkish cuisine is closed to renewal when it comes to innovation, he also expresses that this is not due to chefs, rather it arises from the consumers who are not open to renewals (Chaleil, 2012). Thus, in the study of Ata et al (2011), there is a finding that supports this case. When examining the innovation performances of the establishments that produces food and beverage; Sweden, Portugal, Lithuania, Italy, France, Greece, Estonia and Bulgaria stand out to be the most innovative countries, while the establishments manufacturing food and beverage in Turkey are seen as making too less innovation when compared with the other European Union countries.

In parallel with all these developments, new trends and concepts in the world’s food and beverage sectors can be summarized as follows:

Gastronomy tourism: Gastronomy tourism adds important values to many destinations. The interest

shown to ‘good eating’ in Europe has become a movement in recent years, and “gourmet tours” or “gastronomy tours”, where intellectual tourists with good income levels participate, has become one of the most best-selling tourism products. The groups, which organize tours to Italy or France for good food, an ethnic chef or a good wine, are important examples for Turkey to develop gastronomy tourism. For example, Barcelona acquires a considerable part of its tourism incomes from food and beverage activities it organizes every year.

Wine tourism: Today, trips to Europe countries that traditionally engage in wine, and to the countries where the most developing vineyards are located, are increasing. Here, the purposes in terms of tourists are to learn how to make wine, taste and purchase wine, and gain experience about the features of the wine area.

Slow food movement: The slow food motion, which started in Italy and became common in all the countries, has two basic functions. The first one is to protect the number of endangered animals, plant types and agricultural methods, and the second one is to develop the ability to taste.

Agro tourism: In this movement, which started by transforming the farm houses in rural areas into biolodgings or bio-hotels, the guests are able to consume the products, live the production stage and natural environment, and even can cook bread, make jam and collect olives.

Fusion cuisine: The fusion cuisine, which is a unique, creative and innovative technique that mainly depends on mixing the food cooking techniques and ingredients of different locations deliberately in the same plate, appeared by combining the western techniques with the Far East technique and ingredients in 1980s. With this idea, establishments aim to provide pleasure and loyalty by presenting the customers the tastes from different cultures in one plate.

3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FUSION CUISINE AND TURKISH CUISINE

Tourism has an important function which makes the countries closer to each other. In this approach, the food is an active instruments. In this context, it is important to present tourists the Turkish cuisine culture in the best way. Turkey draws attention from all over the world in terms of its food culture and diversity, and Turkish cuisine culture plays an important role in attracting foreign tourists (Görkem and Öztürk, 2011). Around the world, there are changes existing in food and beverage sector and this is also happening in Turkey, and such changes deeply effect the food-beverage establishments. The fusion cuisine understanding is one of the innovative approaches that appeared in this process.

The first person, who first gave fusion cuisine its current name, is the well-known cuisine chef Norman Van Aiken from Miami. When examining the historical development of this cuisine, although it is called as

Asia fusion in the early years, then in the following years, it is seen that numerous style and number of fusion cuisines were formed with diversities of other country's cuisines.

The requirement for presenting services in parallel to globalization has revealed the fusion term in food and beverage industry. In this frame, food and beverage establishments started to include fusion cuisine applications in order to ensure customer satisfaction (Sica and Mantovani, 2009). The dictionary meaning of the word 'fusion', that is basically a physics term", is stated as *melting, combining, getting together, combination* (Mannur, 2005).

The fusion cuisine, which printed its name on the food culture in recent years, might be defined as creating new cuisines, new food, new tastes by synthesizing different food concepts from the world's cuisines. An example for the fusion cuisine might be given as re-interpreting a kebab from Turkish cuisine and presenting it with a Far East vegetable garniture or with a French cuisine sauce, and thus creating new food and synthesis cuisine culture by that way (Sandıkçı and Çelik, 2007). However, when curry spice is dispersed into the chicken saute which is one of the major meat dishes of Turkish cuisine, a fusion with a mix of Turkish and Indian cuisines might be created. Moreover, the aubergene puree soufflé, which is formed by combining aubergene—has very important place in Turkish cuisine—and the cheese soufflé of French cuisine, is an example of fusion taken from Turkish and French cuisines.

Tastes and flavours that are very unaccustomed to a country's cuisine might come together thanks to fusion cuisine, and a new product might be created in terms of a food-beverage establishment.

The fusion cuisine might be classified with three different methods. One of them is the mixture of close regions with different cultures. In the second method, which is also called "eclectic", a food culture becomes determinative, but techniques or ingredients from other cuisines are also used. And in the last method, without any determinative cuisine, all the world's cuisines are brought together (Pappas, 2011; Oddy, 2003). One of the most important characteristics of Turkish cuisine culture is that, due to having rich food-beverage diversity and culture, such three methods may easily be implemented.

The food culture, which carries the indispensable elements of the geographies, life styles and sense of flavour of the countries and every nation, has ripen for hundreds of years and been inherited from generation to generation, and has almost become the representative of that culture. Every cuisine that was purified from locality and became nationalized, becomes universal at the same time (Akman, 1998). The feeding styles has taken shape according to cultural, geographical, ecological and economical structure that is been involved, and to the historical process. Every nation has a cuisine culture according to its cultural structure. Turkish cuisine culture is also among the most colored and rich cuisines (Güler, 2007).

Turkish cuisine is one of the most developed cuisines in the world since the Turks kept the Spice Route under their control for many years. Spices make the meat life longer as well as has a necessity to season it (Akman ve Mete, 1998). Having possessed the suitable and fertile lands for agriculture, there is both meat and vegetable diversity among the Turks due to farming and animal husbandry. And this richness arises from the reason that the Turkish nation had constituted the oldest societies of the world. The richness of the types in Turkish cuisine depends on many factors. Turkey's geographical location and the historical process it had gone through are among the factors that play important role in the emergence of diversity in the formation of Turkish cuisine culture (Tezcan, 2000; Kadioğlu, 1997).

In Turkey, the food culture of all civilizations and races which had passed from Anatolia for centuries were followed in time by the food and refreshments habits of the people in the wide geography of the Ottoman Empire. When we add to all these, the success of the new generation Turkish cuisine chefs in combining with the world's cuisines, a clean sheet was turned in the Turkish gastronomy.

There are food cultures spreading by keeping its origins from east to west and north to south, as well as there are food types that undergo changes with people and climate characteristics of the region and spread in such way. These food had undergone some changes toward the frame of mind, desire and needs of the people created them, or socio-economic conditions. Therefore, a brand new food model appeared by combining a few products together. This is called fusion cuisine.

Turkish cuisine rather displays a local characteristics and has not been tied to world fusion, and with this aspect, it succeeded to protect its origin. Without moving away from the origin, combining these methods creatively with new techniques and materials which have not been used before and giving them another form provides the fusion to be effectively implemented in Turkish cuisine. And while this includes unique, rooted and local flavours, on the other hand, might create combinations and presentations which can appeal to the international food tastes (Kadioğlu, 1997). As the Turkish Cuisine culture is that wide, colored and rich cuisine culture, it increases the feasibility of the fusion cuisine (Köroğlu et al., 2007).

It is stated that the Turkish cuisine, which has improved and enriched by the effect of the civilizations which had lived in Turkey, is included in the richest three cuisines worldwide, and has the characteristic of the most nutritious cuisine in the world (Denizer, 2008).

In the research made by Akman and Hasipek (2000) on 1000 foreign tourists putting up at holiday villages in Antalya, the ideas of the tourists on Turkish cuisine were tried to be revealed. The tourists stated that they tasted the meat dishes at the most from Turkish cuisine, and that the soups are inadequate in respect of type. The primary issue that the tourists complain about

Turkish cuisine is that the foodstuff in Turkish cuisine are fatty.

As result, the changing process experienced in the whole world also affected the food-beverage establishments, and a brand new product called fusion cuisine has appeared. The richness of Turkish cuisine presents important opportunities and strengths the competitiveness of Turkey in this area.

REFERENCES

- Akman, M. & Hasipek, S. 2000. Yabancı turistlere sunulan yiyecek-içecek hizmetleri ve yabancı turistlerin türk mutfağı hakkındaki düşünceleri. 2000'li Yıllara Girerken Kapadokya'nın Turizm Değerlerine Yeniden Bir Bakış, *Hafta Sonu Semineri VI*. Erciyes Üniversitesi Turizm İşletmeciliği ve Otelcilik Yüksekokulu, Nevşehir, Türkiye.
- Akman, M. & Mete, M. 1998. Türk ve dünya mutfakları. Konya: Selçuk Üniversitesi Basımevi.
- Akman, M. 1998. Yabancı turistlerin türk mutfağından beklentileri, yararlanma durumları ve türk mutfağının turizme katkısı üzerine bir araştırma. Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Ankara Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- Aksoy, T. 2009. Krizde inovasyon nasıl yapılır?. <http://www.temelaksoy.com/2008/12/23/krizde-inovasyon-nasil-yapilir/>
- Ata, A. & Çakar, S. Ö. and Işıtan, K. 2011. Gıda teknolojileri. Yeri Teknoloji Projeleri Destek Programı Sektörel Ynceleme Çalışmaları. II. Türkiye Teknoloji Geliştirme Vakfı. Haziran.
- Atak, M. 2009. Yiyecek içecek işletmelerinde servis elemanlarının hizmet içi eğitiminin iş tatminine etkisi: kuzey kıbrıs türk cumhuriyeti uygulaması. Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü. İzmir.
- Baker, S. & Bradley, P. and Huyton, J. 1998. Principles of Hotel Front Office Operations. London: Cassell.
- Bakkalbaşı, Y.Ö. 2003. A different approach to the performance management in tourism sector conformity between individual and organizational performances. Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Chaleil, O. 2012. Benim mutfağımda yerel ürünler önceliklidir. <http://foodinlife.com.tr/roportaj/163>.
- Cousins, J. & O'Gorman, K. and Stierand, M. 2010. Molecular gastronomy: cuisine innovation or modern day alchemy?. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management 22 (3): 399-415.
- Çalupınar, H. & Baç, U. 2007. Kobilerde inovasyon yapmayı etkileyen faktörler ve bir alan araştırması. Ege Akademik Bakış 7 (2): 445-458.
- Denizer, D. 2008. Türk turizmin gelişmesinde türk mutfağının önemi ve bugün için yapılması gerekenler. II. Ulusal Gastronomi Sempozyumu ve Sanatsal Etkinlikler. Antalya.
- Devocioğlu, S. 2008. Spor klüplerinde inovasyon yönetimi. Futbol Ekonomisi Stratejik Araştırma Merkezi (FESAM). http://perweb.firat.edu.tr/personel/yayinlar/fua_9/9_46967.pdf
- Eraslan, H. & Bulu, M. and Bakan, Y. 2008. Kümelenmeler ve inovasyona etkisi: turizm sektöründe uygulamalar. SOYD Seyahat ve Otel İşletmeciliği Dergisi 5 (3): 15-50.
- Eren, E. & Gündüz, H. 2002. Yş çevresinin yaratıcılık üzerindeki etkileri ve bir araştırma. Doğu Üniversitesi Dergisi (5): 65-84.
- Gemlik, N. & Bışman, F. A. and Bışman, N. 2009. Yenilik yönetiminde stratejinin rolü ve önemi. <http://www.idc.sdu.edu.tr/tammetinler/yonetim/yonetim50.pdf>
- Görkem, O. and Öztürk, Y. 2011. Otel mutfaklarında stajyer istihdamı ve beceri eğitimi yeterliğine yönelik bir uygulama. İşletme Araştırmaları Dergisi 3 (4): 18-33.
- Guile, B.R. & Quinn, J.B. 1988. Managing innovation: cases from the services industries. Washington: National Academy Press.
- Güler, S. 2007. Türk mutfağının değişim nedenleri üzerine genel bir değerlendirme. I. Ulusal Gastronomi Sempozyumu ve Sanatsal Etkinlikler. Antalya.
- Güleş, H. K. & Bülbül, H. 2004. Toplam kalite yönetiminin işletmelerde yenilik çalışmalarına katkıları. Gazi Üniversitesi Y. Y. B. F. Dergisi 1 (2004): 115-129.
- Haktanir, M. & Harris, P. 2002. Performance measurement practice in an independent hotel context: a case study approach. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management 17 (1): 39-50. http://ab.sanayi.gov.tr/Files/Documents/eaci_brochure_eco_innovat_15072011104210.pdf
- <http://acikarsiv.atilim.edu.tr/browse/25/goncaguzel.pdf?show>
- <http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/2005/06/12/656994.asp>
- http://www.gastrovizyon.com/dunyanin-ilk-fuzyon-mutfagi-osmanlinin-saray-mutfagidir_125
- http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/cuma/3809495_p.asp
- <http://www.kayserim.net/yazard.asp?id=8424>
- İraz, R. 2005. İşletmelerde bilgi yönetiminin yenilik ve rekabet gücü üzerindeki etkileri. Atatürk Üniversitesi Yktisadi ve Ydari Bilimler Dergisi 19(1):243-258
- İnsel, A. & Sarıdoğan, E. 2009. Yktisat denizinde fırtına: yaratıcı yıkım ve inovasyon dalgaları. Vira Dergisi. Haziran, http://www.mimozamarmara.edu.tr/~ainsel/Vira_July_2009.pdf
- Jong, P. J. D. & Vermeulen, P. A. M. 2003. Organizing successful new service development: a literature review. Management Decision 41 (9): 844-858.
- Kadioğlu, N. Ç. 1997. Türk mutfağının, akdeniz mutfak kültürünün genel özellikleri yönünden değerlendirilmesinin önemi. V. Uluslararası Türk Halk Kültürü Kongresi.
- Kadioğlu, N. Ç. 1997. Türk Mutfağının, akdeniz mutfak kültürünün genel özellikleri yönünden değerlendirilmesinin önemi. V. Milletlerarası Türk Halk Kültürü Kongresi Maddi Kültür Sektörünü Bildirileri. Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı HAGEM Yayınları.
- Koroğlu, A. & Koroğlu, Ö. and Sarioğlan, M. 2007. Türk mutfağının tanıtılmasında profesyonel turist rehberlerinin rolüne ilişkin ampirik bir çalışma. I. Ulusal Gastronomi Sempozyumu ve Sanatsal Etkinlikler. Antalya.
- Majaro, S. 1998. Managing ideas for profit. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.
- Makridakis, S. 1998. Ya Yaratıcı Olun Ya Da Olduğunuz Yerde Sayın. Executive Excellence Ocak (10): 12-13.
- Mannur, A. 2005. Model minorities can cook: fusion cuisine in asian america, east main street asian popular culture. New York University Press.
- Montes, F. J. L. & Moreno, A.U. and Morales, V.G. 2005. Influence of support leadership and teamwork cohesion on organizational learning, innovation and performance: an empirical examination. Technovation (25): 1159-1172.
- Oddy, D. J. 2003. From plain fare to fusion food. USA: The Boydell Press.
- Ottenbacher, M. and Gnoth, J. 2005. How to successful hospitality innovation. Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly 46 (2): 205-222.
- Öğüt, A. & Akgemci, T. & Pahin, E. and Kocabacak, A. 2007. İşletmelerde düşünce aşamasından patent aşamasına uzanan süreçte yenilik stratejileri ve buluş yönetimi.

- Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi (17): 413-425.
- Örücü, E. & Kılıç, R. and Savaş, A. 2011. KOBÝ'lerde inovasyon stratejileri ve inovasyon yapmayı etkileyen faktörler: bir uygulama. Dođuş Üniversitesi Dergisi 12(1): 58-73
- Pappas, E. 2011. Matrimonial metaphors and avocado pears: Tracking the emergence of fusion cuisine. *Appetite* (April) 56 (2): 540-540.
- Porter, M. E. 1992. *The competitive advantage of nations*. Hong Kong: The Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Porter, M. E. 1998. *The competitive advantage of nations*. London: McMillan Press Ltd.
- Sandıkçı, M. & Çelik, S. 2007. Füzyon mutfak uygulamaları ve misafir memnuniyeti açısından önemi. I. Ulusal Gastronomi Sempozyumu. 4-5 Mayıs, Antalya, Türkiye: 41-54.
- Sarıkaya, N. 2002. Kalite iyileştirme faaliyetlerinin algılanmasının işletme performansı üzerindeki etkilerinin incelenmesi ve türkiye uygulaması. Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Sakarya: Sakarya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Sezgin, M. & Zerenler, M. and Karaman, A. 2008. Otel işletmelerinin menü planlamasında yaratıcılık, yenilikçilik, girişimcilik faaliyetleri üzerine bir araştırma. *Sosyo Ekonomi* (2): 127-142.
- Sica, A. & Mantovani, A. 2009. Macrophage fusion cuisine. *Journal of the american society of hematology* 114 (21): 4609-4610.
- Sundbo, J. & Fuglsang, L. 2002. *Innovation as strategic reflexivity*. London: Routledge.
- Terziovski, M. 2004. Management of quality and innovation in a changing business environment: future challenges&opportunities. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management*. 15 (5): 382-416.
- Tezcan, M. 2000. Türk yemek antropolojisi yazıları. Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları.
- Van Riel, A.C.R. 2005. Service innovation management. *Managing Service Quality* 15(6): 491-610.
- Yelođlu, H. O. 2007. Örgüt, birey, grup bağlamında yenilik ve yaratıcılık tartışmaları. *Ege Akademik Bakış* 7 (1): 133-152.
- Zerenler, M. & Türker, N. and Đahin, E. 2007. Küresel teknoloji, araştırma-geliştirme (AR-GE) ve yenilik ilişkisi. *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* (17): 653-667.

GIS approach in promoting Perlis tourism

Ernieza Suhana Mokhtar, Siti Maryam Abdul Wahab, Norfariza Zainal & Nor Azlan Yusof
Universiti Teknologi MARA (Perlis), Perlis, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Perlis is famous with places of interest as a recreational centre for foreign tourists and the local community. Currently, each state in Malaysia has its own tourism maps, which only show location of fascinating places inaccurately and tourists unable to retrieve detail information directly from the maps. GIS is the powerful tool for decision-making; however, lack of funds is the main issue of not being able to implement the GIS application in tourism. The aim of this paper is to suggest an approach for the usage of open source GIS tool, Quantum GIS in identifying the attraction places surrounding Perlis for tourism purposes. Based on the aim, the objectives of the paper are to i) gather information of Perlis's fascinating places and ii) show the real figure of the places using multimedia approach and iii) identify the road direction to the fascinating places. The results of this paper can be used to help the tourists to plan their journey, and it is applicable to increase the number of tourists visiting Perlis. Ministry of Tourism Malaysia also has a chance to promote the places of interest in Perlis. The study is promising efficient GIS application of Perlis's tourism.

Keywords: open source tool, tourism, GIS, fascinating places

1 INTRODUCTION

Perlis Indera Kayangan is the smallest state and lies at the northern part of the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia. The population of the state is 217 480 in 2010 (Wikipedia, 2011). Even though Perlis is the smallest state in Malaysia, it does not lose out to other states in terms of tourism attractiveness. Perlis is a pleasant and excellent destination for tourists who want to experience the slower-paced and laid-back rural lifestyle.

There are quite a number of fascinating places in Perlis such as Taman Ular, Rumah Traditional, Taman Budaya, and etc. All of these places provide different experience for the tourists to visit. Perlis is the place where people will want to experience rural lifestyle with truly natural environment, visit historical arts and culture, shop the goods at lower prices and taste the fresh sea foods and village's foods with the touch of Thai taste. With those reasons, Perlis can be chosen as the place to visit for environmental and historical study purposes, family's vacation, friend's gathering, camping and so on. Ministry of Tourism, Perlis office is the authority which is responsible to promote these places to foreign and local tourists.

During recent decades, there are so many remarkable growths of research in tourism activities and managements. Several studies on tourism issues and management (Oppermann, 1997; Elliott-white & Finn, 1997; Nielsen & Liburd, 2008; Huang & Hsu, 2008), have been done as an aid in planning and marketing approaches. Oppermann (1997) realized that most

travel agencies prefer to use traditional ways to market to their customers with local newspapers and yellow pages. Only a few travel agencies have specialized in specific types of traveling and would accordingly use other distribution channels. It is argued that new approaches to tourism marketing are required and that Geographic Information System (GIS) provides a range of appropriate and useful tools for tourism marketing managers (Elliott-white & Finn, 1997). GIS can be defined as an integration of hardware, software, and data for capturing, managing, analyzing, and displaying all forms of geographically referenced information. GIS is able to view, understand, question, interpret, and visualize data in many ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and trends in the form of maps, globes, reports, and charts ("GIS.com," 2012). In a tourism management context for example, the user of the GIS might be employed by a tour operator. A GIS file would be opened which would be displayed on a standard computer monitor to show a digitised map. This might show all roads represented as lines and hotels represented as points, within a specified area or polygon, close to, or within a particular radius from say, a heritage sight, tourism complex or attraction (McAdam, 1999).

Maps and other location-based information have traditionally played an important role in the choice of holiday destination and the selection of sites to visit (Liburd & Nielsen, 2010). According to Jansen, Ciamacca, and Spink (2008), geographical information can be used for searching and gathering the travel information. GIS is a potential tool that applicable



Figure 1. State of Perlis.
(Source: www.perlis.gov.my)



Figure 2. Chuping sugar cane plantation.

to be used in enhancing the Perlis's tourism planning. Location-related information play an important role in tourists' decision-making processes; firstly, on the choice of destination; secondly, the behavior and movement patterns at the destination; and thirdly, on the evaluation and communication of vacation experiences. By providing useful information on places of interest for different reasons of vacation and its strategic locations, it will be easier for travelers to identify the perfect places which fulfill their reasons of the vacation. According to Oppermann (1997), database of tourism places is bound to become a strong aspect of tourism marketing in the years to come with potential for any type and size of tourism activities. Using mobile devices to guide tourists in unknown cities or simply to show the shortest way to a certain kind of store is seen as one of the most promising applications in the near future. In order to provide the necessary functionality, GIS have been established in the background.

The integration of GIS and appropriate software could potentially satisfy the consumer's need. One of the popular open source GIS is Quantum GIS. Quantum GIS (QGIS) is a user friendly open source GIS licensed under the GNU General Public License. QGIS is an official project of the Open Source Geospatial Foundation (OSGeo). It runs on Linux, Unix, Mac OSX, and Windows and supports numerous vector, raster, and database formats and functionalities. ("Welcome to the Quantum GIS Project," 2012)

This paper is to gather the detail information on fascinating places surrounding Kangar, Perlis for tourism purposes. The potential of GIS applications in tourism system in Perlis will be discussed further using some GIS software. The real figure of the places will be presented using multimedia approach. With the aid of the software, the tourists are able to identify further about fascinating places to visit. On the other hand, GIS techniques and procedures have important roles to play in analyzing decision problems. In order to satisfy the needs of the tourist in determining the location to the fascinating places, this study will be using Quantum GIS to introduce the application of the shortest path.



Figure 3. Kellam Cave Recreational Park.
(Source: <http://www.fun-travel-malaysia.com>)

2 FASCINATING PLACES IN PERLIS

Perlis has many interesting and unique tourism products. With tourism based resources on recreational area and many interest places, Perlis is able to offer a wider range of travel products to attract domestic and international visitors. The interesting places in Perlis can be divided in several categories such as:

- a) Historical/Cultural Park (Royal Museum Arau, Kota Kayang Museum, Dato' Wan Ahmad's House).
- b) Agro tourism (Herbs Garden, Grape Farm, Harum Manis Plantation, Chuping Sugar Cane Plantation) (Figure 2).
- c) Recreational Park (Perlis State Park, Kellam Cave) (Figure 3).
- d) Wang Burma Cave
- e) Bukit Ayer Recreational Park
- f) Snake and Reptile Farm
- g) Timah Tasoh Lake
- h) Melati Lake (Figure 4)
- i) Shopping (Wang Kelian Sunday Market, Padang Besar Arcade)



Figure 4. Melati Lake.
(<http://interestingplace1.blogspot.com>)



Figure 5. Padang Besar Arcade.

3 GIS SOFTWARE AND DATA MODEL IN TOURISM APPLICATION

Open source GIS tool, Quantum GIS is used as selected software for database development (attribute data) and spatial analysis is constructed on the fascinating places at Perlis. All the spatial and attributes data is in WGS84 coordinate projection system. The attributes data of Perlis fascinating places are obtained from Perlis Town and Rural Planning Department and Ministry of Tourism Malaysia, Perlis office. Table 1 shows list of attributes and digital data layers used in this study. For the road layer, the attribute data added are ID, road name and length while fascinating places are ID, type, name, address, coordinate, postcode, district and state.

4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF GIS PERLIS TOURISM

This study is divided into i) software selection, ii) spatial and attributes relating to the Perlis tourism

Table 1. List of attributes and digital layers.

Layer	Attribute
Road	ID Road name Length
Fascinating places	ID Type Name Address Coordinate Postcode District State

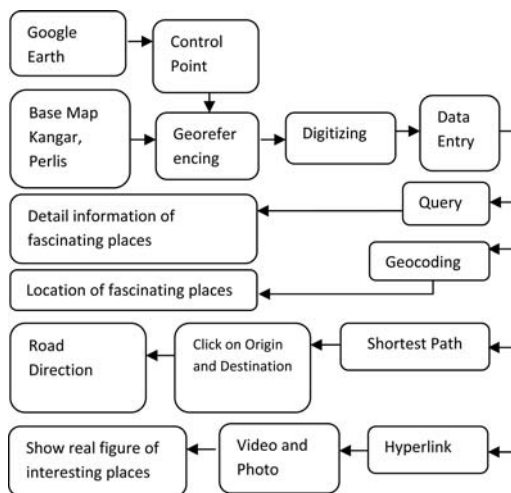


Figure 6. Conceptual framework.

data collection, iii) data processing and iv) result and analysis.

A conceptual model is developed to achieve the objectives of the study. The model shows six (6) steps involve such as georeferencing, digitizing, data entry, geocoding, attribute data query, photo and video hyperlink, and the shortest path (Figure 6).

Using the georeference plugin, the coordinate of Perlis's control points, which are obtained from the Google Earth in WGS84 coordinate system and registered into the Perlis's base map. The road (line), fascinating places (polygon) and facilities (point) provided are vectorized and converted into the GIS data model, and all the detail information (attribute data) is inserted into the spatial feature using the Quantum GIS.

Search query builder is one of the popular tools in any GIS applications. The 'identify tool' is used to query the detail information inserted to the spatial or fascinating places. Tourists can easily gain any information related to the places such as types, address, description, attraction, entrance fee and etc.

Geocode plugin is used to identify the fascinating places, i.e. Padang Besar based on the address locator. Tourists are able to locate the spatial location using the address of fascinating places. For example, by typing the address of Padang Besar, Perlis, the Quantum GIS software will show the actual location on the digital Perlis's map.

To determine the way to the selected fascinating place, shortest path is used by identifying the origin (from) and Destination (to). Lastly, the hyperlink tool of Quantum GIS is used to show the real figure of the fascinating places using multimedia approach such as picture and video.

5 DETAIL INFORMATION OF PERLIS'S FASCINATING PLACES

GIS is applied in promoting the fascinating places surrounding Perlis such as Padang Besar Arcade, Snake and Reptile Farm, Herb Garden, Royal Museum Arau, Kelam Cave and etc. Perlis's fascinating places are categorized into four (4) types such as agro-tourism, recreational park, shopping and historical/cultural park.

Figure 7 shows the list and detail information of fascinating places obtained in the attribute table under the layer of interest places. By selecting the row of fascinating place in the attribute table for example "rumah tradisional", tourists are able to determine the actual location on the digital Perlis's map. The coordinate (latitude, longitude) of "rumah tradisional" is also provided in the selected attribute table for helping the tourists (local or foreigner) to find the location using GIS digital map or through the GPS mobile phone.

In addition, the detail description of the "rumah tradisional" can be obtained directly from the GIS digital data without any access to the other website (Figure 8).

6 IMAGE AND VIDEO OF FASCINATING PLACES USING MULTIMEDIA APPROACH

The action button in QGIS is used to link the image and video of the fascinating places. The tourists can

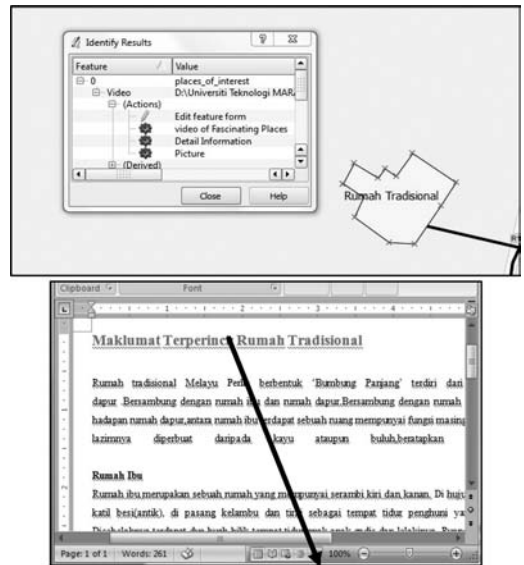


Figure 8. History of the fascinating places.

	places_of_	Jenis	Address	Coordinate
4	Dataran Kangar	Pelancongan	Dataran 350 Dato' Sheikh Ahmad, Kangar...	100.190776 E, 6.439321 N
5	Rumah Tradisional	Kesenian dan W...	Jalan Dato Wan Ahmad, 01000 Kangar, Pe...	100.186148 E, 6.437949 N
6	Dataran Water Front	Pelancongan	101, Jalan Jubilee Perlis, 01000 Kangar, Perl...	100.191559 E, 0.450791 N
7	Bandar Kangar Dari Atas Bangunan KWSP	Pelancongan	Jalan Persiaran Jubli Emas, 01000, Kangar...	100.193009 E, 6.435778 N
8	Kompleks Sukan	Rekreasi	Jalan Hospital, 01000 Kangar, Perlis	100.200028 E, 6.451632 N
9	Taman Budaya Negeri Perlis	Kesenian dan W...	145, Jalan Kampung Beha, 01000 Kangar...	100.195470 E, 6.416951 N
10	Taman Burung	Pelancongan	No 71, Jalan Kampung Kota, Taman Kem...	100.173979 E, 6.466728 N
11	Taman Ular	Pelancongan	No 71, Jalan Kampung Kota, Taman Kem...	100.173926 E, 6.466731 N

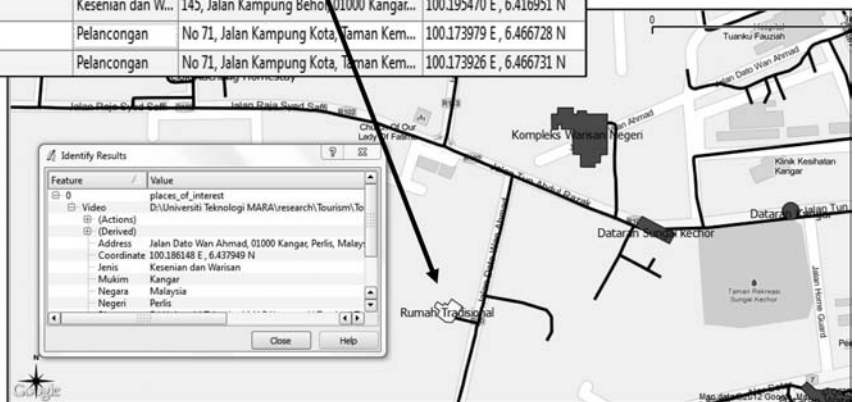


Figure 7. Detail information of Perlis's fascinating places.

overview visually to the place of interest by picture and video using the multimedia approach. The 'identify tools', which consist of two (2) buttons; i) action: video of fascinating places and ii) action: Picture (Figure 9) is linked to the fascinating place's photo and video (Figure 10).

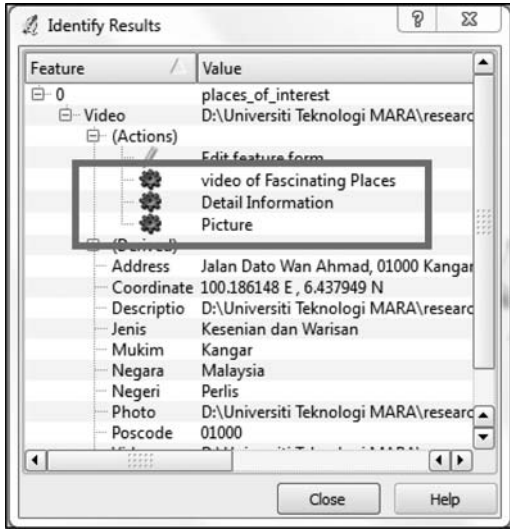


Figure 9. An action button to display the fascinating image and video.

7 ROAD DIRECTION IDENTIFICATION TO THE FASCINATING PLACES

The network analysis is one of the functions in the GIS to identify the road direction either shortest or fastest path. This study focused on the shortest path where the criteria taken under consideration are the length of the road. To identify the road direction, tourists need to identify the start (current location) and stop location (destination).

In this study, the accommodation is stated as start location while the fascinating place, "rumah tradisional" is declared as stop location by determining the address of the place. Then, using calculate button the road direction will be determined based on the distance. As shown in Figure 11, the thickest line is

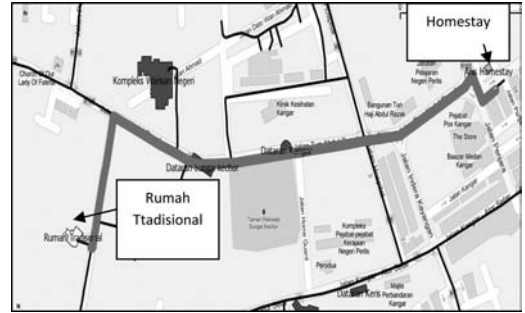


Figure 11. Shortest path from accommodation to fascinating places.

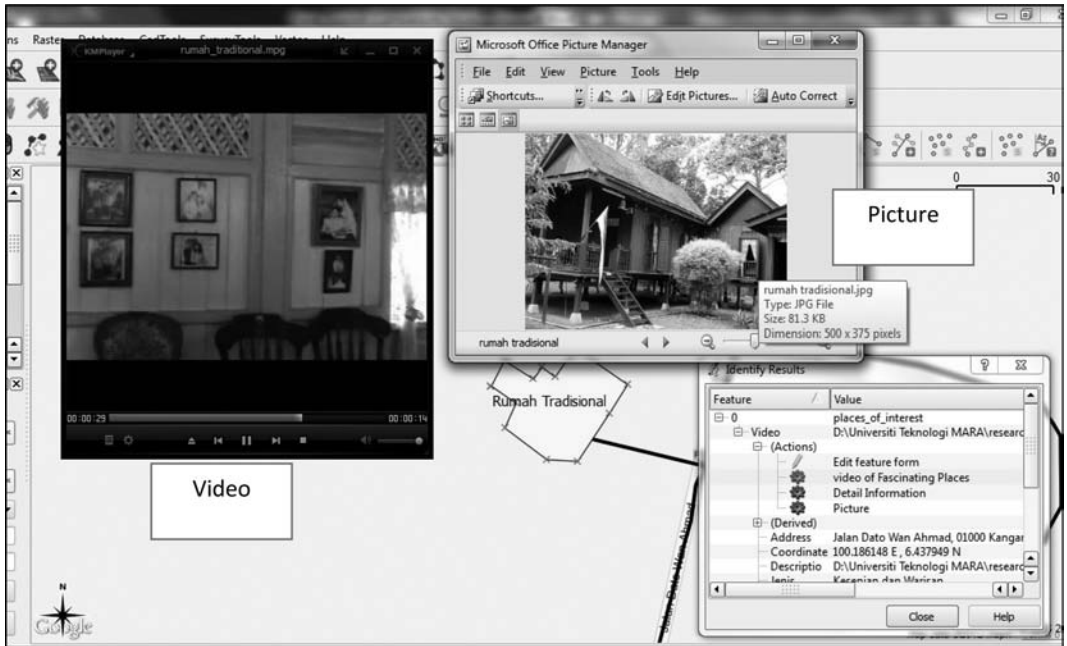


Figure 10. Image and video of "Rumah tradisional" displayed by identify tool.

displayed on the map to show the shortest path from current location to the new destination.

This application is suggested for tourists before the day of the holiday, so as to plan an effective journey within the time and budget.

8 CONCLUSION

QGIS is a powerful tool in providing the detail information from the integration of data sources to support the decision-making in tourism development. This study shows that the open-source software, QGIS is successful can be used for promoting the Perlis's fascinating places using GIS application. Using QGIS, the problem of getting the funding to develop the system as one-stop-centre data can be solved.

Now, tourists (local and foreign) are able to gain the detail information of the Perlis' fascinating places from every single part of the earth before starting their journey. Furthermore, the actual location also can be gained from the digital maps to help the tourists plan their journey and direction to the fascinating places.

This study also applicable to be used by Ministry of Tourism, Perlis office and travel agency in promoting Perlis using the multimedia approach. In addition, the data updating especially tourism maps would be easier, less of paper and less time consuming.

REFERENCES

Elliott-white, M. P. 2012. Growing in Sophistication?: The Application of Geographical Information Systems in Post-Modern Tourism Marketing. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 37–41.

- GIS.com. 2012. Retrieved March 28, 2012, from <http://www.gis.com/content/what-gis>
- Grove, A.T. 1980. Geomorphic evolution of the Sahara and the Nile. In M.A.J. Williams & H. Faure (eds), *The Sahara and the Nile*: 21–35. Rotterdam: Balkema.
- Huang, S. S., & Hsu, C. H. C. (2008). Recent Tourism and Hospitality Research in China. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, (9:3), 267–287.
- Jappelli, R. & Marconi, N. 1997. Recommendations and prejudices in the realm of foundation engineering in Italy: A historical review. In Carlo Viggiani (ed.), *Geotechnical engineering for the preservation of monuments and historical sites*; Proc. intern. symp., Napoli, 3–4 October 1996. Rotterdam: Balkema.
- Johnson, H.L. 1965. Artistic development in autistic children. *Child Development* 65(1): 13–16.
- McAdam, D. 1999. The Value and Scope of Geographical Information Systems in Tourism Management. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 7(1), 77–92.
- Nielsen, N. C., & Liburd, J. J. 2008. Geographical Information and Landscape History in Tourism Communication in the Age of Web 2.0. The Case of the Salt River Bay National Park in St. Croix of the U.S. Virgin Islands. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 25(3–4), 282–298.
- Oppermann, M. 1997. Geography's Changing Role in Tourism Marketing Geography's Changing Role in Tourism Marketing. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, (January 2012).
- Polhill, R.M. 1982. *Crotalaria in Africa and Madagascar*. Rotterdam: Balkema.
- Quantum GIS 2012. Welcome to the Quantum GIS Project. Retrieved 2012, from <http://www.qgis.org/>

Ecotourism planning using remote sensing and GIS: A case study for Marvdasht, Iran

M. Ghadiri Masoum, H. Nasiri, A. Hosseini & Y. Rafii

University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

ABSTRACT: In recent years the concept of rural or ecotourism has been gathering impetus in the countryside of developing countries. Regions which were previously based on agriculture are now urgently seeking new forms of income generation. This paper demonstrates the uses of remote sensing, Geographical Information System (GIS) and Multi-Criterion Decision-Making (MCDM) in an integrated approach for rational planning of ecotourism activities and conservation measures. For this purpose, we try to identify the appropriate areas for ecotourism development, but also pointed out the weaknesses which are now obstructing the growth of this, in many ways the most perspective form of tourism in Marvdasht County. The result from the analysis indicates that from the view point of environmental attractions, the ecological attractions of the study region have the priority in development of tourism which was advised to put emphasize on it for expansion of natural tourism and ecotourism.

Keywords: rural tourism, rural development, GIS, MCDM, remote sensing, Marvdasht.

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an activity which may have a significant influence on the economic, social, functional and physiognomic structure of rural areas. Village tourism is a very broad concept, which includes not only a vacation in the countryside, but also various other tourist activities in rural areas. Natural tourism in rural areas has today become a reality, a need and a wish of tourists, but also a carrying force and an instrument of rural areas development. Ecotourism has a strong connection with sustainable tourism. Sustainability depends on the relationship between tourism and environment. Suitable management for ecotourism development is essential in order to conserve and maintain the biological richness of the area as well as economic upliftment of the local people. In this respect, ecotourism evaluation should be regarded as an important tool for sustainable development of tourism in a rural area (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996, 83). This can be judged with the help of criteria and indicators approach, which is basically a concept of sustainable ecotourism management developed in a set of principles, criteria and indicators (Prubhu et al, 1999, 5). Ideally, ecotourism should satisfy several criteria such as conservation of biological and cultural diversities through ecosystem protection and promotion of sustainable use of biodiversity with minimal impact on the environment being a primary concern (Ryngnga, 2008, 52). An integration of remote sensing and GIS can certainly play an important role in ecotourism planning. In general, they

provide efficient tools to store manipulate and analyze a great variety of spatial data. More specifically, they can be used to map out land covers and habitats (Fung 1997, 89; Fung et al. 2001, 47); monitor landscape changes (Fung, 2003, 543); model species distribution (Miller and Allen 1994, 42; Osborne et al. 2001, 463; Luoto et al. 2002, 1033; Rushton et al. 2004, 51) and predict suitable habitats for different species (Leeuw et al. 2002, 139; Gibson et al. 2004, 218).

The integration of GIS, remote sensing and multiple criteria decision making makes a powerful tool to handle the ecotourism siting problem because GIS provides efficient manipulation, analysis and presentation of the spatial data and MCDM supplies consistent ranking of the potential ecotourism areas based on a variety of criteria (Sener et al., 2006,382).

Thus, the present study is an attempt to identify potential ecotourism sites using remote sensing, ANP and GIS in Marvdasht County, Iran. ANP was employed to assign criteria weights to be used in ecotourism siting. ANP is the generalization of well-known AHP method, which was proposed by Saaty (2001). ANP incorporates the influences and interactions among the elements of the system (criteria and alternatives) as perceived by the decision maker, and groups them into clusters (Aragones-Beltran et al., 2010, 1083). A comprehensive review of the technical literature concerning ecotourism showed that MCDM had been employed by Bunruamkaew and Murayama (2011) and Fung and Wong (2007) for selecting ecotourism sites, Dickey et al (2005) for

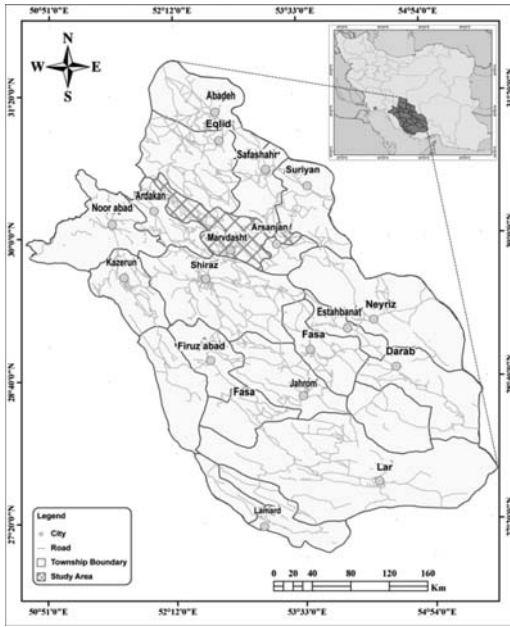


Figure 1. Location of the Marvdasht County (in the fars province of Iran).

choosing appropriate ecotourism disposal techniques, and Neba (2010) for developing rural tourism as an alternative strategy for poverty alleviation in protected areas.

2 STUDY AREA

The Marvdasht County (29° 15' to 30° N and 5° 44' to 53° 30' E) is located in the north part of Fars province of Iran 'Figure 1'. The mean elevation of the area is 1620 meters above mean sea level. According to the De Martonne climate classification, and the area represents a semi-arid-humid climate type with the average annual rainfall of 478 mm, the average annual potential evaporation rate of 2934 mm. There are some important attributes that should be considered in order to develop successful ecotourism in the Province. For instance, it should largely be free from urban settlements with untouched landscape, have rich vegetation cover and considerable wildlife, traditional indigenous people's groups and recreational tourist attractions. Such characteristics suit the selection of the area for a case study to demonstrate the application of the methodology.

3 MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Identifying the criteria for the ecotourism planning

The potentially suitable areas for ecotourism have certain features; the identification of these features is

Table 1. Criteria in land suitability analysis for ecotourism.

Layer	Scale	Source
Wildlife area	1:50,000	Topographic map
Land used/cover map	1:50,000	Satellite image
Natural attraction	1:50,000	Field Survey with GPS
Protected areas	1:50,000	Topographic map
Elevation	1:50,000	Topographic map
Proximity to cultural sites	1:50,000	Field Survey with GPS
Slope	1:50,000	Topographic map
Population data	1:50,000	National statistical office, Iran
Distance from road	1:50,000	Topographic map

contingent upon several factors. Data used in this study were assembled from a variety of sources (Table 1). The factors and criteria set up were chosen according to experience, experts' opinions and information from various sources. Knowledge acquisition has been accomplished through discussions with experts of related fields of study, surveying of authenticated literatures and the local conditions of the region.

3.2 Methods

3.2.1 Determination of the criteria and sub criteria weights by ANP and Pair wise comparison

3.2.1.1 Pair wise comparison

In the present research the Pair wise comparison was used to determine the weights of the sub-criteria. The Pair wise comparison was first proposed by the renowned mathematician Thomas L. Saaty (1980) as an appropriate decision making approach to handle complex problems with numerous factors involved.

This process is used to assess the intangible qualitative criteria and the objective quantitative criteria (Ghodsipour, 2005, 41). To assign weight, a pair wise comparison matrix is formed to make a pair wise comparison between the classes of any criterion. In the pair wise comparison, each of the classes was assigned a weight ranging from 1 to 9. For this, the local conditions of the region, the relevant literature and the specialist expertise were considered and finally the relative weight of each class was determined using the Eigen Vector method in the environment of the Expert Choice software.

3.2.1.2 Analytic Network Process (ANP)

In this study, Analytic Network Process (ANP) method was employed to determine criteria weights. ANP is one of the most recent MCDM techniques which have been proposed by Saaty (2001). In fact, ANP can be considered as a more recent extension of AHP for decision making with dependence and feedback that can handle a more complex decision structure (Saaty, 2001, 132) such as landfill siting which is a complex network of various factors. While AHP is limited to relatively static and unidirectional interactions with little

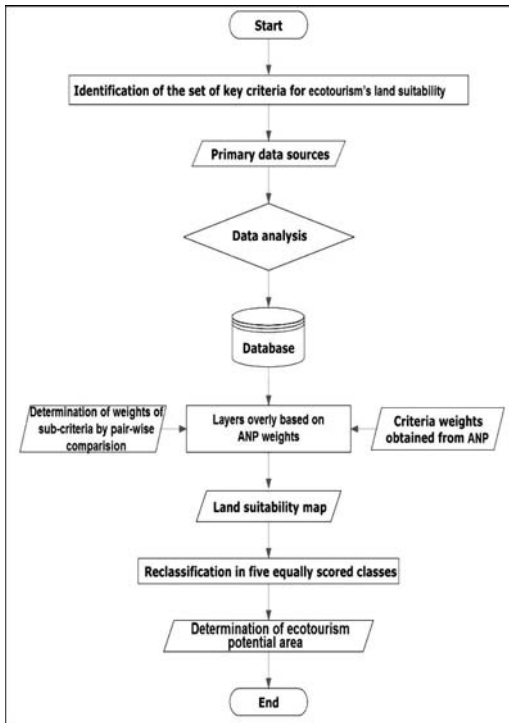


Figure 2. Schematic diagram for modeling suitable ecotourism sites in Marvdasht County, Iran.

feedback among decision components and alternatives (Sarkis, 1998, 165), ANP and its super-matrix is able to handle a more complex decision structure (Saaty, 2001, 134). ANP consists of three parts: the first part is the control hierarchy for the network of the criteria and sub-criteria; the second part is a network of influences among the elements and clusters; and the third is the feedback between the various clusters and elements within a cluster (khan and Faisal, 2008, 1504).

For the case under study, four groups of connoisseur experts, namely tourist planners, environmentalists, village planners and GIS specialists contributed to establish the ANP based network model with the support of Super Decisions software. To calculate criteria weights by the use of ANP method, some questionnaires consisting of pair-wise questions for the comparison analysis were designed. The experts participating in the survey completed the questionnaires. Then, through Super Decision software, criteria weights were calculated using information derived out of the questionnaires.

4 RESULTS

The overall process of the suitable ecotourism site selection has been schematically presented in 'Figure 2'. The collected data related to the nine

Table 2. The weights of the criteria via ANP.

Criterion	Weight
– Elevation	– 0.11
– wildlife Area	– 0.109
– Natural Attraction Places	– 0.221
– Land slope	– 0.144
– Land use	– 0.086
– Protected Areas	– 0.097
– Distance from Road	– 0.068
– Population	– 0.093
– Proximity to cultural sites	– 0.072

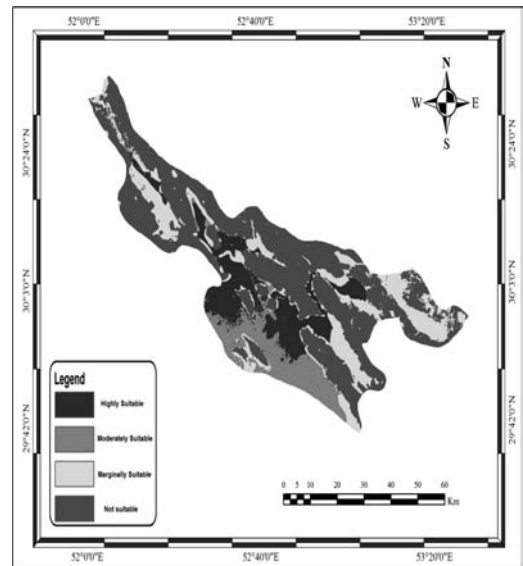


Figure 3. Suitability map for ecotourism in Marvdasht County, Iran.

parameters (Elevation, Wildlife Area, Natural Attraction Places, Land slope, and Land use, Protected Areas, Distance from Road, Population, and the Proximity to cultural sites) was analyzed in the present work.

Having collected the information layers according to the flowchart, Pair wise comparison and ANP were used to determine the weights of the sub-criteria and criteria respectively. Tables of 2 presents the weights of the criteria extracted via the Super Decision software.

After obtaining the normal weights of all nine thematic layers and the features of individual thematic layers, all the thematic layers were integrated with one another in order to demarcate ecotourism zones in the study area. The final map was classified in four equally scored classes from the not suitable to the highly suitable areas. The final land suitability map is presented in 'Figure 3'.

With regards to the analysis of the results and ecotourism requirement, the typical sites recommended are summarized based on 4 classes. 'Highly ecotourism potential' category involves the most sensitive

area and development activities within this area which will lead to disaster and threaten the natural characteristic of the area. It could serve as main ecotourism attractions but with the use of certain limitations and guidelines. Example of guideline to be used to limit the number and duration of access to the area is the code of conduct. Activities suggested for these areas include education and research related activities, site seeing and trekking. 'Moderately ecotourism potential' category allows for mild development but with high consideration on construction work and detail assessment of environmental impact. These areas can still be considered for ecotourism attractions due to passive tourist activities such as camping, trekking, bird watching, site seeing and any activities with minimum development or inference to the site. 'Suitable for tourism development' category includes areas with low sensitivity and available for exploitation. Still, development should be conducted in an appropriate manner with respect to minimizing development impact. Physical structures such as green hotels, lodge, restaurants and public convenience facilities are needed to support ecotourism in these areas. 'Currently not suitable' category includes areas with several impacts of development and degraded environment.

Furthermore, the findings provide insights into the Marvdasht ecotourism industry which could aid in the development of strategies, policies and systems for implementing and managing ecotourism. They also offer a benchmark for future comparative and trend analyses.

5 CONCLUSION

The development of ecotourism in partnership with local communities and conservation projects can restore local livelihoods. In this way villagers can learn how to manage the wildlife and landscapes in a sustainable manner making sound livelihood decisions without sacrificing their cultural values. The objective of this study is to determine the potential for ecotourism planning in Marvdasht County and the surrounding rural areas. The use of the integrated MCDM-GIS approach effectively assists ecotourism planning. MCDM is a sound tool for ecotourism planning, since it takes into consideration the different criteria that have a significant impact on the decision. The application of MCDM has successfully divided the study area into different conservation levels by considering various factors and constraints. Based on different levels of conservation, a range of zones regarding conservation can be established. Also the results of the study indicated the efficiency of the MCDM in ecotourism site selection and the effectiveness of ANP in the rapid assessment of large areas. The present work proposes a method for ecotourism planning and can help policy and decision-makers to approach tourism development issues with a deeper understanding of environmental factors.

REFERENCES

- Aragonés-Beltrán, P., Pastor-Ferrando, J.P., García-García, F., Pascual-Agullo, A., 2010. An Analytic Network Process approach for siting a municipal solid waste plant in the Metropolitan Area of Valencia (Spain). *Journal of Environmental Management* 91, 1071–1086.
- Bunruamkaew, K., Murayama, Y., 2011. Site Suitability Evaluation for Ecotourism Using GIS & AHP: A Case Study of Surat Thani Province, Thailand, International Conference: Spatial Thinking and Geographic Information Sciences, 21: 269–278.
- Ceballos-Lascurain, H., 1996, *Tourism, ecotourism and protected areas*, The World Conservation Union (IUCN). Gland: Switzerland.
- Dickey, A., & Higham, J.E.S., 2006, A Spatial Analysis of Commercial Ecotourism Businesses in New Zealand: A c 1999 Benchmarking Exercise Using GIS, *Tourism Geographies*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 373–388.
- Fung, T., & F. K.-K. Wong, 2007, Ecotourism planning using multiple criteria evaluation with GIS, *Geocarto International*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 87–105.
- Fung, T., 1997, Mapping land cover changes in the inner deep bay area of Hong Kong. In *Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta as seen from Space Images*, K. Lulla and K.N. Au (Eds), pp. 83–92 (Hong Kong: Geocarto International Centre).
- Fung, T., 2003, Landscape dynamics in the Maipo Ramsar wetland site. In *Geoinformatics for Tropical Ecosystems*, P.S. Roy (Ed.), pp. 539–553 (Tokyo: Asian Association on Remote Sensing).
- Fung, T., NG, S.L., KWAN, M. and YEUNG, E., 2001, Mapping the broad land use pattern of Hong Kong. *Planning and Development*, 17, 41–50.
- Ghodsipour, Seyed Hassan., 2005, *Analytical Hierarchy processes*, Amirkabir Industrial University press.
- Gibson, L.A., Wilson, B.A., Cahill, D.M. and Hill, J., 2004, Spatial prediction of rufous bristlebird habitat in a coastal heathland: a GIS-based approach. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 41, 213–223.
- Khan, S., Faisal, M.N., 2008. An analytic network process model for municipal solid waste disposal options. *Waste Management* 28, 1500–1508.
- Leeuw, J.D., Ottichilo, W.K., Toxopenus, A.G. and Prins, H.T., 2002, Application of remote sensing and geographic information systems in wildlife mapping and modeling. In *Environmental Modeling with GIS and Remote Sensing*, A. Skidmore (Ed.), pp. 121–144 (New York: Taylor & Francis).
- Luoto, M., Kuussaari, M. and Tovonen, T., 2002, Modeling butterfly distribution based on remote sensing data. *Journal of Biogeography*, 29, 1027–1037.
- Miller, R.I. and Allen, J.H., 1994, Mapping the elements of biodiversity: the rare species of Madagascar. In *Mapping the Diversity of Nature*, R.I. Miller (Ed.), pp. 37–51 (Oxford: Chapman and Hall).
- Neba, N.E., 2010, Developing rural tourism as an alternative strategy for poverty alleviation in protected areas: Example of Oku, Cameroon, *International NGO Journal* Vol. 5 (1), pp. 50–59.
- Osborne, P.E., Alonso, J.C. and Bryant, R.G., 2001, Modeling landscape scale habitat use using GIS and remote sensing: a case study with great bustards. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 38, 458–471.
- Prubhu, RC, Colfer, JP, Dudley, R., 1999, Guidelines for developing, testing and selecting criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, Center for International Forestry Research. Jakarta: Indonesia.

- Rushton, S.P., Ormerod, S.J. and Kerby, G., 2004, New paradigms for modeling species distributions? *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 41, 193–200.
- Ryngnga, P.K., 2008, Ecotourism prioritization: a geographic information system approach, *SAJTH*; 1(1):49–56.
- Saaty, T.L., 1980, *The analytic hierarchy process*, McGraw-Hill: New York.
- Saaty, T.L., 2001. *Decision making with interdependence and feedback. The Analytic Network Process*. RWS Publications. University of Pittsburgh.
- Sarkis, J., 1998. Theory and methodology evaluating environmentally conscious business practices. *European Journal of Operational Research* 107, 159–174.
- Sener, B., Suzen, M.L., Doyuran, V., 2006. Landfill site selection by using geographic information systems. *Environmental Geology* 49, 376–388.

This page intentionally left blank

The usage of ICT applications in 5 star hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Azdel Abdul Aziz, Mohd Faez Saiful Bakhtiar, Nur'Hidayah Che Ahmat,
Mohd Syaquif Yasin Kamaruddin & Noor Azmi Ahmad

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Hotel's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has affected society and its surroundings in many ways. Most of hotels in this world use ICT as to ease their tasks such as taking reservation, room management, telecommunication, and guest accounting. In Malaysia, hotels have started to use ICT application as an important strategic asset. ICT has been rapidly changed or enhanced from time to time and many hotels invest a lot of money to ensure that they have the latest technology. By using quantitative approach, this paper analyzed the levels of usage of ICT applications used in Room Division and Food and Beverage Department of hotels. Through self-administered questionnaires, 350 respondents from 28 five stars hotels in Kuala Lumpur were approached using random stratified sampling. It appears that room division department has the highest level of ICT usage. This outcome had significant implication to the hotel operators on how to prioritize the importance of the hotel's ICT application.

Keywords: ICT applications, level of usage, room division, food and beverage

1 INTRODUCTION

Technology has affected society and its surroundings in many ways. Moreover, information technology dramatically changes with new features and capabilities, moving away from the data processing era to strategic information systems era. Technology which is commonly known as information and communication technology (ICT) is applied in the hospitality industry as an important strategic asset (Cho and Olsen, 1998). Most of hotels in the world use ICT to ease their tasks such as taking reservation, room management, telecommunication, and guest accounting. According to DiPietro (2010), ICT has been rapidly changed or enhanced from time to time and many hotels invest a lot of money to ensure that they have the latest technology. Even though ICT seems to give positive impacts, ICT might also cause negative impacts as well. As mentioned by Sigala (2003), by fully depending on technology use will not generate the maximum result.

Many organizations have gradually increased their investment in information technology for planning in order to boost the efficiency of their business processes, support management decision-making, and improve productivity (Kim et al. 2006). Moreover, improving productivity is the main role of information technology (IT) in the hotel industry, while information resources have long played an important role in conducting successful hotel operations (Ham, Woo and Jeong, 2005). Next, by implementing IT systems has resulted in decreased costs, greater productivity and increased revenues in the hotel industry (Siguaw,

Enz and Namasivayam, 2000; Huo, 1998), improving customer service and business operations (Sweat and Hibbard, 1999; Barcheldor, 1999; Van Hoof, Verbeeten and Combrink, 1996).

There are numerous hotels that apply technology in their operation. It is a challenge for the organization to adopt new technologies and learn how to use them to build a better system, at the same time to prioritize which systems are the most important one. Some impacts of the new technology may have dysfunctional consequences for users, which may sabotage the main objective for implementing the new technology or system. Effects of a new system or technology could include changes in stress, job satisfaction, quality of work life, and other work related outcomes with important consequences for the productivity and efficiency of operations. In this study, the researchers focused on the level of usage of ICT applications that is available in 5-star hotels located within the Kuala Lumpur area.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 ICT applications in hotel industry

Many researchers have wondered that the operation of information technology (IT) in the lodging industry has increased productivity, reduced costs, improved service quality, improved guest satisfaction and long-term profitability (Cobanoglu, Corbaci, and Ryan, 2001). ICT offers several advantages for hotels of all sizes. One of the advantages is increased effectiveness

due to cost decrease and revenue expansion. Another advantage is higher quality customer relationships due to the possibility of personal contact services and dialogue with the customer (Wang, 2008). Given the benefits that IT offers to the lodging industry, the wide use of technology would appear to be an expected conclusion (Siguaw, Enz and Namasivayam, 2000).

2.2 *ICT applications in room division department*

According to Ham, Kim and Jeong (2005) as well as Lam, Cho and Qu (2007), they said that since IT has been apparent to have remarkable return in competition, hotel industry have broadly relies on IT to improve their employees' productivity and efficiency, as well as customer satisfaction. Many researchers have instituted that there is positive connection between IT investment and organization productivity and performance (Byrd & Turner, 2001; Powell & Dent-Micallef, 1997; Rai, Patnayakuni, & Patnayakuni, 1997). However, according to Davis (1989) and Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1992), although there are positive effects and advantage, there will be barriers of external factors that influenced the acceptance of IT and new IT would not be fully accepted.

The most typical IT tool in hotel organization is hotel information system (HIS). According to Ham, Kim and Jeong (2005), HIS can be divided into four categories which are front office system, guest-related interface, restaurant and banquet management system and back office system. But among these, hotel front office system (HFOS) is the most important system in HIS especially in room division department. This is because its operate 24 hours a day and 365 days a years. In addition, Bailey and Pearson (1983) as well as Eldon (1997) said that HFOS offers information in a useful format and the information is clear. They also said that the system supplies accurate and sufficient information to the users. This was supported by Ahn, Ryu and Han (2004) told that HFOS offer an up-to-date, relevant and necessary information to the user which will satisfied the users need. To ease the use of HFOS, the manager and HIS practitioners must supervise by providing a swift support in case a problem happen and provide training to help the employees to understand and utilised the HFOS without problem.

2.3 *ICT Applications in food and beverage department*

According to International Quality and Productivity Center (2001), as firm develop improvement in the new Digital Economy, organizations are relying on their IT departments to plan, build up, and install on-line solutions. Firms nowadays especially hotels are using IT to unite with their stakeholders such as consumers, suppliers, workers and management.

As stated by Kearns (1997), information technology (IT) and management information systems (MIS) are identical terms. They are just a set of interconnected

computerized mechanism that work mutually to collect, retrieve, process, store and distribute information for the reason of facilitating planning, control, coordination, analysis and decision-making in firm (Laudon and Laudon, 1998). According to Choe (1998) as well as Huber (2003), Restaurant Management Information Systems (RMIS), is a system that shore up the management in their decision-making processes as well as in traditional financial reporting, variance reporting and forecasting. RMIS have been used to develop store performance in many ways. Zhang and Lado (2001) said that by well deploying RMIS at operational level, companies may develop and force their unique operational resources and capabilities.

3 METHODOLOGY

This research adopts the descriptive design research, and was conducted in quantitative manner since it is targeted to examine and measure the level of usage of ICT application in hotels. A quantitative approach was used to gather the data by distributing questionnaire to the sample that has been determined. It involves gathering numerical data using structured questionnaires from individuals. The research took place in the 5 stars hotels around Kuala Lumpur. For the study population, this research used sample of 5-star hotel employees in Kuala Lumpur. From the recent record, there are 97 hotels in Kuala Lumpur with 28 hotels are 5-stars rating (Tourism Malaysia, 2011). The researchers chose the convenience sampling and distributed 350 questionnaires to 28 hotels that is involved in this study. 175 employees were randomly chosen for Food and Beverage Department while another 175 employees were also randomly chosen from Room Division.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 *Response rate*

The researchers distributed a total of 350 questionnaires to the employees who work in Food and Beverage (F&B) department and Room Division of the 5-star hotels around Kuala Lumpur with a purpose of data collecting. Out of 350 questionnaires, both researchers only managed to collect 235 questionnaires; 116 questionnaires from Room Division and 119 questionnaires from Food and Beverage. There was no missing value in any of the survey. The total percentage of respond rate that the researchers secured was 67.1%.

4.2 *Respondent's background profile*

Information that could be found in the background profile was the respondent's gender, age, education, and experience. Frequency and percentage value of the profiles were used against all demographic profile.

Out of 235 respondents, 41.3% which was 97 respondents were male. Meanwhile, the balance which

Table 1. Result of mean and standard deviation of room division.

	reservation	check in/out	room status	guest info	guest account
N Valid	116	116	116	116	116
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.91	5.08	4.90	4.76	4.65
Std. Deviation	1.060	1.026	1.008	.984	1.073

was 58.7% or 138 respondents were female. It represented that majority of employees in 5-stars hotels were female. Besides that, for the age group, the highest percentage of 63.8%, goes to under 29 years old. Followed by the age range between 30 and 39 years old (25.1%). Next was the range of 40 to 49 years old with 9.8%. Lastly, 50 years old and above with 1.3%. Based on this information, it was clear that number of employees with ages under 29 years old were very high compared to the other three groups.

In terms of education, 44.7% respondents have completed college or university with diploma and degree level. Followed by 23.8% of those who were only entered college and university. At the percentage of 18.7%, goes to those who had completed secondary or high school. Next was completed postgraduate degree with 10.2% and lastly 2.6% representing those who their education level was less than secondary or high school. Here, shows that majority of the employees in the 5-star hotel in Kuala Lumpur were holding certificates of diploma and degrees. For experience, the highest percentage was 0 to 2 years with 37.9%. Followed by 3 to 4 years with 31.1%, 18.3% were 5 to 6 years and 9.4% represent those who have 7 to 10 years working experience in hotel industry. From this range, it shows that many employees were actually lack of experience in the hotel industry.

4.3 Mean scores and standard deviation of ICT application dimensions

All of the items are based on 6-point of Likert scale (1 = never, 2 = very low, 3 = low, 4 = occasionally, 5 = high and 6 = very high). In Room Division, there were five ICT application systems that were frequently used being analyzed. The application or systems were reservation system, check-in or out system, room status system, guest information system and guest accounting system. Based on table 4.1, it shows the result of mean scores and standard deviation of room division ICT application. The mean score results was in the range of 4.65 to 4.99. The highest mean score was 5.08 (SD = 1.026) which was check in/out system. This shows most of the respondent agree that this system is the most frequently use application system in hotel. Then, it followed by reservation system with mean score 4.91 (SD = 1.060). Next it is room status system with 4.90 (SD = 1.008), guest information

Table 2. Result of mean and standard deviation of food and beverage.

	Menu management system	Sales analysis	Beverage Control system	Cost control
N Valid	119	119	119	119
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.65	4.92	4.76	5.05
Std. Deviation	1.005	.825	.965	.812

Table 3. Result of compare mean and standard deviation of both dimensions.

		Room division	Food and beverage
N	Valid	116	119
	Missing	0	0
Mean		5.30	4.82
Std. Deviation		.879	.759

system with 4.76 (SD = 0.984) and lastly the least frequent usage was guest accounting system with 4.65 (SD = 1.073). Meanwhile, for standard deviation, it shows that the most constant answer was guest information system with 0.984. This was due to it has the lowest value of standard deviation.

On the other hand, for the frequencies of usage level in Food and Beverage's ICT application, there were four items being analyzed. The items were menu management system, sales analysis system, beverage control system and cost control system. The result of mean score was in the range of 4.65 to 4.97. As shown in table 4.2, the highest mean scores was 5.05 (SD = 0.812) which is cost control system. Most of the respondent agreed that cost control system was the most frequent application or system being used in hotel. Next, it is follow by sales analysis system with mean score 4.92 (SD = 0.825), beverage control system with 4.76 (SD = 0.965), and finally, it is menu management system with mean 4.65 (SD = 1.005). Meanwhile, for standard deviation, the most constant answer and the lowest value is cost control system with 0.812.

Finally, it was the comparison between mean scores and standard deviation between Room Division and Food and Beverage (F&B) department. This test was to find which department used the most frequent ICT applications in hotel. In table 4.3, it shows that it was only 0.48 slightly different between this two department. The Room Division was the most ICT application usage in the hotel with a mean score 5.30 (SD = 0.879). On the other hand, Food and Beverage show that their mean score was 4.82 (SD = 0.759). Meanwhile, in term of standard deviation, Food and Beverage department show the lowest value with 0.759 and it was the most constant variable.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of the findings

The researchers need to determine the most significant attributes and variables in ICT application dimensions. The results were examined through comparing the mean score of each variables and attributes.

Based on table 4.3, the highest level of usage item under Room Division ICT application is Check-in/out System with a mean score of 5.08 compare with other variables. The results supported Wang and Wang (2010) study. According to them, hotel just send a text message to guest's mobile phone asking the guest if they would like to begin the check-in/out process and the hotel would do it immediately. In addition, the availability of a check-in/check-out system in room division can decrease paper costs and reduce the labor requirements of the hotel (Sirirak, Islam and Khang, 2011). Meanwhile in Food and Beverage ICT Application, the highest level of usage item was cost control with mean score was 5.05. This result is consistent with Ham, Kim and Jeong (2005) study. Based on them, food and beverage outlet that implement IT, executed significantly better than other outlets in term of cost control and profitability. The result of each dimension was determined right after each of the item was analyzed. It appears that the most important dimension was Room Division ICT application. The mean score for room division was 5.30. The most important variable was concluded from this finding. Ham, Kim and Jeong (2005) stated that by installing computer applications in the room division department, likes reservation management, room-management and guest accounting modules, can enhanced hotels performance.

5.2 Implication

This study provides knowledge based on the important of ICT applications used in hotel that can assist managers to prioritize which system that needs to be emphasized. The findings showed that the usage of ICT application in Room Division is crucial since it is the first thing that represents the service of the hotel to the customer. Furthermore, the check in/out is the most important item in the room division section and it is one of the essential function for room division pertaining to guest service. From this study, the researchers hoped that it can help the managers of hotels to use the findings as guidance for them to prioritize the ICT application in their hotel. Since the usage of ICT applications are important in 5-stars hotels, the 3 and 4-stars might also apply the same technology applications in order to improve their hotels' performance. Lastly, the researchers also hope that it could contribute to the academicians and researchers theoretically.

5.3 Limitations and recommendations for future research

Along the process of this study, the researchers encountered few limitations regarding the study. This

limitation could be highlighted so that it can be considered for future research. The limitation was this study only contributed on the most important ICT applications that applied in Room Division and Food and Beverage Department. The study limits information on the relationship and influences between the ICT applications that is available in the hotel and hotel performance. Furthermore, from the respondents' data, other information such as comparison between experience and position could be done. By doing these, varieties of results will be gained, and it is highly recommended for further studies.

REFERENCES

- Ahn, T., Ryu, S., and Han, I. 2004. The impact of online and offline features on the user acceptance of Internet shopping malls. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications* 3(4), 405–420.
- Bailey, J. E., and Pearson, S. W., 1983. Development of a tool measuring and analyzing computer user satisfaction. *Management Sciences* 29(5), 530–545.
- Barcheldor, B., 1999. Hospitality and travel: a trip to Grandma's goes high tech. *Information Week*, September 27, p. 189.
- Byrd, T. A., and Turner, E. T., 2001. An exploratory examination of the relationship between flexible IT infrastructure and competitive advantage. *Information & Management* 39(1), 41–52.
- Cho, W., and Olsen, M.D., 1998. "A case study approach to understanding the impact of information technology on competitive advantage in the lodging industry", *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, Vol. 22 No. 4, pp. 376–94.
- Choe, J. 1998. The Effects of User Participation on the Design of Accounting Information Systems. *Information & Management* 34, 185–198.
- Cobanoglu, C., Corbaci, K. and Ryan, B. 2001. "A comparative study: the impact of technology in lodging properties in the United States and Turkey", *International Journal of Hospitality Information Technology*, Vol. 2 No. 11, pp. 23–40.
- Davis, F. D. 1989. Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly* 13(3), 319–339.
- Davis, F. D., Bagozzi, R. P., and Warshaw, P. R. 1992. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to use computers in the workplace. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 22(1), 1111–1132.
- DiPetro, R. B. 2010. Impacts and implications for hospitality operations: Key issues for ICT applications, 19, pp. 47–67.
- Eldon, Y. L. 1997. Perceived importance of information system successfactors: A meta analysis of group difference. *Information & Management* 32(1), 15–28.
- Ham, S., Kim, W. G., and Jeong, S. 2005. Effects of information technology on performance in upscale hotels. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 24(2), 281–294.
- Huber, M. M. 2003. Measurement of Restaurant Manager Perceptions of Restaurant Management Information Systems.
- Huo, Y., 1998. Information technology and the performance of the restaurant firms. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* 22 (3), 239–251.
- International Quality and Productivity Center (IQPC) 2001. Retrieved April 20, 2001, from <http://www.iqpc.com>.

- Kearns, G. S. 1997. Alignment of Information Systems Strategy with Business Strategy: Impact on the Use of IS for Competitive Advantage. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1997), UMI Dissertation Services, 9735614.
- Kim, T. G., Lee, J. H., and Law, R. 2006. An extended technology acceptance model. An empirical examination of the acceptance behavior of hotel front office systems.
- Kim, T. G., Lee, J. H., and Law, R. 2008. An empirical examination of the acceptance behaviour of hotel front office systems: An extended technology acceptance model. *Tourism Management* 29, 500–513.
- Lam, T., Cho, V., and Qu, H. 2007. A study of hotel employee behavioral intentions towards adoption of information technology. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 26(1), 49–65.
- Laudon, K. C. and J. P. Laudon 1998. *Information Systems and the Internet*. Orlando, Dreyden Press.
- Powell, T. C., and Dent-Micallef, A. 1997. Information technology as competitive advantage: The role of human, business and technology resource. *Strategic Management Journal* 18(5), 375–405.
- Rai, A., Patnayakuni, R., and Patnayakuni, N. 1997. Technology investment and business performance. *Communication of the ACM* 40(7), 89–97.
- Sigala, M. 2003. “The information and communication technologies productivity impact on the UK hotel sector”, *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, Vol. 23 No. 10, pp. 1224–1245.
- Siguaw, J., Enz, C., and Namasivayam, K., 2000. Adaptation of information technology in US Hotels: strategically driven objectives. *Journal of Travel Research* 39 (2), 192–201.
- Sirirak, S., Islam, N., and Khang, D. B. 2011. Does ICT Adoption Enhance Hotel Performance? [Research paper].
- Sweat, J., and Hibbard, J., 1999. Customer disservice. *Information Week*, June, pp. 65–78.
- Tourism Malaysia 2011. Where To Stay. Retrived Apr 15, 2011, from <http://www.tourism.gov.my/accommodations/list.php>
- Van Hoof, H., Verbeeten, M., and Combrink, T., 1996. Information technology revisited-International lodging industry technology needs and perceptions: a comparative study. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 37 (6), 86–91.
- Wang, H.-Y., and Wang, S.-H. 2010. Predicting mobile hotel reservation adoption: Insight from a perceived value standpoint. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 29, 598–608.
- Wang, Y.C. 2008. “Examining the level of sophistication and success of destination marketing systems: impacts of organizational factors”, *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, Vol. 24 No. 1, pp. 81–98.
- Zhang, M. and A. Lado 2001. Information Systems and Competitive Advantage: A Competency-Based View. *Technovation* 21, 147–156.

This page intentionally left blank

Food and beverage technology and employees' acceptance in 4 and 5 star hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Muhamad Syahir Muhamad Stamam & Mislan Nenin

University of Management & Technology, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

Rahmat Hashim & Salleh Mohd Radzi

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Technology is defined as a tool or machine that helps to fulfill tasks easier and simpler. Despite of its universal advantages and benefits upon the development of the hotel industry, the acceptance of hotel employees towards the usage of technology is still uncertain and imprecise. This study examines employees' acceptance on the usages of technology in four and five stars hotel daily operations. At this intensity, the employees were required to express their experiences of using the Point of Sales (POS) System installed in the hotel operation. Sample populations of this study were among the front liners who working in coffee house. Results revealed that, most of employees' perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of POS system in coffee house operation. At this stage, it can be concluded that employees perceive the applications of technology towards their daily tasks routine positively. This situation highlights several important spots which need to be in high concern by any hotel operators.

Keywords: technology, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, TAM, technology acceptance.

1 INTRODUCTION

Wally and Amin (1994) defined technology as a tool or machine that helps to fulfill tasks easier and simpler. Thus, it can be seen that the applications of technology has been widely used in almost every sector in the world. As mentioned by Jensen (2004), technology has developed significantly over the past decade. In line with that, he also mentioned that the application of technology has given much benefit in term of communication, networking and database technology. Moreover, through technology huge volume of data can be accessed and send securely, received instantaneously and stored efficiently (Jensen 2004). In relation with that notion, Devarpanah (2001) mentioned that technology is necessary in any organization since it is important for rapid business development and most of business environment required technology in order to improve their business operation.

Fine (1998), also highlighted that technology system can assists the organization by improving skills to the staff; minimize the administration problem and improving performance monitoring. In addition, weighing evidence, evaluating alternative, predicting outcomes and making complex decisions is the major factor that influence organization to apply the technology system in business environment (Uzoka and Famuyiwa, 2004).

While the world is rapidly applying technology as the medium of achieving effectiveness and efficiencies

and productivity, the service industry is parallel with that mission. According to Law and Jogaratnam (2005), the investment of technology benefits the hotel if it enables customers to have a better experience and the hotel staff to work more efficiently to better assist the customers. It shows that, technology adoption also may give benefit to the hotel operation.

Overall, all the examples pertaining to the technology highlighted by the researchers previously, can obviously be seen within the daily hotels' operation around the globe. With the focus on the employees' efficiencies and effectiveness, it is critical for any hotel operator to understand the staffs' level of acceptance towards the technology applied. With different level of education, knowledge and experience, it is assumed that the level of employees' acceptance upon the use of technology in their daily tasks is different.

Acceptance of a technology only can be determined by individual intentions towards the technology (Shumaila, Gordon and John, 2007). This notion suggested that not every employee is willing to accept and willing to use the system provided. Some employees might be interested to use and few others might just ignore the adaptation to such system. This might happen because lack of training among the staffs. Davies, Taylor and Savery (2001) supported the idea by mentioning that staff members are likely to be given any form of training. This training would be a good technology application approach as user will fulfill utilize technology if they are familiar with that system

and they will be more likely to select the application which they perceive is easier to use (Wagner and Flannery 2004).

According to Wagner and Flannery (2004), only three out of nine individuals might not be computer literate and might not know how to utilize the system. Therefore, employees who are illiterate may feel inadequate to adapt the system compared to their literate colleagues. They will have some difficulties on using a system during an operation time. This will lead to failure in the management of the operation, thus from this observation, the need to measure and investigate the acceptance level of employees towards hotel F&B technology in hotel business is arise. This is significant as the successful utilization of system in F&B department basically depending on the level of employees' acceptance towards the technology applies. Due to this reason, this paper examines to what extent the employee perceived the usefulness and ease of use of technology in their daily operation task, specifically on the application of Point of Sale System (POS) in the Food and Beverage Department operations.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

This study was conducted at four and five stars hotel in Kuala Lumpur. It focused on the individual level of analysis and in this case, the relevant unit of analysis was frontliners working in F&B department, specifically coffee house. As the four and five stars hotels are promising high quality of services, the pledge had encouraged the organizations to adopt and practice a high technological system in their operations. The system applied is more up to date and could highly increase the performance of the staffs in order to achieve their certain objectives of the operation. Therefore, it is worth at this stage for the researcher to collect reliable and valid information regarding the perspectives of employees' acceptance towards the technology applied among those hotels.

The researchers applied self-administered questionnaires as their quantitative data collection method. Permissions were requested from each participating hotels and "drop-off/pick-up method" was adopted. The researchers distributed the questionnaires to each coffee house manager of each hotel that agree to participate and the managers then distribute to their employees. The respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on technology usage and their level of acceptance. Within a period of a week, the researchers collected the completed questionnaires from each participating hotels.

In planning the research instrument, consideration was initially given to two related issues. Firstly, considering the difference in customers' profiles and experience levels, the questionnaires had been very simple and easy to understand. Questions were therefore composed as understandable as possible with simple language to reduce any possible uncertainty.

Table 1. Number and percentage (%) of the overall respondents reported by gender, age, position, working experience and education background.

Variables	All	
	n	%
Gender:		
Male	60	46.9
Female	68	53.1
Age:		
25 Years and below	76	59.4
26-35 Years	43	33.6
36-45 Years	8	6.3
46-55 Years	1	0.8
56 Years and above	0	0
Position:		
Waiter	60	46.9
Waitress	68	53.1
Supervisor	0	0
Others	0	0
Work Experience:		
2 Years	53	41.4
2-5 Years	54	42.2
5-10 Years	18	14.1
More than 10 Years	3	2.3

Secondly, the use of Bahasa Malaysia and English is appropriate as both languages are widely used in Malaysia. In addition, some respondents might have a poor understanding of either language. Since this study is quantitative in nature, there is a need to develop the questionnaire in order to get the better result. The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections which are, demographic, evaluation on perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, career fit, task fit, and question regarding the acceptance of technology use from the view of workers.

3 RESULTS & ANALYSES

Owing to the different star rating of the hotels involved in this study, it was assumed that employees who are working in four star hotels may have had different perceptions of the POS system applied in the five stars hotel. A comparative analysis between all hotels was initially undertaken to determine the homogeneity of the data obtained. The results of One-way ANOVA and post-hoc (Scheffe test) showed that no statistical significant differences appeared on any of the 30 items with a significance level of $p > 0.05$, $p > 0.01$ and $p > 0.001$. In other words, there were no fundamental underlying differences between any perceptions of the respondents. Therefore, regardless of the hotels' star ratings, respondents' perceptions of POS system were identical.

3.1 Respondent profile

Based on the 128 questionnaires collected, the female respondents ($n = 68$) exceeded the male ($n = 60$) with

Table 2. Mean scores for items on respondents' perceived usefulness towards POS.

No.	Item	n	Mean	S.D
1	Accomplish task more quickly	128	5.09	0.664
2	Improve my job performance	128	5.23	0.737
3	Increase my productivity	128	5.10	0.686
4	Enhance my effectiveness	128	5.13	0.725
5	Easier to do my job	128	5.11	0.751
6	Useful In my job	128	5.23	0.745

the score difference of 6.2 percents. This is obvious as each hotel hired more female workers than male workers in the coffee house operation. In addition, most respondents came from the age of group between 25 years and below ($n = 76$, $\% = 59.4$). It could be assumed that, management is more likely to hire young workers in the coffee house operation. Moreover, working in F&B operation requires a high level of physical activity and the working hour is not fixed according to a timetable. Next, the result is followed by the age of group between 26–35 years ($n = 43$, $\% = 33.6$), 36–45 years ($n = 8$, $\% = 6.3$) and age between 46–55 years ($n=1$, $\% = 0.8$). No respondents came from the age group of 56 years and above. Meanwhile, the position of waitress recorded the highest number of respondents ($n = 68$, $\% = 53.1$) and the waiter ($n = 60$, $\% = 46.9$). Based on the data, it reveals that there is an equivalent number between gender and position in coffee house operation. Last but not least, it cannot be denied that high job turnover is still become one of the most critical problems within the hotel industry. The notion relates with the next percentage score as the staffs who has working there for more than 10 years are only 2.3 percents ($n = 3$). Years between 2–5 is the highest with 50 percents ($n = 54$), followed by 2 years 41.4 percent ($n = 53$) and 5–10 years with 14.1 percents ($n = 18$).

3.2 Analysis of employees' perception towards perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use

Perceived usefulness can be defined as an Individual belief, by using a specific application system, it will help to increase his or her job performance within organization (Yousafzai *et al.*, 2007). Table 2 shows the positive means score presented by the respondent on perceived usefulness towards the application of POS system. This can obviously be revealed from the mean score highlighted for item two as most of the respondents agreed that, POS will assist them in improving their job performance (item 2, $m = 5.23$) and it is also useful for them in coffee house operation (item 6, $m = 5.23$). At this stage, it can be assumed that most of the employees in coffee house operation rely on POS system in order to perform better in their job task. This is evident in item 4, where they believe that, POS helps them to enhance their effectiveness in daily operation (item 4, mean = 5.13). It probably gives a clear

Table 3. Mean scores for the items on respondents' perceived ease of use towards POS.

No.	Item	N	Mean (m)	S.D
1	Easy to learn	128	5.05	0.751
2	Easy to get POS to do what I want it to do	128	5.05	0.904
3	Clear and understandable	128	5.01	0.846
4	Flexible to interact with	128	5.01	0.854
5	Easy to become skillful	128	4.98	0.873
6	Easy to use	128	5.12	0.819

picture in term of the functionality of POS system in coffee house operation. Thus, it cannot be denied that most of the respondents perceived POS system as useful. Item three revealed that most of the respondents agreed that POS will increase their productivity (item 3, mean = 5.10). The respondents also agreed that POS would enable them to accomplish their task more quickly (item 1, mean = 5.09).

Perceived ease of use can be defined as a people who tend to use or not to use an application in order to help them to perform their job better. Table 3 depicts the respondents' perception on the ease of use of POS system. Item 6 shows that most of respondent would find POS system is easy to use (item 6, $m = 5.12$). It can be assumed that, employee who did not able to fully utilize the POS system also feel that it is a need for them to use POS in order to help them to perform their job better. In line with that, most of respondents agreed that, learning to operate POS would be easy for them as they also found that it is easy to get POS to do according to their instructions. This is highlighted by item number one and two which stand as the second highest mean scores in perceived ease of use (item 1, 2 $m = 5.05$). Therefore, it can be considered that employees' knowledge towards POS is still shallow. This might happen because they are only dealing with POS for the same purpose everyday as most of them do not realize that the system are capable to perform more tasks as instructed. On the other hand, most of the employee in coffee house operation also agreed that, their interaction with POS would be clear and understandable (item 3, $m = 5.01$) and they would find POS to be flexible to interact with (item 4, $m = 5.01$). It shows that, the only factor that may lead to the acceptance of POS system is the ways of employee believe the functionality and the benefit of POS system itself. At this stage, it cannot be argued that most of employees did perceive the ease of use of POS system in the coffee house operation.

Table 4 shows that most of employees have a positive acceptance towards the POS system in coffee house function. Majority of the employee were willing to continue using the POS system in coffee house operation. This is proved by a clear evident from the mean score ($m = 4.62$) given to item number three. At this stage, it can be concluded that, the employees' perception towards POS is strong in terms of helping them

Table 4. Mean scores for the items on respondents' acceptance towards POS system.

No.	Item	n	Mean (m)	S.D
1	I predict, I will continue using this system	128	4.55	0.741
2	Does not required a lot of mental efforts	128	3.91	1.097
3	I will continue using this system	128	4.62	0.814

in their daily job task. Furthermore, this conclusion is supported by item number two as some of respondents also predicted to continue using the POS system in the future ($m = 4.55$). At this stage, the employees' acceptance would contribute to the development of the new technology in the future. However, even though most of respondent are willing to continue this system in future, they will still not be able to fully utilize the system since the item "Interacting with this POS system does not required a lot of my mental efforts" has a minimum score ($m = 3.91$). In other words, POS system can be considered as an alternative to the employee even though they are not familiar and not capable enough to fully utilize the POS system.

4 DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

What can be said from the preceding analyses is that, most of employees in coffee house operation perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of POS system optimistically. Some of employees are capable enough with the system and belief that without POS system in coffee house operation it might affect their job performance. In addition, even though there are different perceptions towards POS system in coffee house operation, most of employees agree to still using POS system in the future. At this stage, it can be concluded that even employees are not able to fully utilize the POS system, they still believe that without POS system they are not able to perform job task better. In the mean time, career fit and task fit are the factors that contribute to the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use towards POS system. Based on the conclusions gathered, it shows that, career fit might lead to the perceived ease of use of POS system, where by task fit might influence the perceived usefulness of POS system.

Although the result highlighted the meaningful and significant findings, there are still some limitations encountered during the research process. Since this study is focusing on coffee house operation in hotel business, it cannot be generalized and represent the whole concept of employees acceptance towards technology in the whole organization of the hotel and even in the different department in hotel operation. Moreover, the question arises whether the finding would

be the same or different if the survey was conducted in different department in hotel operation or in any business environment.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Since this study is focusing on employees' acceptance towards POS system in coffee house operation, it can be as a reference to other potential researcher to use the information here in order to explore into a bigger area. Understanding on employees' acceptance toward POS system is necessary because the system need human skills in order to make in functional. It is good for management to put a higher consideration towards this matter and make them able to identify the employees' acceptance level towards POS system. In addition, no matter how excellent the technology install in coffee house operation, if the employees itself did not able to fully utilize the system; it might lead to the failure in business operation.

REFERENCES

- Algahtani, Said S., and King, M. 1999. Attitudes, satisfaction and Usage: Factors Contributing to Each in the Acceptance of Information Technology. *Behavior and Information Technology*, 18, 277–297.
- Baker, M., Cattet, A., and Riley, M. 1995. Practical Food and Beverage Training in The UK: A study of Facilities and a debate on its relevance. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 7, 21–24.
- Ballout, H. I. 2007. Career Success; The Effect of Human Capital, Person-Environment fit and Organizational Support. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22, 741–765.
- Chathoth, P.K. 2006. The Impact of Information Technology on Hotel Operations, Service Management and Transaction Costs: A Conceptual Framework for Full-Service Hotel Firms. *International Hospitality Management*, 396–408.
- Chtourou, M.S. and Souiden 2010. Rethinking the TAM model: time to consider fun. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 27, 336–344.
- Davis, F.F. 1989. Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13, 318–340.
- Davis, F.F. 1993. User Acceptance of Information Technology: System Characteristic, User perceptions and Behavioral Impacts. *International Journal of Man-Machine Studies*, 38, 475–487.
- Davies, D., Taylor, R., and Savery, L. 2001. The Role of Appraisal, Remuneration and Training in Improving Staff relations in the Western Australian Accommodation Industry: A Comparative to Study. *Journal of European Industrial*, 25, 366–373.
- F.M.E. Uzoka and F.O. Famuyiwa 2004. A Framework for The Application of Knowledge Technology to The Management of Diseases. *International Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance*, 4, 194–204.
- Icek, A., and Martin, F. 1980. Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior. Prentice – Hall, Inc.
- Jesen, N.J. 2004. Technology and Intelligent. *Journal of Money Laundering Control*, 3, 227–242.

- Lee, H.Y., Kim, W. G., and Lee, Y.K. 2006. Testing the Determinants of Computerized Reservation System Users' Intention to Use Via a Structural Equation Model. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 30, 246–266.
- Li, Y. H. and Huang, J.W. 2009. Applying Theory of Perceived Risk and Technology Acceptance Model in the Online Shopping Channel. *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology*, 53, 919–925.
- Martin, F. 1998. *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior*. Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Mohammad Reza Davarpanah 2001. *Level of Information Technology Application in Iranian University Library*. MCB University Press, 9, 444–450.
- Morley, M. J. 2007. Person-Organization Fit. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22, 109–117.
- Murphy, K. and Olsen, M. 2009. Dimensions of A High Performance Management System: An Exploratory Study of the US Casual Restaurant Segment. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 21, 836–853.
- Riley, M. 2005. Food and Beverage Management, A Review to Change. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17, 88–93.
- Schrier, T., Erdem, M. and Brewer, P. 2010. Merging Task-Technology Fit and Technology Acceptance Models to Assess Guest Empowerment Technology Usage in Hotel. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 1, 201–217.
- Sheldon, P.J. 1983. *The Impact of Technology on The Hotel Industry*. Butterworth & Co Ltd, 269–278.
- Walley, P., and Amin, V. 1994. Automation in a Customer Contact Environment. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 14, 86–100.
- Wagner, G.D. and Flannery, D.D. 2004. A qualitative Study of Factors Affecting Learner Acceptance of a Computer – Based Training Support Tool. *Journal of European Training*, 28, 383–399.
- Yousafzai, S.Y., Foxall, G.R. and Pallister, J.G. 2007a. Technology Acceptance: A Meta-Analysis of the TAM: Part 1. *Journal of Modeling in Management*, 2, 251–280.
- Yousafzai, S.Y., Foxall, G.R. and Pallister, J.G. 2007b. Technology Acceptance: A Meta-Analysis of the TAM: Part 2. *Journal of Modeling in Management*, 2, 281–30.

This page intentionally left blank

Pitaya powder potential as antioxidant functional ingredient in food products

Chemah Tamby Chik, Sabaianah Bachok & Noradzar Baba

Department of Foodservice, Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor DE

Aminah Abdullah & Wan Aida Wan Mustapha

Department of Food Technology, Faculty of Science & Technology, UKM Bangi, Selangor DE

Noriham Abdullah

Department of Food Technology, Faculty of Applied Science, UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor DE

ABSTRACT: The use of natural pigment with additional benefits were highly appreciated by consumers. Natural active colour of pitaya fruit betalain is stable over a higher range of pH (3–9) and a better substitute for anthocyanin pigment which is easily influenced by pH changes. The objective of this study is to develop a powdered colouring made from pitaya juice. Pitaya juice was spray dried using maltodextrin with 10 dextrose equivalent (DE), 15DE and 20DE as carrier and ascorbic acid as additive to preserve the colour. The dried powder content for antioxidant and polyphenolic was evaluated using Folin-ciocalteau reagent, 2,2-diphenyl-1-picryldrazil (DPPH) and ferric reducing power (FRAP) antioxidant assay. The results showed that maltodextrin at different degree of dextrose equivalent did not show any significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in total phenolic content, DPPH and FRAP assay. Ascorbic acid at 0.1, 0.5 and 1.0% showed that the highest percentage of ascorbic acid content exhibited the higher ($p < 0.05$) total phenolic acid value of 350.4 mg gallic acid equivalent/100 g sample. DPPH and FRAP assay showed similar trend with 46.3% and 9.7 mg catechin equivalent/100 g sample. Pitaya powder with ascorbic acid has potential to be incorporated as functional ingredient into other products being developed.

Keywords: pitaya, antioxidant, functional ingredient, powder

1 INTRODUCTION

The use of natural pigment with additional benefit was highly appreciated by consumers. Natural pigment which was found in fruit juices has some added value for its colour and functional properties. However, juices that had short shelf life and proper storage is costly. Therefore dried juice was able to maintain the fruits phytochemicals properties for a longer period thus helps in reducing handling and storage cost.

Research now focused on maintaining the phytochemical contents in food (Sewald & DeVries, 23 Ogos 2008). Food processing was found to increase the flavonol content in food (Stewart, Bozonnet, Mullen, Jenkins, Lean & Crozier, 2000; Price & Rhodes, 1997). And these flavonoids are absorbed in the small intestine without changes (Bermúdez-Soto & Tomás-Barberán, 2004).

Pitaya is a fruit recently planted commercially in several states in Malaysia. It is a climbing cactus originated from Latin America with medium-large fruit bearing large green or red scales (Nerd & Mizrahi, 1997). Pitaya has gained popularity for its red-ultra

violet betalain colour which contained antioxidant properties (Wu, Hsu, Chen, Chiu, Lin & Ho, 2006; Kanner, Harel & Granit, 2001). Betalain, a water soluble nitrogenous pigment consisted of red-ultra violet betacyanin and yellowish betaxanthin (Moreno, Garcia-a-Viguera, Gil & Gil-Izquierdo, 2008). Betalain from pitaya fruits are better than beet root betalain because it lacks the “earthy” taste due to geosmine and pyrazine (MoBhammer, Stintzing & Carle, 2006; Stintzing & Carle, 2007). There are many studies on the drying of fruits, among them are cactus pear powder (MoBhammer et al., 2006), roselle (Duangmal, Saicheua & Sueeprasan, 2007), black carrot (Ersus & Yurdagel, 2007) and carotenoid (Tang & Chen, 2000). Most of the research focused on fruits with anthocyanin content. However the usage of anthocyanin as colouring are limited due to its instability. Therefore pitaya served as another source of red pigment with antioxidant content and is stable over a wide pH ratio.

Spray drying is a process widely used to produce fruit juices powders (Abadio, Domingues, Borges & Oliveira, 2004; Cano-Chauca, Stringheta, Ramos & Cal-Vidal, 2005; Quek, Chok & Swedlund, 2007). This

method helps in producing powders with good quality, low water activity and easier transport and storage (Tonon, Brabet & Hubinger, 2008). It is useful in drying material which are heat sensitive, by increasing flowability and solubility (Chiou & Langrish, 2007). Ramamoorthy and Bono (2007) reported spray dried extracts had higher antioxidant activity and flavonoid content as compared to the extract which are vacuum dried. Cai & Corke (2000) stated that food properties such as nutrients, colour and flavor are a function of maltodextrin DE. Thus it is the objective of this study to dry pitaya juice using maltodextrin as carrier and adding ascorbic acid at 0.1, 0.5 and 1.0% to maintain the pigment phytochemical content of the spray dried powder.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Total phenolic content

Total phenolic content were determined using Folin-Ciocalteu reagent, modification method by Wolfe, Wu & Liu (2003). Gallic acid was used as standard and the concentration of total phenolic compounds in the extracts were calculated by standard curve interpolation. Results were reported as mg gallic acid equivalent/100 g dried sample.

2.2 DPPH assay

Free radical scavenging activity were measured by the 2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazil (DPPH) according to a modified method by Wu et al. (2006). Sample extracts (100ul) were added into 3.9 ml of DPPH reagent (prepared with 24mg of DPPH/L of methanol). The percentage of DPPH scavenging activity is expressed by the following formula,

$$\text{DPPH inhibition} = \left[\frac{(\text{Initial abs} - \text{sample abs})}{\text{Initial absorbance}} \times 100 \right]$$

2.3 FRAP assay

FRAP method were according to Benzie and Strain (1996) which measures the ferric reducing ability of plasma (FRAP). The method is based on the reduction of a ferric 2,4,6-tripyridyl-s-triazine complex (Fe³⁺-TPTZ) to the ferrous form (Fe²⁺-TPTZ). The stock solutions included 300 mM acetate buffer (3.1 g C₂H₃NaO₂.3H₂O) and 16 mL C₂H₄O₂, pH 3.6, 10 mM TPTZ (2, 4, 6-tripyridyl-s-triazine) solution in 40 mM HCl, and 20 mM FeCl₃.6H₂O solution. The fresh working solution was prepared by mixing 25 mL acetate buffer, 2.5 mL TPTZ solution, and 2.5 mL FeCl₃.6H₂O solution and then warmed at 37°C before using. The reagent was added into 100 ul sample extracts. The reduced form of blue colour were read at 93 nm after 30 minutes. Trolox was used as standard and ferric reducing power of the extracts were calculated by standard curve interpolation. Results were expressed as mg Trolox equivalent/100 g dry weight.

Table 1. Mean (*n* = 2) for the Polyphenolic Content, DPPH test and FRAP assay for Pitaya Powder with Maltodextrin DE10, 15 and 20.

Maltodextrin	TP (mg gallic acid/100 g powder)	DPPH (%)	FRAP (mg catechin/100 g powder)
MDE 10	252.5 ^a	41.5 ^a	5.7 ^a
MDE 15	210.6 ^a	28.7 ^b	4.8 ^a
MDE 20	222.5 ^a	38.8 ^a	5.4 ^a

Different letter in the same column showed significant difference (*p* < 0.05).

2.4 Powder preparation

Pitaya juice added with water at ratio of 1:1 and maltodextrin at 25% before spray dried (SD06 LabPlant, UK). The powder sample was collected and kept sealed in a plastic bag until further usage.

2.5 Research design

Powder prepared with 3 types of maltodextrin at dextrose equivalent of 10, 15 and 20 was added with ascorbic acid at three level of concentration 0.1, 0.5 and 1.0% before being spray dried. Factorial analysis using SAS statistical package version 9.1 (2002) were used. ANOVA test were used to determine significant difference (*p*<0.05) while DUNCAN were used to determine the significant sample. Each parameter and test was in duplicate.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result in Table 1 showed polyphenolic content, DPPH % and FRAP assay result for pitaya powder with maltodextrin DE10, 15 and 20. Maltodextrin was incorporated into the pitaya juice acting as carrier. Pitaya juice is high in sugars and acids and thus not suitable to be spray dried without carrier. Maltodextrin was chosen due to its low cost (Jaya & Das, 2004; Jaya, Das & Mani, 2006), bland taste (Rodríguez-Hernández, Gonzalez-Garcia, Grajales-Lagunes & Ruiz-Cabrera, 2005), has low viscosity as compared to its high volume (Abadio et al., 2004) and are available in different size molecules (Desobry, Netto, & Labuza, 1997). During spray drying, some pigment was lost due to high temperature used (data not showed). However in this study the different degree of polymerization in maltodextrin did not show any significant difference (*p*>0.05) in the content of polyphenol, DPPH test and FRAP assay for pitaya powder. Our result differs from Rodriguez-Hernandez et al. (2005) maybe due to the maltodextrin DE which are in closer range.

The result in Table 2 showed the polyphenolic, DPPH test and FRAP assay for pitaya powder with ascorbic acid at 0.1, 0.5 and 1.0%. The more ascorbic acid added into pitaya juice the higher (*p*<0.05) polyphenol, DPPH and FRAP result.

Table 2. Mean ($n=2$) result for polyphenolic content, DPPH test and FRAP assay for Pitaya powder with ascorbic acid at 0.1, 0.5 and 1.0%.

Ascorbic acid (%)	TP (mg gallic acid/100 g powder)	DPPH (%)	FRAP (mg catechin/100 g powder)
0.1	127.5 ^c	20.1 ^b	1.3 ^c
0.5	207.6 ^b	42.6 ^a	4.9 ^b
1.0	350.4 ^a	46.3 ^a	9.7 ^a

Different letter in the same column showed significant difference ($p < 0.05$).

It was argued that ascorbic acid is also an antioxidant apart from its usual usage as an additive to stabilize food products. DPPH and FRAP method has been shown to be influenced by the reducing power of ascorbic acid, however, the detection of polyphenol content in pitaya powder showed significant increment of phenolic content with ascorbic acid added. Ascorbic acid was added to preserved the betalain pigment (Cai & Corke, 2000). Thus it can be suggested that ascorbic acid has preserved the betalain content through the spray drying process.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The product will be suitable to be used as powdered drink to increase the consumption of antioxidant phytochemicals for people. Furthermore it can also be use as functional ingredient into other food product development.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Different degree of polymerization in maltodextrin has no significant effect on the polyphenol content. The trend was also true in DPPH and FRAP assay. Ascorbic acid content in pitaya juice influence the overall content of polyphenol, DPPH and FRAP result in the pitaya powder as the end product. Higher ascorbic acid content in pitaya juice proved to be beneficial in maintaining the polyphenolic content in pitaya powder.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Authors were grateful to the grant provided by FRGS-UKM-ST-01-FRCS0001-2006 and UKM-GUP-NBT-08-27-1003.

REFERENCES

Abadio, F.D.B., Domingues, A.M., Borges, S.V., Oliveira, V.M. 2004. Physical properties of powdered pineapple (*Ananas comosus*) juice – effect of maltodextrin

concentration and atomization speed. *Journal of Food Engineering* 64(3):285–287.

Benzie, I.F.F. & Strain, J.J. 1996. The Ferric reducing ability of plasma (FRAP) as a Measure of “Antioxidant Power”: The FRAP Assay. *Analytical Biochemistry* 239:70–76.

Bermúdez-Soto, M.J. & Tomás-Barberán, F.A. 2004. Evaluation of commercial red fruit juice concentrates as ingredients for antioxidant functional juices. *European Food Resource Technology* 219:133–141.

Cano-Chauca, M., Stringheta, P.C., Ramos, A.M. & Cal-Vidal, J. 2005. Effect of the carriers on the microstructure of mango powder obtained by spray drying and its functional characterization. *Innovative Food Science and Emerging Technologies* 5(4):420–428.

Cai, Y.Z. & Corke, H. 2000. Production and Properties of spray dried Amaranthus betacyanins pigments. *Journal of Food Science* 65(6):1248–1252.

Chiou, D. & Langrish, T.A.G. 2007. Development and characterization of novel nutraceuticals with spray drying technology. *Journal of Food Engineering* 82:84–91.

Desobry, S.A., Netto, F.M. & Labuza, T.P. 1997. Comparison of spray drying, drum drying and freeze drying for carotene encapsulation and preservation. *Journal of Food Science* 62(6):1158–1162.

Duangmal, K., Saicheua, B. & Sueeprasan, S. 2007. Colour evaluation of freeze-dried roselle extract as a natural food colorant in a model system of a drink. *Lebensm.-Wiss.u.-Technology* 41:1437–1445.

Ersus, S. & Yurdagel, U. 2007. Microencapsulation of anthocyanin pigments of black carrot (*Daucuscarota L.*) by spray drier. *Journal of Food Engineering* 80:805–812.

Jaya, S. & Das, H. 2004. Effect of maltodextrin, glycerol monostearate and tricalcium phosphate on vacuum dried mango powder properties. *Journal of Food Engineering* 63:125–134.

Jaya, S., Das, H. & Mani, S. 2006. Optimization of maltodextrin and tricalcium phosphate for producing vacuum dried mango powder. *International Journal of Food Properties* 9(1):13–24.

Kanner, J., Harel, S. & Granit, R. 2001. Betalains – A new class of dietary cationized antioxidants. *Journal of Agriculture & Food Chemistry* 49:5178–5185.

MoBhammer, M.R., Stintzing, F.C. & Carle, R. 2006. Evaluation of different methods for the production of juice concentrates and fruit powders from cactus pear. *Innovative food science & Emerging Technologies* 7:275–287.

Moreno., D.A., Garcia-a-Viguera, E.C., Gil, J.I. & Gil-Izquierdo, A. 2008. Betalains in the era of global agri-food science, technology and nutritional health. *Phytochemistry Review* 7:261–280.

Nerd, A. & Mizrahi, Y. 1997. Reproductive biology of fruit cacti. *Horticulture Review* 18:322–346.

Price, K.R. & Rhodes, M.J.C. 1997. Analysis of the major flavonol glycosides present in four varieties of onion (*Allium cepa*) and changes in composition resulting from autolysis. *Journal of Science of Food & Agriculture* 74:331–339.

Quek, S.Y., Chok, N.K. & Swedlund, P. 2007. The psychological properties of spray dried watermelon powder. *Chemical Engineering and Processing* 46(5): 386–392.

Ramamoorthy, P.K. & Bono, A. 2007. Antioxidant activity, total phenolic and flavonoid content of *Morinda Citrifolia* fruit extracts from various extraction processes. *Journal of Engineering Science & Technology* 2(1):70–80.

Rodríguez-Hernández, G.R., Gonzalez-Garcia, R., Grajales-Lagunes, A. & M.A. Ruiz-Cabrera, M.A. 2005. Spray-drying of cactus pear juice (*Opuntia streptacantha*): Effect

- on the physicochemical properties of powder and reconstituted product. *Drying Technology* 23:955–973.
- Sewald, M. & DeVries. *Journal of Food Product Shelf life*. www.medallionlabs.com [23 August 2008].
- Stewart, A.J., Bozonnet, S., Mullen, W., Jenkins, G.I., Lean, M.E. & Crozier, A. 2000. Occurrence of flavonols in tomatoes and tomato-based products. *Journal of Agriculture & Food Chemistry* 48(7):2663–2669.
- Stintzing, F.C. & Carle, R. 2007. Betalains – A bunch of prospects. *Trends in Food Science & Technology* DOI: 10.1016/j.tifs.2007.04.012.
- Tang, Y.C. & Chen, B.H. 2000. Pigment change of freeze-dried carotenoid powder during storage. *Food Chemistry* 69:11–17.
- Tanon, R.V., Brabet, C. & Hubinger, M.D. 2008. Influence of process conditions on the physicochemical properties of acai (*Euterpe oleracea* Mart.) powder produced by spray drying. *Journal of Food Engineering* 88:411–418.
- Wu Li-Chen, Hsiu-Wen Hsu, Yun-Chen Chen, Chih- Chung Chiu, Yu-In Lin & Ja-an Annie Ho. 2006. Antioxidant and Antiproliferative activities of red pitaya. *Food Chemistry* 95: 319–327.
- Wolfe, K., Wu, X. & Liu, R.H. 2003. Antioxidant activity of apple peels. *Journal of Agriculture & Food Chemistry* 51:609–614.

Proximate compositions and physicochemical characteristic of soybean waste in chicken patty

N. Baba, L.B. Jipiu, C.T. Chik, & A.F. Amir

University Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: A study was conducted to formulate a chicken burger from the soy bean waste product. In this study proximate compositions and physicochemical were analyzed. This process involved cleaning, mincing, mixing, homogenizing, forming and freezing the sample at the temperature of 20°C before they were analyzed. There were four (4) treatment of chicken burger consisting of i) control chicken burger (C); ii) chicken burger with 15% of soy bean waste (T1); iii) chicken burger with 20% of soy bean waste (T2); and iv) chicken burger with 25% of soy bean waste (T3). Proximate analysis and physicochemical analysis which included the colour analysis were conducted for this study. Findings demonstrated that sample T2 contains the highest moisture and protein level compared to other samples. There were significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between all products in terms of the fat analysis, protein and carbohydrate. Meanwhile, there is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in terms of the moisture analysis and ashes content in all four samples. Findings also revealed that the soybean waste in the chicken patty has shows an increment in the brightness level (L^*) and an increment in the redness level (a^*) after the frying process. There is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between all samples. However, there is no difference existed for every formulation on their 9 weeks of cold storage process, which suggested that the colour change of patties will only be influenced by the time and temperature of frying process.

Keywords: chicken burger, soy bean waste, colour analysis, burger process, proximate compositions

1 INTRODUCTION

Burger was first introduced in this country through restaurants that offers fast-food meals. Meat products such as burger, sausage, hotdog and nugget have been generally accepted and eaten in Malaysia mainly in the fast-food restaurants such as KFC, McDonalds and A&W (Babji et al. 2000). The most famous meat product in Malaysia is burger (both chicken and beef). The local burger products such as Sri Rasa, Ramly, Purnama, Saudi and Ayam A1 are also available in the market. Ingredients such as textured vegetable protein, starch, bread powder, soy flour, egg powder, potato, gluten and casinate are used in producing burger (Babji & Seri Cempaka, 1995). These ingredients contain high value of nutrient (Tee et al. 1998). And for this reason, burger contains the sufficient amount of macro and micro nutrients needed in human being.

According to Lin and Mei (2000), in the low-fat meat system, the emulsion stability and the ability to contain water development, depending on the stable complex formation and the deformation of meat protein during the heating process can be achieved through the combination of isolated soy protein, alginate and carrageenan. The main purpose to use isolated soy protein is to a) increase the thickness; b) reduce water loss; c) stabilize the emulsion and; d) reduced the production cost (Mott, 1998). This research was

conducted to evaluate the three ranges of chicken soy burger formulations, which each of it contains soy bean waste at the level of 15%, 20% and 25%. The aspect of this research includes on the evaluation of total cooking loss, texture analysis and the sensory evaluation. The analysis outcomes were then compared between the three samples (T1, T2 and T3) which had different formulations together with the control sample.

2 MATERIAL AND METHODS

Sample preparation was prepared according to Table 1 below. In the preparation, the chicken breasts were skinned off, cleaned and minced in the meat blender. The meat was kept cold in the freezer (-20°C). Burger was mixed (Hobart mixer) at the temperature of $\pm 5^{\circ}\text{C}$. The temperature must be maintained between 10–15°C. Salt and STPP were added and mixed slowly for 1½ minute before going through a higher speed. ISP and cold water were added and mixed for another 2 minutes.

2.1 Instructions of chicken burger processing

Chicken fat was later added into the mixture and the mixing resumed for 4 minutes. The temperature

Table 1. The difference of mixture percentage for each formula.

Ingredient	*C (%)	T1 (%)	T2 (%)	T3 (%)
Boneless, skinless chicken breasts	77.00	62.00	57.00	52.00
Cold water	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00
Chicken fat	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00
Salt	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
STPP	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
ISP	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Chicken stock powder	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54
Pepper	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22
Onion powder	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22
Nutmeg powder	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22
Grinded soy bean	–	15.00	20.00	25.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

*C act as controller while T1, T2 and T3 functions as formula modulator which determined by the replacing of meat to soybean.

of the mixture was regularly checked to ensure that temperature was maintained at 10–15°C. Next the final ingredients (chicken stock powder, pepper, garlic powder, and nutmeg powder) were added for flavouring purpose. For the sample of T1, T2 and T3, this was the time where the finely grind soybean was added into the mixture. Then, the mixture was beaten for another 2 minutes.

After the mixing process was done, 75 gm of the mixture was added into mould to produce the burger. The moulded burger was then put on a tray, packed into a plastic container, labelled and transferred to a freezer (–18°C).

2.2 Chicken soy burger processing

Soybean has to be first processed before it can be mixed together in the burger mixture. This is the soy burger processing flowchart.

2.3 Method in processing chicken soy burger

During the process, the meat has to be defrosted in the temperature of –5°C. Then, the meat was put into the electric mixer (Hobart). Salt and STPP were added and mixed using a specified speed during the process. Temperature was taken regularly because the mixture has to be kept at the temperature between 10–15°C. Then, the flavouring and spices were added together with the grinded soybean. Next, the mixture was weighed at 75 gram per burger before it was moulded. After they were moulded and kept cold in the temperature of –18°C for 1 to 2 hour, they were packed separately and stored for the analysis purposes which took about 9 weeks.



Exhibit 1. Chicken soy burger processing flowchart.

2.4 Proximate analysis

2.4.1 Ashes content determination

5.0 g dry weight of the samples were heated inside a heating saucer using an electric heater Hot-plate Magnetic Stirrer model 34532 brand Snijders until there is no smoke produced. They are then incinerated in muffle burner NEY model 2-252 II Series at the temperature of 550°C for a night (AOAC 1990)

Calculation:

Total of Ashes (%) = (Weight of ashes (g)/weight of the original sample (g) x 100

2.4.2 Water content determination

The water content determination was analyzed using the oven method (AOAC 1990). The water content is determined by heating 5 g wet weight of the samples blended in an oven at the temperature of 105°C until the weight of the sample become permanent (overnight). The weight loss is reported as the percentage of water content.

Calculation:

% of water content = [(wet weight (g) – dry weight (g))/wet weight (g) x 100

2.4.3 Fat content determination

The Soxhlet Extraction method is used in determining the fat content of the samples (AOAC 1990). The analysis is done using the Soxhlet instrument. The aluminum Soxhlet pitchers must be dried and the readings of the pitchers' weight (Wa) are taken after they are cooled. 1 g (Wb) of each dried samples is weighted twice, wrapped with the filtering paper and put inside

the cone container for Soxhlet extraction. Each pitcher in filled with 50 ml of hexane. The pitchers and the cone container are put on the Soxtec System HTI1043 Extractor Unit (Sweden). The process begins with 20 minutes of boiling, followed by the rinsing process for 35 minutes and finally the evaporation process for about 10 minutes. After the extraction, only the pitcher that contains fat will be dried in an oven at the temperature of 100C for 20 minutes and be cooled down in the drying container. The final weight of each pitcher (Wc) is taken.

Calculation:

$$\% \text{ Fat Content} = \frac{Wc - Wa}{Wb} \times 100$$

Wa = The aluminium pitcher's weight (g)

Wb = Sample's weight (g)

Wc = Pitcher's weight containing fat (g)

2.5 Protein content determination

The protein content determination is measured based on the Makrojedahl's method (AOAC 1990) using the Tecator Kjelttec system which consists of Tecator 2020 Digester and Kjelttec System 1026 Distilling Unit. 0.5 g of dried samples (dried overnight at the temperature of 60°C) are put into the kjeldahl's tubes, with one tube left empty. Half a spatula of booster (Su2SO4:K2SO4) and 12 ml thick H2SO4 (95–98%) are put into each tube. The digestion takes on 45 minutes at 420°C temperature until it changes color to transparent green. The sample was cool down for 15 minutes. 75 ml of distilled water is added inside all tubes. Then the distillation, nitration of the empty tube and the samples with the Kjelttec Analyzer is done. The nitration is done slowly with 0.05 M hydrochloric acid until the bolic acid changes to its original colour which is pink. The titration readings are taken in counting the protein percentage.

Calculation:

$$\% N = \frac{0.1 \times (\text{sample acid volume}) - (\text{empty tube acid volume}) \times 14 \times 100}{\text{Dry sample weight (g)} \times 100}$$

$$\% \text{ Protein} = \%N \times 6.25$$

$$\text{Protein weight (g)} = \frac{\% \text{ protein} \times \text{residue weight (g)}}{100}$$

% Protein = f = 6.25 (meat product, flour, flour product and other food product)

% protein = f = 5.7 (cereal and cereal product)

2.6 Carbohydrate content

The determination of carbohydrate content is done by the subtraction of total % of all nutrients to 100%. The result is determined as the % of carbohydrate content.

Table 2.

Proximate composition	C	T1	T2	T3
Moisture	65.74a	66.37a	67.10a	64.76a
Ashes	1.98a	2.29a	2.12a	2.09a
Fat	10.78b	7.79c	8.32c	12.71a
Protein	17.46b	17.96a	18.03a	16.16c
Carbohydrate	4.05a	5.60a	4.44a	4.30a

Calculation:

$$\% \text{ carbohydrate} = 100\% - (\% \text{ protein} + \% \text{ fat} + \% \text{ water} + \% \text{ coarse fiber} + \% \text{ ashes})$$

2.7 Colour determination

The colour is determined with the use of calibrated Minolta Colormetre Model CR-300 from Japan. Before the instrument is calibrated with a white marble at the value of L = 92.4, a = 0.3134 and b = 0.3198. The brightness level (L), redness (a*) and yellowness (b*) can be obtained from the range after the readings are taken 3 times. Samples that will be used are the samples of C, T1, T2 and T3, which are exposed to the room temperature. Three replications are done for each sample.

2.8 Statistical analysis

Proximate compositions data and physicochemical data was evaluated by using the Statistical Analysis System package (SAS) version 18.0 by conducting Analysis of Variance method (ANOVA) and the Duncan Multiple Range Test to see the significant difference observed that follows the subject studied at the level of confidence 95% ($p < 0.05$).

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Proximate analysis

The proximate analysis is conducted in determining the percentage of fat, ashes, carbohydrate and moisture in the research sample. Based on Table 2, generally there is no significant differences ($p > 0.05$) between all the types of burger produced in this research.

3.1.1 Moisture content

From the research, there is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between C to T3. However, T2 gives a high percentage, which is 67.10 ± 0.76 , followed by T1, C and T3 with means of 66.37 ± 1.33 , 65.73 ± 0.23 and 64.76 ± 0.35 respectively. The overall moisture content in all samples is between 64%–67%. This is parallel to the result of the research done by Tee et al. (1988), when he stated that chicken breast contains 70.9% moisture.

3.2 Ashes content

For its ashes content, there is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between these four samples that are C to T3. In this context, T2 shares similar ashes content with T3. Generally, the ashes content is in between the means of 1 to 2.10%, more than what is stated by Tee et al. (1988) in his research, which found that the ashes content in a raw chicken meat is only 1%. This is determined by the additional substances used as the ingredients in producing the chicken soy burger that contributes to the increment of this value.

3.3 Fat content

There is a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in the fat content. However, T3 noted the highest mean percentage that is 12.71 ± 0.52 while T1 noted the lowest mean percentage for its fat content that is 7.79 ± 0.77 . It is said that the decrement of protein content and the increment of water content will lower down the fat content (Marquez et al. 1989).

3.4 Protein content

From the analysis conducted, there is a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) for the protein percentage in all samples. The T2 sample noted the highest mean percentage that is 18.03 ± 0.11 while T3 noted the lowest mean percentage for the protein content that is 16.16 ± 0.04 . This is perhaps, due to the high percentage of fat content in T3 that lowered down the protein content in this sample. It was also found that the protein content existence is determined by the chicken parts used because Tee et al. (1988) reported that 18.4% protein can be found in chicken breast while Holland et al. (1992) stated that protein content in bright chicken meat is 21.8%.

3.4.1 Carbohydrate content

In addition, there is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) for the carbohydrate content in all four samples. T1 has the highest carbohydrate content with 5.60 ± 1.85 followed by T2, T3 and C with means percentage of 4.44 ± 0.16 , 4.30 ± 0.81 and 4.05 ± 0.27 respectively.

3.5 Colour analysis

3.5.1 Brightness density level (L^*)

The level of brightness (L^*) rises for all four samples throughout the 9 weeks of storing but insignificant ($p < 0.05$). In all formulation, the level of brightness (L^*) increases through the storage period. This might be due to the protein extraction and the shrinkage of myofibril that raises the spread of light and gives higher brightness level. This is also due to the lipid oxidation in the extraction of protein muscles (Farouk & Swan 1997).

3.5.2 Redness level (a^*)

The level of redness (a^*) in chicken soy burger is as shown in Exhibit 3 below. It is found that overall, the redness level (a^*) has no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in all research samples. The T1 formulation has the highest redness level (a^*). Meanwhile, there is a decrement in the redness level (a^*) of both the control formulation and T1 in the ninth week of storage period. In this research, it is found that none of the samples have significant difference ($p > 0.05$) from week 0 to week 9 of storage.

The redness of meat is basically determined by the level of hemoglobin in the meat. The high level of hem gives a darker shade of red for meat. However, chicken meat, which is categorized under white meat has lower level of redness (a^*) as compared to beef. The level of redness in the meat is between 12.1–13.3 (Hague et al. 1994).

3.5.3 Yellowness level (b^*)

Value (b^*) is an attribute which is also taken into account in determining the level of yellowness in any substance. The increment in value (b^*) is shown by the bright yellow colour of the particular substance and the decrement of value (b^*) will result to the colour that is greenish. It was found that there are a significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in the yellowness value (b^*) in all four samples through the 9 weeks of storage period. This study shows that stretching the storage period will not give an impact to the yellowness value (b^*). The yellowness value (b^*) in all samples might be determined by the ingredients in the burger such as fat, soybean waste and ISP (Isolated Soy Protein). According to Farouk and Swan (1998), the yellowness level (b^*) will increase when there is fat in the sample because of the yellow pigment contained in fat.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Through this research, it can be seen that the sample T2 contains the highest moisture and protein level as compared to other samples. There were significant differences of ($p < 0.05$) between all products in terms of the fat analysis, protein and carbohydrate. Meanwhile, there is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in terms of the moisture analysis and ashes content in all of the four samples. As for the colour analysis, findings also revealed that the soybean waste in the chicken patty has shown an increment in the brightness level (L^*) and an increment in the redness level (a^*) after the frying process. There is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) between all samples. However, there is no difference existed for every formulation on their 9 weeks of cold storage process, which suggested that the colour change of patties will only be influenced by the time and temperature of frying process.

REFERENCES

- Babji, A. S., Alina, A. R., Tan, S. S., Nulkirah, M., Wan Sulaiman, W. I., & Yusoff, M. S. A. 2000. Palm fat: the new animal fat analogue for process meats. 7th ASEAN Food Conference 19–22 November 2000. Manila, Philippines.
- Babji, A. S., & Seri Cempaka, M. Y. 1995. The Nutritional Value of Some Processed Meat Product in Malaysia. *Mal. J. Nutri*, 1 (1), 83–94.
- Farouk, M.M. & Swan, J.E. 1998. Effect of muscle condition before freezing and simulated chemical changes during frozen storage on the pH and colour of beef. *Meat Science*, 50(2):245–256.
- Farouk, M.M. & Swan, J.E. 1997. Factors affecting protein functionality in frozen beef. In *Proceedings of the 43rd International Congress of Meat Science and Technology*, Auckland, New Zealand. Pg. 477–496.
- Hague, M.A., Warrem, K.E., Hunt, M.C., Kropf, D.H, Kastner, C.L., Stroda, S.L. & Johnson, D.E. 1994. Endpoint Temperature, Internal Cooked Color, and Expressible Juice Color Relationships in Ground Beef Patties. *Journal of Food Science*. 59(3): 465–470.
- Holland, b., Welch, A.A. Unwin, I.D., Buss, D.H., Paul, A.A. & Southgate, D.A.T. 1992. *The Composition of Foods*. 5th The Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, U.K. pg. 428–444.
- Lin, K. W., & Mei, M. Y. 2000. Influences of gums, soy protein isolated and heating temperature on reduced fat meat batters in a model system. *J. Food Science*, 65 (1), 48–52.
- Marquez, E.J., Ahmed, E.M., West, R.L. & Johnson, D.D. 1989. Emulsion Stability and Sensory Quality of Beef Frankfurters Produced at Different Fat or Peanut Oil Level. *Journal of Food Science*. 4:867–873.
- Motts, S. 1998. Improve meat using vegetable protein. *Food Process*, 67, 16–17.
- Tee, E. S., Mohd, I. N., Mohd, N. A., & Khadijah, J. 1998. *Jadual Komposisi Zat Dalam Makanan Malaysia: ASEAN Food Habit Projects*, National Sub Committees on Prot: Food Habits Research and Development Malaysia.

This page intentionally left blank

The potential of nanotechnology application in improving bioactivity of Malaysian plants

A. Norhidayah, A. Noriham & M. Rusop
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Malaysia is a tropical country with thousand of plants that are rich in active components food ingredients. The active components derived from plants can for traditional medicine as well as exhibit anti-oxidative, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, antitumor- promoting and anti-carcinogenic properties. It is generally known that the main dietary constituents contributing to these protective effects are the antioxidant components as well as a wide variety of free radical scavenging molecules such as phenolic compounds, nitrogen compounds, vitamins and terpenoids. However it is being reported that these major constituents such as flavonoids and lignans are compounds with poor water solubility, larger particle size and complex chemical structure thus limit their absorption in the body system and in food. It has been practically proved that particle size reduction strategies including nanotechnology can improve solubility and increase the dissolution rate of poorly water- soluble active ingredients. Nanotechnology helps the active ingredients to disperse stably and homogeneously as compared to its raw material. In addition, the physicochemical, antioxidant properties and medicinal characterization of traditional medicine are also being optimized.

Keywords: antioxidant, Malaysian plants, nanotechnology, active component.

1 INTRODUCTION

Nanotechnology is generally a new and fast emerging field involved in the manufacture, processing and application of structures, devices and systems through development of materials in the nanoscale dimension which is less than 100 nm (Bouwmeester, et al., 2009). Nanotechnology is gaining momentum and becoming a worldwide important tool for the food and bioprocessing industry which possibly can improve production processes to provide products with better characteristics and new functionalities in the food and bioprocessing industry. Due to uniqueness of nanoparticle characteristics, this technology rapidly growing and is an important tool in the food and bioprocessing industry (Neethirajan & Jayas, 2011) as well as in the nutraceuticals and functional foods manufacture for human health improvement (Chen, et al., 2006). It is estimated \$ 1 trillion of nanotechnology related products are going to be developed in the year 2011–2015 where as the demand & market value for nanotechnology food & food processing would become more than \$20 billion by the 2010. (Valdés, González, Calzón, & Díaz-García, 2009).

Several researchers proved that nanosuspension technology can improve the characteristic of macrostructured herbs by enhancing their water solubility, bioavailability as well as antioxidant properties (Liu, Chen, Shih, & Kuo, 2008) of quercetin (Gao, et al., 2011), Chinese Medicines Plants (Ma, et al.,

2009; Su, Fu, Quan, & Wang, 2006; Yen, Wua, Lin, Cham, & Lin, 2008) and in insoluble drug (Itoh, Pongpeerapat, Tozuka, Oguchi, & Yamamoto, 2003; Sonada, Horibe, Oshima, Iwasaki, & Watano, 2008). It is in line with other researchers where they claimed that reduction of particle size can improve quality (Zhao, Yang, Gai, & Yang 2009). However, very limited source of information can be obtained on the effect of nanotechnology on the bioactivity effectiveness of Malaysian plants. Thus this paper provides some overview and related researches to food nanotechnology and its implication on plant's bioactivity. The information provided might be useful for improving its functional properties as well as to broaden up its applications.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Bioactivity compounds of Malaysian plants*

Malaysia being a tropical country enjoys the privilege of abundant rain forests, consisting of thousands of plants that are rich in phytochemicals components which are important as the source of traditional medicines. Approximately 16% from 10,000 higher plants species and 2000 species of lower plants available in Peninsular Malaysia, are claimed to be used for medicinal purposes (Gurib- Fakim, 2006) The active compounds that are scientifically detected have

become a key for development of alternative drugs and food ingredients.

Recent studies done by scientists around the world have explored the potential of these components which can exhibit anti-oxidative (Lim, Lim, & Tee, 2007; Liyana-Pathirana, Shahidi, & Alasalvar, 2006). Antimicrobial (Kamatou, Viljoen, & Steenkamp, 2010; Onmetta-aree, Suzuki, Gasaluck, & Eumke, 2006) anti-inflammatory (Kamatou, et al., 2010; Muniappan Sundararaj, 2003; Nonato, et al., 2009) antitumor promoting (Chung, Jung, Surh, Lee, & Park, 2001; Mackeen, et al., 2000) and anti-carcinogenic properties (Chung, et al., 2001; Sripanidkulchai, et al., 2002). It has long been known that plants possessed antioxidative properties and have been used worldwide especially in traditional preparations to treat many diseases. Antioxidants reduce the oxidative stress in cells by protecting the cell against DNA damage, enhancing the efficiency of DNA repair, decreasing oxygen concentration, intercepting singlet oxygen, preventing first chain initiation by scavenging initial radicals, binding metal ion catalysts, decomposing primary products to nonradical compounds and chain breaking to prevent continued hydrogen abstraction from substrates (Saha, et al., 2004) and therefore are useful in the treatment of many human diseases.

It is generally known that the main dietary constituents contributing to these protective effects are the antioxidant components as well as a wide variety of free radical scavenging molecules hydrogen donating compounds, singlet oxygen quenchers and/or metal ion chelators (Ikram, et al., 2009) such as phenolic compounds (e.g. phenolic acids, flavonoids, quinones, coumarins, lignans, stilbenes, tannins), nitrogen compounds (alkaloids, amines, betalains), vitamins, terpenoids (including carotenoids), and some other endogenous metabolites which are rich in antioxidant activity contributed to this property (Juntachote, Berghofer, Siebenhandl, & Bauer, 2007). Moreover antioxidants also play a vital role in food quality by reducing the nutritional loss and preventing the formation of harmful substances during the storage of the food (Roy, et al., 2011).

Several studies had been conducted by scientists in Asia to explore the presence of active components in plants for free radical scavenging molecules with antioxidant, antimicrobial, anti carcinogenic properties. In the study done (Kusuma, et al., 2011), they found that *S. polyanthum* ripened fruit, *M. koenigii* leaves, and *Z. purpurea* rhizome extracts have significantly displayed those properties. Significant anticancer, anti aging, immune-stimulatory properties are also shown in Traditional Chinese Medicine such as *C. uscuta chinensis* L. (Yen, et al., 2008) *Salvia miltiorrhiza* (Liu, et al., 2008), due to presence of flavonoid saponin, lignans as well as salvianolic acid B and tetramethylpyrazine.

Generally, Malaysia also possesses an abundance of vegetables, herbs and fruits that are relatively good sources of antioxidant components as good as synthetic antioxidant. Accumulating evidences provided

by local scientists showed that selected Malaysian plants effectively have this potential which includes subtropical fruits such as ciku (*Manilkara zapota*), star fruits (*Averrhoa carambola* L.), and guava (*Psidium guajava*) (Leong & Shui, 2002). Surprisingly, Ikram et al., (2009) found that Malaysian underutilized fruits such as sentol (*Sandoricum sp*), asam gelugor (*Garcinia prainiana*) and buah melaka (*Phyllanthus emblica*) are also rich in antioxidant components. High antioxidant capacity are being observed in the studied fruits that has sour (e.g. *Baccaurea*, *Garcinia*, *Mangifera* and *Pometia*) and bitter tastes (e.g. *Phyllanthus* and *Averrhoa*). Whereas Saha et al., (2004) found that FTC and TBA values of methanolic of seven Malaysian medicinal plants including *Lasianthus oblongus*, *Psychotria rostrata*, *Spermacoceexilis*, *Chasalia chartacea*, *Hedyotis verticillata*, *Sperma Spermacoce articularis* and *Leea indica* showed strong antioxidant activity comparable to or higher than α tocopherol BHT and quercetin.

Moreover, the water extract of tenggek burung (*Melicope lunu-ankenda*), kesum (*polygonum minus*), guava (*Psidium guajava* L.) and mango (*Mangifera indica* L.), effectively inhibit lipid oxidation in mechanically deboned chicken meat (MDCM) sausages and chicken ball during frozen storage comparable to BHA/BHT and rosemary oleoresin Herbalox R. (Norhidayah, Babji, Shazali, Norazmir, & H., 2011; Noriham, Babji, & Aminah., 2005) Studies on local plants such as turmeric (*Gurcuma domestica*), asam gelugor (*Garcinia atroviri atroviridis*), mengkudu (*Morinda citrifolia*), pegaga (*Centella asiatica*) and ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) also exhibited good antioxidant activities (Hussin, et al., 2007; Ikram, et al., 2009; Stoilova, Krastanov, Stoyanova, Denev, & Gargova, 2007; Zin, Abdul-Hamid, & Osman, 2002).

2.2 Nanotechnology application in plants

Due to these amazing functional properties, recently many of research are being done to make use of these materials to replace synthetic antioxidants as well as drugs. However, it is being reported that the original medicines which include herbs with major constituents such as flavonoids and lignans are hard to be effectively absorbed primarily due to poor solubility in either water or oil, larger particle size and complex chemical structure (Ma, et al., 2009; Sonada, et al., 2008; Takatsuka, Endo, Jianguo, Yuminoki, & Hashimoto, 2009; Yen, et al., 2008). Thus, numerous studies have been conducted to improve the value in use and overcome this problem. It has been practically proved that particle size reduction strategies particularly nanotechnology can improve solubility and increase the dissolution rate of poorly water soluble active pharmaceutical ingredients (Itoh, et al., 2003; Kim, et al., 2008; Sonada, et al., 2008; Su, et al., 2006).

Nanotechnology is the technology that produce nanoparticles with a size in the range of 10–1000 nm.

Nanoparticles produced through nanotechnology possesses many advantages, such as increasing compound solubility, reducing medicinal doses and improving the absorbency of medicinal doses compared with the respective crude drugs preparations (Brigger, Dubernet, & Couvreur, 2002). Generally, greater intracellular uptake and bioactivity shown by nanoparticles compared to microparticles due to their small size and relative mobility. Su et al., (2006) revealed that nanonization of *Rhizoma Chuanxiong* increased yield extraction and enhanced the bioactivity effectiveness where the cellular tissues are broken into pieces, dispersed stably and homogeneously as compared to its raw material.

Additionally, the active ingredients were also fully dissolved. It is in proportion to Ma et al., (2009) where they found that the physicochemical and medicinal characterization of *Liuwei Dihuang* was optimized after ground to 161.9 nm which previously was inconsistently absorbed in its macroparticle. When the plant medicine undergoes nanonization into nano size, the cell membrane and cell walls were crushed into pieces, thus the active constituents could directly contact with outer solvent. On the other hand, the contact area of the plant medicine in the form of nanoparticle with body fluid also increased thus promotes faster absorption and higher bioavailability. Better hepatoprotective effect were illustrated by treated rats with 50mg/kg of nano-*Cuscuta chinensis* than 125 mg/kg of (P < 0.05) as reported by Yen et al., (2008). In addition, nano-*Cuscuta chinensis* can give similar outcome to ethanolic *Cuscuta chinensis* at lower dosage (five times as less as ethanolic *Cuscuta chinensis*). It is due to the ability of nanoparticles to penetrate throughout the submucosal layers while microparticles were predominantly localized in the epithelial lining only (Manharaj & Chen, 2006).

Antioxidant properties in several plants were also affected by this technology. Liu et al., (2008) reported that Danshen samples prepared using nanotechnology exhibited more scavenging power compared to its traditionally ground material based on DPPH radical scavenging and ferrous ions chelating assays. Moreover the reducing power of nanosized Dashen was also significantly better than the common preparations. Thus they suggested that modern technique which is nanotechnology give greater release of active components in tested samples. Active components release is affected by particle size.

Smaller particles have larger surface area; therefore, most of the active components associated would be at or near the particle surface, leading to faster release. Whereas, larger particles have large cores which allow more drug to be encapsulated and slowly diffuse out (Manharaj & Chen, 2006).

The application of nanotechnology in insoluble drugs is also well documented. Sonoda et al., (2008) explored the effect of this technology to the poorly water-soluble drug flurbiprofen (FP) and found that the dissolution property was improved by the formation of crystalline nanoparticle drugs. Similar results also

showed in ursodeoxycholic acid (UDCA), diphenyl hydrantoin (phenytoin) and biphenyl dimethyl dicarboxylate (DDB) thereby increases its concentration in blood to the desired level (Itoh, et al., 2003; Kim, et al., 2008; Ma, et al., 2009). All these studies showed that the particle reduction technology especially nanotechnology can effectively improved the functional properties of medicinal plants as well as in insoluble drugs. The next interest thing to do with the scientific knowledge that were obtained was to actually introduce new techniques and approaches for better extraction of active component in plants focusing on local plants and explore the calculated safe dosage of nanostructured plant extracts as food ingredients to improve food quality.

3 CONCLUSIONS

Nanotechnology is generally a new and fast emerging field involved in the manufacture, processing and application of structures, devices and systems through development of materials in the nanoscale dimension, which is less than 100nm. This technology obviously improved the extraction yield, enhanced dissolution, increased their therapeutic effectiveness and improved antioxidant bioactivity compared to their crude or micronized materials. In conclusion, it is appears reasonable to suggest that nanoparticle system can be applied to overcome other water poorly soluble herbal medicine limitations, decrease dosage for disease treatment as well as improve food quality. However, since this technology is relatively new especially in the food sectors, thus lot more researches need to be conducted to scientifically prove the implications of this technology to the human wellness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors are grateful to the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia for the scholarship and Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) Malaysia for grant (06-01-01-SF0390).

REFERENCES

- Bouwmeester, H., Dekkers, S., Noordam, M. Y., Hagens, W. I., Bulder, A. S., de Heer, C., et al. 2009. Review of health safety aspects of nanotechnologies in food production *Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology*, 53(1), 52–62.
- Brigger, I., Dubernet, C., & Couvreur, P. 2002. Nanoparticles in cancer therapy and diagnosis. *Advanced Drug Delivery Reviews*, 54,, 631–651.
- Chen, Z., Meng, H., Xing, G., Chen, C., Zhao, Y., Jia, G., et al. 2006. Acute toxicological effects of copper nanoparticles in vivo. *Toxicology Letters*, 163(2), 109–120.
- Chung, W.-Y., Jung, Y.J., Surh, Y.J., Lee, S.S., & Park, K.-K. 2001. Antioxidative and antitumor promoting effects of [6]-paradol and its homologs. *Mutation Research/Genetic Toxicology and Environmental Mutagenesis*, 496(1–2), 199–206.

- Gao, L., Liu, G., Wang, X., Liu, F., Xu, Y., & Ma, J. 2011. Preparation of a chemically stable quercetin formulation using nanosuspension technology. *International Journal of Pharmaceutics*, 404(1–2), 231–237.
- Gurib-Fakim, A. 2006. Medicinal plants Traditions of yesterday and drugs of tomorrow. *Molecular Aspects of Medicine*, 27(1), 1–93.
- Hussin, M., Abdul-Hamid, A., Mohamad, S., Saari, N., Ismail, M., & Bejo, M. H. 2007. Protective effect of *Centella asiatica* extract and powder on oxidative stress in rats. *Food Chemistry*, 100(2), 535–541.
- Ikrum, E. H. K., Eng, K. H., Jalil, A. M. M., Ismail, A., Idris, S., Azlan, A., et al. 2009. Antioxidant capacity and total phenolic content of Malaysian underutilized fruits. *Journal of Food Composition and Analysis*, 22(5), 388–393.
- Itoh, K., Pongpeerapat, A., Tozuka, Y., Oguchi, T., & Yamamoto, K. 2003. Nanoparticle Formation of Poorly Water-Soluble Drugs from Ternary Ground Mixtures with PVP and SDS. *Chem. Pharm. Bull* 51(2), 171–174.
- Juntachote, T., Berghofer, E., Siebenhandl, S., & Bauer, F. 2007. The effect of dried galangal powder and its ethanolic extracts on oxidative stability in cooked ground pork. *LWT – Food Science and Technology*, 40(2), 324–330.
- Kamatou, G. P. P., Viljoen, A. M., & Steenkamp, P. 2010. Antioxidant, antiinflammatory activities and HPLC analysis of South African *Salvia* species. *Food Chemistry*, 119(2), 684–688.
- Kim, J., Jung, D. H., Rhee, H., Choi, S.-H., Sung, M. J., & Choi, W. S. 2008. Improvement of bioavailability of water insoluble drugs: Estimation of intrinsic bioavailability. *Korean J. Chem. Eng.*, 25(1), 171–175.
- Kusuma, I. W., Kuspradini, H., Arung, E. T., Aryani, F., Min, Y.-H., Kim, J.-S., et al. 2011. Biological Activity and Phytochemical Analysis of Three Indonesian Medicinal Plants, *Murraya koenigii*, *Syzygium polyanthum* and *Zingiber purpurea*. *Journal of Acupuncture and Meridian Studies*, 4(1), 75–79.
- Leong, L. P., & Shui, G. 2002. An investigation of antioxidant capacity of fruits in Singapore markets. *Food Chemistry*, 76(1), 69–75.
- Lim, Y. Y., Lim, T. T., & Tee, J. J. 2007. Antioxidant properties of several tropical fruits: A comparative study. *Food Chemistry*, 103(3), 1003–1008.
- Liu, J.R., Chen, G.F., Shih, H.N., & Kuo, P.C. 2008. Enhanced antioxidant bioactivity of *Salvia miltiorrhiza* (Danshen) products prepared using nanotechnology. *Phytomedicine*, 15(1–2), 23–30.
- Liyana-Pathirana, C. M., Shahidi, F., & Alasalvar, C. 2006. Antioxidant activity of cherry laurel fruit (*Laurocerasus officinalis* Roem.) and its concentrated juice. *Food Chemistry*, 99(1), 121–128.
- Ma, P. Y., Fu, Z. Y., Su, Y. L., Zhang, J. Y., Wang, W. M., Wang, H., et al. 2009. Modification of physicochemical and medicinal characterization of Liuwei Dihuang particles by ultrafine grinding. *Powder Technology*, 191(1–2), 194–199.
- Mackeen, M. M., Ali, A. M., Lajis, N. H., Kawazu, K., Hassan, Z., Amran, M., et al. 2000. Antimicrobial, antioxidant, antitumour- promoting and cytotoxic activities of different plant part extracts of *Garcinia atrovirens* Griff. ex T. Anders. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 72, 395–402.
- Manharaj, V. J., & Chen, Y. 2006. Nanoparticles – A Review. *Tropical Journal of Pharmaceutical Research*, 5 (1), 561–573.
- Muniappan, M., & Sundararaj, T. 2003. Antiinflammatory and antiulcer activities of *Bambusa arundinacea*. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, 88(2–3), 161–167.
- Neethirajan, S., & Jayas, D. S. 2011. Nanotechnology for the Food and Bioprocessing Industries. *Food and Bioprocess Technology*, 4(1), 39–47.
- Nonato, F. R., Barros, T. A. A., Lucchese, A. M., Oliveira, C. E. C., Santos, R. R. d., Soares, M. B. P., et al. 2009. Anti-inflammatory and antinociceptive activities of *Blechnum occidentale* L. extract. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, 125(1), 102–107.
- Norhidayah, A., Babji, A. S., Shazali, M. S., Norazmir, M. N., & H., N. 2011. Effects of Mango (*Mangifera indica* L.) and Guava (*Psidium guajava* L.) Extract on Frozen Chicken Meat Balls' Storage Quality. *Pakistan Journal of Nutrition*, 10 (9), 879–883.
- Noriham, A., Babji, A. S., & Aminah., A. 2005. Antioxidant effects of plant extracts in chicken sausages. *Malaysian J. of Ani. Sci*, 10(1), 24–27.
- Oonmetta-aree, J., Suzuki, T., Gasaluck, P., & Eumke, G. 2006. Antimicrobial properties and action of galangal (*Alpinia galanga* Linn.) on *Staphylococcus aureus*. *LWT* 39(12) 1214–1220.
- Roy, N., Laskar, R. A., Sk, I., Kumari, D., Ghosh, T., & Begum, N. A. 2011. A detailed study on the antioxidant activity of the stem bark of *Dalbergia sissoo* Roxb., an Indian medicinal plant. *Food Chemistry*, 126(3), 1115–1121.
- Saha, K., Lajis, N. H., Israfi, D. A., Hamzah, A. S., Khozirah, S., Khamis, S., et al. 2004. Evaluation of antioxidant and nitric oxide inhibitory activities of selected Malaysian medicinal plants. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, 92(2–3), 263–267.
- Sonada, R., Horibe, M., Oshima, T., Iwasaki, T., & Watano, S. 2008. Improvement of Dissolution Property of Poorly Water-Soluble Drug by Novel Dry Coating Method Using Planetary Ball Mill. *Chem. Pharm. Bull.*, 56(9), 1243–1247.
- Sripandikulchai, B., Tattawasart, U., Laupatarakasem, P., Vinitketkumneun, U., Sripandikulchai, K., Furihata, C., et al. 2002. Antimutagenic and anticarcinogenic effects of *Phyllanthus amarus*. *Phytomedicine*, 9(1), 26–32.
- Stoilova, I., Krastanov, A., Stoyanova, A., Denev, P., & Gargova, S. 2007. Antioxidant activity of a ginger extract (*Zingiber officinale*). *Food Chemistry*, 102(3), 764–770.
- Su, Y.I., Fu, Z.Y., Quan, C.J., & Wang, W.M. 2006. Fabrication of nano Rhizama Chuanxiang particles and determination of tetramethylpyrazine. *Transactions of Nonferrous Metals Society of China*, 16(Supplement 1), s393–s397.
- Takatsuka, T., Endo, T., Jianguo, Y., Yuminoki, K., & Hashimoto, N. 2009. Nanosizing of Poorly Water Soluble Compounds Using Rotation/Revolution Mixer. *Chem. Pharm. Bull.*, 57(10), 1061–1067.
- Valdés, M. G., González, A. C. V., Calzón, J. A. G., & Díaz-García, M. E. 2009. Analytical nanotechnology for food analysis. *Microchim Acta* 166, 1–19.
- Yen, F.L., Wua, T.H., Lin, L.T., Cham, T.M., & Lin, C.C. 2008. Nanoparticles formulation of *Cuscuta chinensis* prevents acetaminophen-induced hepatotoxicity in rats. *Food and Chemical Toxicology* 46(17) 1771–1777.
- Zhao, X., Yang, Z., Gai, G., & Yang, Y. 2009. Effect of superfine grinding on properties of ginger powder. *Journal of Food Engineering* 91, 217–222.
- Zin, Z. M., Abdul-Hamid, A., & Osman, A. 2002. Antioxidative activity of extracts from Mengkudu (*Morinda citrifolia* L.) root, fruit and leaf. *Food Chemistry*, 78(2), 227–231.

Marketing

This page intentionally left blank

Customer relationship management in small and medium sized hotels

Setareh Feiz, Zainab Khalifah & Ali Ramezani Ghotbabadi

Faculty of Management, University Technology Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Applying some “beneficial technologies” on “Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)” will have crucial benefits in the structure of these enterprises. For this paper, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) would be as the technology and SMEs would be the small and medium sized hotels. Among all SMEs, CRM works so well especially in hotels because it helps them to understand their guests, show their appreciation to them, as well as to gather some useful practical data about their customers. These will enable the hotels to present better services to the guests in their next visit. The importance of recognizing the right way of implementing CRM in small and medium sized hotels should always be considered by enterprises. This paper is about the importance of CRM and its different usages on SME hotels. Moreover, the challenges of SME hotels in implementing CRM will be discussed.

Keywords: Small and Medium Enterprises, Customer Relationship Management, customer importance, and small and medium sized hotels

1 INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is mainly process-driven. There are certain critical processes that can be easily identified and defined by hospitality industry. One of these processes is customer relationship management (CRM).

It is necessary for hospitality firms to respond to changes in customers' demand and services requested quickly. CRM systems make this possibility easy through data collection or data mining within the sector which leads to positive impact on productivity, service quality, and profitability as well. Thus, hotels which are the focus of the hospitality industry must provide consistent services, recognition, even rewards, during and after the customer visit. Data collection and mining are therefore critical to deliver effective CRM, particularly CRM “in the moment”, (Haley & Watson, 2002).

Imrie and Fyall, (2000) emphasized that although large hotels have complicated CRM procedures according to strong branding and loyalty plans, small hotels have no access to such options.

That is exactly related to many customers who would not visit small hotels for the second time. They usually would not spend their time in the same location for business and leisure.

Furthermore, leisure customers frequently prefer to visit different places to chase diversity. Whereas it was mentioned by too many researchers about different organizations: Hotels should focus on attracting new customers as well as keeping the old customers.

2 SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED HOTELS

There are different definitions for small and medium sized hotels worldwide. Cerovic et al. (2005) categorized hotel accommodations such as below:

- Small hotels (5–50 rooms)
- Medium sized hotels (51–200 rooms)
- Large hotels (more than 200 rooms)

Luciani (1999) defined that small sized hotels are often 3 stars with less than 60 rooms. Sigala, (2003a) also believed that 30 to 60 rooms is a good indicator for differentiating micro or family hotels from small and bigger ones, respectively. In accord with WTO, one SME hotel has below 50 rooms and it employs less than ten persons; it is most located in marginal places, (Main, 2001). Actually, these personalisation and uniqueness of lodging experiences create benefits for the tourists who spend time in SME hotels, (Main, 2001).

According to Morrison (1998) the definition of small hotel as a business entity is: financed by one individual or small group, directly managed by its owner(s) in a personalised manner and not through the medium of a formalised management structure.

In the article of Holverson & Revaz (2006), they emphasized that “as the world's large hotel groups consolidate and benefit from economies of scale, scope, and concentrated resources for acquiring the latest technology and expertise in order to build strong brands for more sophisticated and demanding customers, there is increasing pressure on small and

medium sized independent hotels to be able to continue to perform well or even to survive.”

The competitive advantage to have SME hotels and to function them as well, according to Main (2001), is their ability to being flexible in comparison to inflexible standardised hotel brands. In these kinds of hotels customisation and therefore the capability to engage with niche markets is allowed. However, independent hotels beside SME hotels, suffer intrinsic defects, (Holverson & Revaz, 2006). Dominated by family businesses, there may be limited development due to noneconomic incentives, limited marketing, quality assurance challenges, pricing policies, cost control, and a lack of financial resources, (Morrison, 1998). In addition, Morrison (1998), referred to the areas which caused more problems and there were underutilised assets, decreasing profit margins and more sensitivity to occupancy, and seasonal fluctuations than larger hotels.

Buhalis and Main (1997) recognized the most problematic conditions in SME hotels: the shortage of capital, the absence of economies of scale, an underutilised economies of scope, the peripherality, an inadequate management skills, an inadequate marketing skills and expertise, an insufficient power of bargaining inside the distribution channel, and the shortage of representation in revealing the place of electronic marketing.

There is little evidence that hotels, and especially the small and medium sized ones, pay any attention to make their processes formal in terms of service mapping or blueprinting. The challenge is then to improve the processes efficiently which will lead to save costs, improve processes, and enhance customer satisfaction.

According to Luciani (1999), “small and medium sized hotels are managed through a family oriented view and they are not directly interested in growth, also their major concern is about the way to survive in the changing market”. Small and medium sized hotels are dependent on family members. Additionally, their lack of management expertise contributes to reduced technology infrastructure and adapting to new processes/technology, thus these hotels fail to remain reactive to innovation.

3 CUSTOMER

In the present hospitality industry, satisfying customers through beautiful landscape, nature, or comfortable hotel beds is no longer adequate, (Jonsson & Devonish, 2009). It is vital to enhance customer-relationship capability which can provide more organizational performance, customer satisfaction, and competitiveness.

In recent years, the focus of the market has transferred to building customer relationship and retaining valuable customers rather than striving for new customers, (Day & Montgomery, 1999). There is a common characteristic among small hotels and other SMEs mentioned by Moriarty et al. (2008) that says

small hotels and other SMEs have preoccupied with the act of customer acquisition, so there is less attempt to retain the existing customers.

For better performance, companies tend to focus on the key components and develop a clear link to the customer's needs, (Day, 2003). Buttle, (2000) indicated that customer relationship management focus on strategically developing and maintaining long-term mutually beneficial relationship between important key customers. Peppers & Roger, (1993) believes that following four simple steps (confirm, segment, interact and customize), enterprises can start the implementation of customer relationship management in any situation. In addition to the actual practice of the four steps, companies need to rethink the most fundamental business philosophy, thoroughly review the attitude of managers and employees, or even build a company culture.

The value of retaining main customers will continue to increase the company's profits, (Reichheld, 1996). Companies should differentiate customers (Nykamp, 2001) instead of differentiating products and they should shift their focus from market share to customer share.

4 CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Hotels use customer relationship management (CRM) extensively. According to Lin and Su, (2003) hotel industry is one of the industries which better suited for CRM than others. Significant advances in information technology (IT) provided businesses with a chance of maintaining and nurturing customer relationships impressively through CRM ..(Zineldin, 2000).

Most hotel processes are dependent on the continuous collection of data to enhance the customer experience, monitor their return on investment, and to better develop products and services. CRM gathers data by considering customers' visits, reservation, and traffic to the hotel websites. The added value by guests provides added income to the hotel and also effective CRM leads to increased customer loyalty, optimized customer lifetime value, and therefore overall revenue enhancement.

Customer relationship management produces some attractive challenges for small independent hotels, (Moriarty, et al. 2008). To implement CRM successfully in SME hotels, there are some important aspects regarding customers which should be considered such as:

- Pursuing customer retention
- Training and inspiring employees to treat customers differently and keeping them satisfied
- The sensitivity to respond to customer changes

To get better and continuous customer relationship, top management involvement is very important; managers must put in greater effort in understanding their customer. Besides that, hotel receptionist or other

front-line staffs who are more in contact with hotel guests have a vital role in implementing CRM in the right way. Their behaviour and their role in collecting information about customer needs play an important part in applying CRM in SME hotels. Development of new service design and testing need to concern the customer's feeling and active cooperation of front-line staff, (Jones, 1996). In addition to that, small and medium sized hotels' owners and general managers are usually in contact with their customers in the field directly, or by speaking to their customers will generate important sources of innovative ideas.

Referring to Stokes and Lomax (2002), the management word of mouth to recommend customer acquisition is too prominent. The more top management owns the initiative, the quicker customer relationship and loyalty will build. (Pratt, 2007).

CRM is a company-wide business strategy which requires cooperation between departments for being successful. That cooperation, even in a small hotel sometimes needs a gentle force from above to keep the program in a right way (Pratt, 2007).

5 SUMMARY

The hospitality industry is process-driven and they need beneficial technologies in their enterprises to sustained and make profit. One of the significant processes is customer relationship management (CRM). Hotels as a part of the hospitality industry need CRM in their system and technology has assisted hotels in collecting data related to customers' visits, reservation, satisfaction and traffic to the hotel websites.

Moreover, to implement CRM successfully in SME hotels, customers should be their main priority. All SME hotels must try to keep the existing customers and attract the new ones by training and inspiring employees to treat customers differently and ensure that they are satisfied.

Finally, without top management involvement and agreement, there will be no success in implementing CRM. In every company to get better and longer customer relationship, top management involvement has a very important function.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This paper is under the scholarship of University Technology Malaysia (UTM).

REFERENCES

Buhalis, D., & Main, H. 1997. Catalysts in introducing information technology in small and medium sized hospitality organisations, in Min Tjoa, A. (Ed.). *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism: 275–285*.

- Buttle, F. 2000. The S.C.O.P.E of customer relationship management. *CRM-Forum*.
- Cerovic, Z., Gali, V., & Ivanovi, S. 2005. Menadžment hotelskog domaćinstva.
- Day, G. S. 2003. Creating a superior customer-relating capability. *Sloan Management Review*, 44(3): 77–82.
- Day, G. S., & Montgomery, D. B. 1999. Charting new courses for marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 63(Special Issue): 3–19.
- Haley, M., & Watson, B. 2002. The ABCs of CRM: Part one of Two. *Hospitality Upgrade*, 36, 38, 40.
- Holverson, S., & Revaz, F. d. r. 2006. Perceptions of European independent hoteliers: hard and soft branding choices. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 18(5): 398–413.
- Imrie, R., & Fyall, A. 2000. Customer retention and loyalty in the independent mid-market hotel sector: a United Kingdom perspective. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 7(3): 39–54.
- Jones, P. 1996. Managing hospitality innovation. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 37(5): 86–95.
- Jonsson, C., & Devonish, D. 2009. An exploratory study of competitive strategies among hotels in a small developing Caribbean state. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 21(4): 491–500.
- Lin, Y., & Su, H. Y. 2003. Strategic analysis of customer relationship management – a field of study on hotel enterprises. *TQM & Business Excellence*, 14(6): 715–731.
- Luciani, S. 1999. Implementing yield management in small and medium sized hotels: an investigation of obstacles and success factors in Florence hotels. *Hospitality Management*, 18: 129–142.
- Main, H. 2001. The use of the internet by hotels in Wales – a longitudinal study. *International Journal of Hospitality Information Technology*, 2(2): 35–44.
- Moriarty, J., Jones, R., Rowley, J., & Kupiec-Teahan, B. 2008. Marketing in small hotels: a qualitative study. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 26(3): 293–315.
- Morrison, A. 1998. Small firm co-operative marketing in a peripheral tourism region. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 10(5): 191–197.
- Nykamp, M. 2001. The Customer Differential: The Complete Guide to Implementing Customer Relationship Management. *American Management Association*.
- Peppers, D., & Rogers, M. 1993. The one-to-one future: Building relationships one customer at a time. *Currency-Doubleday*.
- Pratt, M. 2007. Luxury Hotelier's 2007 Top Ten CRM Resolutions. *Hospitality Net*.
- Reichheld, F. F. 1996. Learning from customer defections. *Harvard Business Review*: 57–69.
- Sigala, M. 2003a. Competing in the virtual marketplace: a strategic model for developing e-commerce in the hotel industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Information Technology*, 3(1): 43–60.
- Stokes, D., & Lomax, W. 2002. Taking control of word of mouth marketing: the case of an entrepreneurial hotelier. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 9(4): 349–357.
- Zineldin, M. 2000. Beyond Relationship Marketing: Technological Marketing. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 18(1): 9–23.

This page intentionally left blank

Branding Kuching City as health tourism destination

Siti Mardinah Abdul Hamid & Nuraini Putit

UiTM Sarawak, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This paper provides an overview of health tourism industry in Malaysia and explores the potential and opportunity for branding Kuching City as a health tourism destination. It discusses the New Economic Model (NEM) as a way to unleash the country's growth potential in the industry. This paper also presents problems affecting the tourism industry and the prospects for health tourism as the drive toward multiplying economic base for Tourism sectors. Finally, the paper highlights strategies and recommendations for the growth of health tourism and the branding of Kuching City as health tourism destination.

Keywords: Health tourism, destinations, New Economic Model, branding, Kuching City

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Background of study*

Health tourism, from a consumer perspective, can be defined as traveling for the maintenance, enhancement or restoration of wellbeing in mind and body (Carrera & Bridges, 2006). From a supplier perspective, health tourism can be defined as traveling to destinations, which provide facilities and health-care services explicitly and in addition to their regular tourist amenities (Goodrich & Goodrich, 1987). In that regard, Malaysia is an excellent choice for meeting the healthcare needs of international medical and health tourism patients.

Malaysia is one of the fastest emerging destinations for health tourism in Asia, mainly catering for Asian health travelers. The majority of Malaysia's medical tourists come from Indonesia mainly due to the superior quality of healthcare that Malaysia offers (APHM, 2007). The same reason draws health travelers from other Asian countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan. Patients from richer Asian countries like Singapore and Japan, that represent the second and third highest origins of medical travelers respectively, visit Malaysia due to the lower prices of medical procedures.

Whilst Middle Eastern medical travelers visit Malaysia for both the price and the quality of health-care provided, Australians and people from the European Union are attracted not only to the lower cost of medical procedures in Malaysia but also English is widely spoken in Malaysia.

In addition, the favorable exchange rate of the US Dollar to the Malaysian Ringgit (RM) makes the already low cost medical treatment an incredible value to medical tourists. The majority of hospitals in Malaysia are offering services to medical tourists are privately owned institutions following internationally

recognized standards in healthcare. Currently, there are at least 35 hospitals in Malaysia that are being geared towards medical tourism. Most of these hospitals are accredited by international bodies including the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the Joint Commissions International (JCI) among others, making them on par with medical institutions in western countries.

Furthermore, the Malaysian government is actively promoting the medical tourism industry as a strategic industry in healthcare sector. With patient safety as priority, the government, ensures, strict compliance to the international health standards. The Malaysian Society for Quality in Health (MSQH) was formed through the initiatives of both the Ministry of Health Malaysia and the Association of Private Hospitals of Malaysia, which takes care of quality standards being followed at all levels of health care related to medical practitioners, facilities, procedures etc. This is one of the very important ways of ensuring delivery of true care to the medical tourism community and also this benefits the international community who opt for Malaysia as a second home.

Thus, medical tourism in Malaysia echoes a safe and beneficial alternative to those patients who have faced the problems of long waiting lists and expensive medical treatments back home. And a great opportunity to make Malaysia a second home on this very important and compelling reason of medical facilities well is within the reach. Toward this end, being considered one of the cleanest cities in Malaysia and was voted as one of the world's healthiest cities, recognized and awarded by both United Nations (UN) and World Health Organization (WHO) and by the Alliance of Healthy Cities in Suzhou, China, it is very timely to consider Kuching City as Health Tourism destinations.

1.2 Statement of the problem

It is estimated that the health tourism in Asia will be worth USD4 billion (RM14.2 billion) in 2012 and Malaysia, as one of the top destinations for health tourists from around the world, expects to earn up to USD590 million (RM2.1 billion) within five years until 2017 (MOH, 2008).

According to the Association of Private Hospitals Malaysia, the number of foreigners seeking healthcare services in Malaysia has grown from 75,210 patients in year 2001 to 341,288 patients in year 2007 which generated a total of RM203.66 million (USD59 million) in revenue.

In between the year 2000 to 2007, the increase of receipts from health tourism has been growing at 30 percent per year and this is forecasted to continue yearly. It is expected that a total of RM584 million or more in medical revenue will be generated. This is a constructive advantage reported by Association of Private Hospital Malaysia (APHM, 2008). Health tourism industry in Malaysia though seems to be growing, but it has yet to reach its full potential as resources are not used to the utmost.

In 2010, health tourism was estimated at USD40 billion annually in USA alone. It was reported that more than 2.9 million patients visited Malaysia and neighboring countries to seek medical treatments in the past year. Deloitte, a statistical consultant firm of international repute estimates the number to increase by 17 percent, year by year and there will be 2 million patients or tourists coming to Asia Pacific region from United States or Canadian region (Deloitte, 2009).

In nutshell, the industry is encouraged and expected to grow and prosper in the years to come, thus allowing healthcare providers, facilitators, and corporate players to leverage and prosper to provide much needed support to the health care sector.

To date, hospitals also reported a corresponding increase in revenue from this sector. Thus, the facts and figures show strong market position for health tourism for Malaysia, and ultimately post an immense opportunity for branding Kuching City as health tourism destinations.

1.3 Objective of the study

The overall objective of this study is to get an overview of the emerging health tourism sector, its potential to grab the opportunity and address issues. Specific questions addressed in this study are:

- i. What is the current development of health tourism in Malaysia?
- ii. What are the future prospects – what is the vision for the industry in Malaysia?
- iii. What are medical and health tourism development perspective in Sarawak, particularly Kuching City?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will review the literature that relates to the development of medical tourism and the emergence of branding into the tourism industry. Early publications examine the relation between tourism, travel and health care. Examples are found in World Health Statistics Quarterly (Pasini, 1989) and Health Policy (Sheaff, 1997). The year 2002 shows an ethical voice towards reproductive tourism (Pennings, 2002). From 2003, the debate and the volume around medical tourism intensify in context.

In 2007, both The Lancet (MacReady, 2007) and the WHO Bulletin (Chinai & Goswami, 2007) reported on the phenomenon. New countries are reported to be engaged in medical tourism, such as reported in The Journal of the Korea Medical Association (Woo, 2009).

The relation between public or primary care and medical tourism is an emerging interest, especially in Asian regions (Dedmon, 2009). Medical tourism is installing itself within existing national, international and local frameworks. Health and business with health-related products and services are a mega trend in the twenty-first century (Nefiodov, 1999).

The term brand in this article is defined according to Freundt (2006) from the perspective of behavioral sciences as a distinctive image of a product, service or any other associations of a carrier rooted deeply in the psyche of the consumer, which has influence on choice and decision. These brand associations are part of the brand image (Meffert et al., 2005) and can be established on various association levels (Kotler et al., 2007). In the tourism context, Clarke (2000) refers to the reduction of the impact of intangibility as one of the benefits of branding.

According to Domiszlaff (1992), the aim of brand policy is to secure a monopoly position in the psyche of the consumer. Brand trust again can be seen as a central determinant of brand loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Matzler et al., 2008). To create a brand which induces trust and commitment and has unique brand associations, and thus a strong brand (Koll & von Wallpach, 2009), marketers should therefore establish brand associations close to the consumers' personality. When a product is able to carry a strong brand we define it as in principle "brand compatible" or "brandable".

Branding started to expand into the tourism industry only recently (Wagner & Peters, 2009). In tourism management literature, there is now a notable stream of research dealing with the general issue of destination branding (Hosany et al., 2006; Tasci & Kozak, 2006).

As Smith & Puczko (2008, p. 203) state: "It is not uncommon in health and wellness tourism that brands are seen as either only logos or a term". But marketing in health tourism differs in one very important aspect from marketing in tourism in general – it involves some kind of health element which is one of the most personal and sensitive aspects for consumer.

Table 1. Malaysia medical tourism patients in year 2003–2007.

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
102,946	174,189	232,161	296,687	341,288

A brand based on this value structure, sharing the same values as its customers, would then have all the potential of becoming a strong brand with loyal customers. The significance of such an influential brand is very high because it is a guarantee for greater sales and revenues. The value structure identified here could function as a basis for developing behavioral branding in health tourism since brands are usually seen as either logos or a term (Smith & Puczko, 2008).

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study utilized secondary data from various agencies. Resources in term of statistics and graph were gathered from agencies such as Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture, Art and Tourism, Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board, Association of Private Hospital Malaysia (APHM), and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE). Data was also obtained from the International Medical Travel Journal (IMTJ) and academic journal on medical and health tourism.

4 FINDINGS

The findings are divided into three sections:

4.1 *An overview of medical and health tourism in Malaysia*

Malaysia started streamlining its health services sector for global competition and health tourism in 1990s. Malaysia is now a strong competitor in the global health tourism market and its delivery of healthcare is being internationally acknowledged. Malaysia is experiencing a tremendous pace of tourism development. Tourism sector has been recognized by Malaysian government as a major source of revenue and catalyst to the Malaysian economic renaissance.

The amount of medical tourist Malaysia in 2007 has tripled since 2003, with figures already reaching more than 282,000 for the first nine months in year 2008 alone, which is 16 percent higher than in 2007. The 2007 figures indicate Indonesia at the top of the list and accounting for 72 percent of foreign patients to Malaysia, followed by 10 percent from Singapore and another 5 percent from Japan according to HealthCare Patients Visiting Malaysia. This figure is also supported by the Association of Private Hospitals of Malaysia (APHM) as shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 2. Malaysia medical tourism patients by country of origin (year: 2007).

Indonesia	Singapore	Japan	India	Europe	Others
72%	10%	5%	4%	3%	6%

Malaysia is known to as political stable, multicultural environment, wide choice of specialty hospitals, skilled professionals, friendly staff who can speak different languages, and competitive pricing were the main factors driving health tourism in Malaysia (MATRADE, 2010).

There are 229 private hospitals, of which 35 were identified as promoters of health tourism in Malaysia. Treatment for medical health is at a lower cost compared to other countries. A cardiac bypass surgery in Malaysia would cost around USD9000 and USD15000 at other countries.

In 2010, Malaysia earned revenue of RM379 million and expecting to increase 17 percent in healthcare and dental tourism by 2012. Malaysia is well on its way to develop itself as a health tourism hub and is the most visited health tourism destination by UK patients, attracting 8.5% of all UK medical and health tourists every year (MOH, 2010).

4.2 *The new economic model and health tourism*

The New Economic Policy has identified the need to focus on the key sectors that can be leaders in generating high growth rates. Malaysia has considered new areas of tourism such as medical and health tourism that refers as a high-potential growth sector. Malaysia has a wealth of expertise, the opportunity to leverage specialization and has gained first mover advantages, which will attract high-end tourists who seek exclusiveness and high value services. Having more than 30 offices worldwide, MTPB has the advantage of promoting Malaysia on the international scene.

The New Economic Model (NEM) will create Malaysia that will be renowned for transformation arising from the resourcefulness of its people exemplified by its rich cultural traditions. The economy will be *market-led, well-governed, regionally integrated, entrepreneurial* and *innovative*. The private sector will be the main driver of growth dominated by high value added goods and services in a competitive environment.

In moving Malaysia towards the core characteristics of the NEM, a new and bold approach to unleash the country's growth potential. This new approach is relevant to health tourism as "Private sector-led growth", and hence can promote competition across and within sectors to revive private investment and market dynamism.

Malaysian Prime Minister, Najib Razak recently said, "Medical tourism is a high priority to position Malaysia as a world-class healthcare services provider. The key is to make sure Malaysia's regulatory

environment is ready to support investment (Najib, 2009). Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board (MTPB) is embarking on a three-year project to collect market data on health tourism, as the country seeks to increase the number of people visiting the country for medical treatment. According to analysts Frost & Sullivan (2009), healthcare expenditure in Malaysia is driven by increased privatization within the healthcare service provision. The market for healthcare services has also received a positive impetus from health tourism.

Due to the increase in demand for medical and health tourism, the Malaysian government has set up several referral gateways to assist medical tourists. One of them is the health tourism website www.malaysiahealthcare.com that assists medical tourists globally.

5 THE WAY FORWARD

Under the Sarawak Corridor of Renewal Energy (SCORE) plan and strategies tourism is one of the primary focus. Even though the focus is more on the natural attractions but the concept of tourism still prevail for other mode sector. The following suggestions are recommended so as to boost Kuching City as a health tourism destination.

- i. Costs. The costs in Kuching would be considerably cheap as compare to other developing Asian countries such as Singapore. The primary target market for Kuching could be of middle to high income group from Indonesia, Singapore, Japan, India, Europe and Brunei.
- ii. Capacity. More designated hospitals are needed to overcome the current lack of capacity such as new such as medical centers and hospitals could be completely devoted to and promote specific areas of expertise/medical tourism products cancer treatment, cosmetic surgery and retirement village with complete medical facilities. Hospital with adjacent with hotel facilities is recommended to ease the accompanying family members.
- iii. Government support. One of the common strategy is to encourage local and foreign investment in the healthcare sector by easing the regulation and providing more incentives
- iv. Travel facilitation. The government should ease the entry/exit requirement for medical and health tourists.
- v. Medical practitioners. Expert team of various field of medicine may need to be boosted. Holistic healing may be incorporated with the modern medicine to help healing and recuperation of the patients.
- vi. Communication skills. Though the primary target market are patients from Kalimantan and Brunei where language barrier is at its minimum. However, the basis of cross cultural training should be incorporated to ensure patients would trust the services rendered.

- vii. Promotion. The tourism bodies or organization should support the medical promotion campaign in foreign countries so as to attract potential patients and medical tourists. The government shall initiate an iconic branding for Kuching City to map itself as a health tourism destination. Thus, as an Islamic country, we can tap Middle East patients as one of potential markets.

6 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Health services in Kuching City

The health services provided by the Sarawak Health Department are delivered through a network of static and mobile facilities that provide promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative care. Under the government entity, Kuching houses the Sarawak General Hospital which offers a complete and comprehensive clinical services and facilities. Another additional state of the art services and facilities is the Cardiac Centre which began its operations in Kota Samarahan on January 1, 2011.

Kuching also house a few private medical centers such as Normah Medical Specialist Centre (NMSC) located in Petra Jaya. NMSC has been accredited by the Malaysian Society for Quality in Health with full certification in 2005 which patients seeking treatment in NMSC will receive the same level of care and treatment protocols as their counter parts in the developed countries.

Other private hospitals are Timberland Medical Centre and KPJ Specialist Centre. Both offers 24-Hour Accident & Emergency, ambulance, laboratory and outpatient clinic. Other medical facilities are Blood bank, Coronary Care Unit, delivery suites, Diagnostic Imaging (Radiology) Department, Haemodialysis Unit, Intensive Care Unit, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Neuro Diagnostic Services and others.

6.2 Branding Kuching city as health tourism destination

Kuching, the state capital of Sarawak having a population of approximately 450,000 is one of Malaysia's most rewarding travel destinations. Kuching City was also voted as one of the cleanest cities in Malaysia and as one of the world's healthiest cities, recognized and awarded by both United Nations (UN) and World Health Organization (WHO) and by the Alliance of Healthy Cities in Suzhou, China.

The state government is serious in tapping revenue from medical tourism as there is a demand for healthcare services from neighboring Kalimantan Indonesia. Datuk Amar Abang Johari Tun Openg, The Minister of Tourism returning from Kalimantan said that the response was very encouraging for Kuching to be promoted as a health tourism destination (Borneo Post, 9th December 2011). He further disclosed that about 550,000 Indonesian tourists visited the state in 2011. Many of them are seeking medical treatment at private

hospitals in Kuching and Sibü (Borneo Post, 12th May 2012).

With the low cost flight by Kalstar and Batavia Air and now MASwings, more people from the city of Pontianak can come to Kuching City for medical treatment. As Malaysia was targeting revenue of some RM430 million from healthcare travel in 2011, a 22 percent increase is expected in 2012 and Kuching City is named as part of the contributor to health tourism revenue (MOT, 2011).

Medical and health tourism industry would have promising future if private hospitals and hotels could collaborate to introduce post-treatment packages to patients and their family members. The post-treatment package is a new trend that should not be overlooked by health and tourism industry players in the state.

Record shows that on the average, Indonesian patients spent four days in the state. The number of Indonesian tourists represented 15 per cent of the total 3.8 million tourists visiting the state last year. Sarawak is to adopt a new approach in promoting health tourism. Private hospitals should see beyond providing medical services and collaborate with hotels for patients to stay and rest at hotels after treatment. In view of the above, hence it is timely for Kuching City to initiate a course of action into Branding Kuching as Health Tourism Destination.

There are vast opportunities for branding Kuching City as health tourism destination. Under a more market-driven economic policy guided by the NEM, health tourism is capable of facilitating economic growth, while also helping to generate incomes and providing jobs. With a well developed tourism infrastructure and low cost of living, Kuching City makes it affordable for overseas patients to spend an extended period of convalescence in the city. Relaxed, quiet and with several medical centers a short distance from beautiful beaches, the opportunities for ample period of recovery are numerous.

Undoubtedly, Kuching City is a tourist's heaven and it is no exception for patients coming from medical and health tourism. Kuching City is a home to many beautiful beaches and resorts. Patients can enjoy the exotic beaches or go for sightseeing. While patients for less critical care cases can enjoy an exhilarating tourist experience, it also offers enough opportunity for critically-ill patients to take a leisurely vacation.

Kuching City has gained reputation as one of the preferred locations for medical tourism and healthcare at highly economical prices. Thus, Kuching City has the potential to attract and satisfy this emerging demand. Overall, Kuching City needs to differentiate itself and to grasp this opportunity to become a popular and trusted choice as health tourism destination.

REFERENCES

- Association of Private Hospital Malaysia (APHM), *Medical Tourism Report 2000/2010*. Kuala Lumpur.
- Borneo Post: Medical Tourism taking root – Abang Johari, 2012/05/12.
- Borneo Post: Government Eyes Medical Tourism as Good Income Earner – Abang Johari, 2011/12/09.
- Carrera & Bridges. 2006, "Globalization and healthcare: understanding health and medical tourism", Expert review of pharmacoconomics & outcomes research, vol. 6 no. 4, pp. 445–454.
- Chaudhuri & Holbrook. 2001, "The chain of effect from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: the role of brand loyalty", Journal of Marketing, Vol. 65, April, pp. 81–93.
- Chinai & Goswami. 2007, "Medical visas mark growth of Indian medical tourism", Bulletin of the World Health Organization, Vol. 85 No. 3, pp. 164–5.
- Clarke. 2000, "Tourism brands: an exploratory study of the brands box model", Journal of Vacation Marketing, Vol. 6 No. 4, pp. 329–45.
- Domizlaff. 1992, Die Gewinnung des öffentlichen Vertrauens: Ein Lehrbuch der Markentechnik, Auflage, Hamburg.
- Dedmon. 2009, "The future of primary care in Thailand in the context of a global financial crisis", Asian Biomedicine, Vol. 3 No. 4, pp. 345–50.
- Deloitte. 2009, Medical Tourism: Update and Implications, Deloitte Centre for Health Solutions, Washington, DC.
- Freundt. 2006, Emotionalisierung von Marken, Deutscher Universitätsverlag, Leipzig.
- Frost & Sullivan. 2009, Medical Tourism: Update and Implications, Centre for Health Washington, DC.
- Goodrich & Goodrich. 1987, "Health-care tourism – an exploratory study", Tourism Management, Vol. 8 No. 3, pp. 217–22.
- Hosany, Ekinci & Muzaffer, U. 2006, "Destination image and destination personality: an application of branding theories to tourism places", Journal of Business Research, Vol. 59, pp. 638–42.
- Koll & Von Wallpach. 2009, "One brand perception? Or many? The heterogeneity of intra-brand knowledge", Journal of Product & Brand Management, Vol. 18 No. 5, pp. 338–45.
- Kotler, Keller & Bliemel. 2007, Marketing-Management, 12th ed., Pearson Studium, München.
- MacReady. 2007, "Developing countries court medical tourists", The Lancet, Vol. 369 No. 9576, pp. 1849–50.
- Matzler, Grabner-Kräuter & Bidmon. 2008, "Risk aversion and brand loyalty: the mediating role of brand trust and brand affect", Journal of Product & Brand Management, Vol. 17 No. 3, pp. 154–62.
- Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), Medical and Health Tourism 2008–2010. Kuala Lumpur.
- Meffert, Burmann & Koers. 2005, Markenmanagement: Identitätsorientierte Markenführung und praktische Umsetzung, 2nd ed., Gabler Verlag, Wiesbaden.
- Ministry Of Culture, Art and Tourism, Health Tourism Statistic Report 2003–2011, Kuala Lumpur.
- Ministry Of Health Malaysia, Health Statistic Report 2003–2010, Kuala Lumpur.
- Najib. 2009, Government Transformation Plan. Kuala Lumpur.
- Nefiodov. 1999, Der sechste Kondratieff: Wege zur Produktivität und Vollbeschäftigung im Zeitalter der Information, 3rd ed., Rhein-Sieg-Verlag, Sankt Augustin.
- New Economic Model, Report by National Economic Advisory Council; 2009
- Pasini. 1989, "Tourist health as a new branch of public health", World Health Statistics Quarterly, Vol. 42, pp. 77–84.

- Pennings. 2002, "Reproductive tourism as moral pluralism in motion", *Journal of tourism in Europe*, *Human Reproduction*, Vol. 19 No. 12, pp. 2689–94.
- SCORE. 2009, *Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy Report*. Sarawak.
- Sheaff. 1997, "Healthcare access and mobility between the UK and other European Union states: an 'implementation surplus'", *Health Policy*, Vol. 42 No. 3, pp. 239–53.
- Smith & Puczko. 2008, *Health and Wellness Tourism*, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
- Tasci & Kozak. 2006, "Destination brands vs. destination image – do we know what we mean?", *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, Vol. 12 No. 4, pp. 299–317.
- Wagner & Peters. 2009, Can association methods reveal the effects of internal branding on tourism stakeholder? *Journal of Place Management and Development*, Vol. 2 No. 1: pp. 52–69.
- Woo. 2009 "Medical tourism and the future of medical practice in Korea", *Journal of the Korean Medical Association*, Vol. 52 No. 9, pp. 844–6.

Creating new dimension in marketing new destination in Jordan: Suggested strategy for Aqaba region

Jamal Hussein El-Harami

*Hospitality and Tourism Management Department, College of Economics and Administrative Sciences,
Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan*

ABSTRACT: The main goal of this research is to improve marketing of tourism destinations in Aqaba region by including the well-known archaeological site in Madain Saleh north western Saudi Arabia. Recently Aqaba region witnessed major developments in tourism infrastructure by the construction of luxury hotels and resorts undertaken by Tala Bay, Saraya, Ayla, Marsa Zayed projects with upon completion will transform Aqaba into an important tourist destination in the region. These giant tourist projects will definitely require serious and innovative venues of marketing able to generate large numbers of tourists from around the world. Aqaba is marketed with Wadi Rum and Petra as the golden triangle of tourism. By including Madain Saleh the sister city of Petra the name will be the golden quadrangle of tourism. Joint marketing the four destinations with the cooperation of Saudi Arabia tourism authority will open the door for citizens and residents from the Gulf States to travel and see deferent destination. Cruiseship tourism will also be considered.

Keywords: Jordan, Aqaba, destination marketing

1 INTRODUCTION

World tourism reached 970 billion tourists during 2011 and expected to climb to around 1.5 billion by the year 202. In over 150 countries, tourism is one of the top five export earners, and in 60 it is the number one. Tourism is the main source of foreign exchange for one third of the developing countries and one-half of the less developed countries.

According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) the Middle East received 60 million international tourist arrivals in 2010. The region experienced rapid growth (14.2%) (UNWTO 2010). Jordan receives tourists from around the World who are attracted to visit its diverse tourist sites, such as, historical places, like the worldwide famous Petra (UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985, and one of the New Seven Wonders of the World), Jerash, Madaba, Baptism site on the east bank of the Jordan river, unspoiled natural locations such as Wadi Rum and the coastal city of Aqaba on the Red Sea which is known for its coral reefs. Jordan is known for being an “open museum” where all phases of civilizations are represented.

Jordan experienced a steady increase in tourism during the first decade of the 21st century. Over seven million travelers arrived in Jordan in 2010 and spent more than 2 billion Jordanian Dinars (\$ 2.4 billion), which contributed over 13.2% to national GDP. Direct employment reached 42,500 in 2010 and is

estimated to support several hundred thousand full time-equivalent jobs economy-wide when the full multiplier impact is accounted for. It is expected that more than 25,000 workers will be needed by the tourism sector over the next five years.

Tourism will continue to be a long term driver of economic growth in Jordan, accounting for the largest slice of GDP in Jordan's productive economy. This strategy builds on this solid foundation by improving Jordan's overall competitiveness as a tourism destination and positioning the country as a distinctive and culturally enriching experience for visitors. Health tourism is a fast growing sector focused in the Dead Sea area where major health spas exist in luxurious resorts using Dead Sea water and minerals from hot springs in Hammat Maeen. Medical tourism is in large demand from Arab and foreign nationals who come to seek medical services offered in many private hospitals which are equipped by up-to-date medical equipments and well trained physicians and nursing staff.

Tourism in Jordan is served by a wide range of hotel chains and budget hotels and motels, furnished suites and flats which meet the needs of tourists of all categories. Transport facilities by air and land connect Jordan with the World. Visas are granted at port of arrival for most world nationals (Wikipedia, 2012). Queen Alia International Airport is being rebuild to serve nine million passengers annually in the first phase; twelve million in the second phase.

Business men from Jordan and Gulf region are investing heavily in tourist infra-structure in the form of luxury hotels, spas, resorts and massive real estate projects in Amman, Dead Sea coastline and Aqaba. Tourism is one of Jordan's major industries and in 2010, eight million tourists from various countries visited Jordan, with tourist receipts amounting to about three and half billion dollars in addition to one billion earned through medical tourism. In Jordan tourism industry reached 10% – 12% sustained annual growth owing to several factors such as, Jordan's geographical locations, rich cultural heritage, holy places, stability and security.



Map of tourism sites in Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

2 STUDY PROBLEM

Tourism industry in Jordan still faces the problem of short stay of tourists compared with the wide range of touristic sites spread in various and distinguished locations. In the past tourism marketing was directed towards European countries, United States of America and some Asian countries. Incoming tourism to Jordan from these countries decreased in 2011 due the current political changes known as the "Arab Spring". It is estimated that Jordan lost 25% of its tourism market. The main motive of this study is the search for new and sustainable markets aimed at tourist generating countries such as the Arabian Gulf and Saudi Arabia in particular since it shares close by sites which can be marketed in a joint package. This will result in prolonging tourists stay. Aqaba can serve as the main destination with its mega tourism facilities which require an aggressive marketing strategy to increase numbers of potential tourists.

This paper proposes a new marketing strategy which will expand the current one called the golden triangle meaning Aqaba, Wadi Rum and Petra. These three destinations complement each other by offering diverse element ranging from seaside tourism, adventure tourism and heritage tourism. The new proposed strategy aims to include Madain Saleh, a heritage site in the northwestern of Saudi Arabia known as Petra's sister, which will be called the golden quadruple. The vast and great richness of these tourist destinations require new direction of marketing. In order to understand that we will shed lights on the components of each destination.

1. Components of Tourism Products in Aqaba Region:

Aqaba is located on the Red Sea in the southern part of Jordan. It is the only seaport. Coastline is 27 km (17 mi). The population of 100,000 people is set to double over the next ten years. Aqaba benefits from natural advantages by its location and closeness to Petra and Wadi Rum on one side and Sinai and Sharm al Sheikh on the Egyptian side, Madain Saleh on the Saudi Arabian side. (doing business 2012)

Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZ) has been responsible for most of the city's development since it opened in 2001. It was launched as a duty-free, low tax multi-sectoral development zone encompassing the entire Jordanian coastline. According to the strategic plan 2001–2020 the zone targets 50% of investments in the tourism industry, 30% in a variety of services. (bouportal 2012) In addition to the existing hotels, resorts, shopping centers, water sports and diving centers, Aqaba is going through mega and touristic projects most of which will be completed by the year 2015. They include the following:

- a. Saraya Aqaba is a major tourist and real estate development projects. The project comprises of shopping, dining, entertainment, accommodations within the context of an authentically styled ancient city. Saraya Aqaba features six luxury five star hotels with more than 1200 rooms and a water park, convention center and residential developments such as beach front villas, town houses and apartments. The total project cost is estimated at over one billion U.S. dollars. (Aqaba Development Corporation, Jordan 2012)



Saraya tourist projects, Aqaba.

- b. Ayla project is one of the most successful investment projects in Aqaba. Located at the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. 432 hectares of which 75 hectares of lagoons which will be filled by sea water. 1,550 luxury hotel rooms, the hotels are:

Grand Hyatt Hotel	300 rooms
Ayla Spa Hotel	200 rooms
Ayla Beach Hotel	250 rooms
Ayla Palace Hotel	450 rooms
Regency Hyatt Hotel	350 rooms
Waterfront Villas	72 units
Waterfront Townhouses	866 units
Waterfront Apartments	730 units
Golf Villas	171 units
Golf Townhouses	235 units
Golf Apartments	610 units
Commercial Apartments	200 units

and 100,000 sq.m of retail and commercial businesses and recreational amenities such as water parks, science museum, beach clubs, historical preservations and Jordan's first 18-hole golf course.

The objectives of this project are to:

- (1) create a world-class destination for tourism.
- (2) attract residential communities from Jordan, Gulf states and others, and
- (3) increase Aqaba's shorelines.

The distinguished aspect of this project is that it extends 2 km from the waterfront, increasing appearance of the beach by 17 km. Keeping in mind that its original access to the coastline is 235 m. The total cost of this project is expected to reach 2.1 billion U.S. dollars. The first phase will be completed by the end of 2015 with the cost of 600 million U.S. dollars.

- c. Marsa Zayed is one of the largest real estate projects and tourism in Jordan. The project extends over an area of 2.3 sq kilometers and includes 2 kilometers of waterfront. It overlooks the Red Sea with the aim of establishing one of the finest resorts, centers and tourist destinations. The project will turn the waterfront into an environment for the use of multi-purpose spread by residential towers and areas reserved for recreational facilities, tourism and the custom business and world-class hotels to more than three million square meters of land. The project will include 3,000 hotel rooms, luxury marinas, a cruise ship terminal, 30,000 villas, town houses and apartments, as well as shopping districts. No doubt that Marsa Zayed's project will transform the city of Aqaba to become one of Jordan's touristic landmarks. The total cost of this mega project will reach 10 billion U.S. dollars when completed in 2017. It will be implemented in several phases; the first phase will be finished in 2014.
- d. Tala Bay, this resort is located 14 km south of the city of Aqaba. It stretches over two kilometers private sandy beach on the Red Sea. In the center of Tala Bay is the Marina Town which embraces the picturesque private marina. The town consists of villas, apartments, duplexes, swimming pools, commercial centers, restaurants and more. Over three hundred apartments have been sold. Another Tala Bay feature is the Private Beach Club which includes four international-brand hotels (1,400 rooms) and an 18-hole golf course. Tala Bay is now one of Jordan's most spectacular attractions. The total cost of this project is 680 million U.S. dollars. (Wikipedia 2012)

Besides the above mentioned touristic projects Aqaba enjoys other attractions such as shopping centers, souvenir shops, ethnic restaurants, marine life and archaeological museums. Aqaba is served by King Hussein International Airport which receives direct flights from various parts of the world. It is well connected with Amman by a major highway. The population of Aqaba is 100,000 people. It is expected to double in the next ten years. Certainly, the town benefits

from some natural advantages. Its close proximity with Wadi Rum, Petra, Sharm al Sheikh in Egypt and Suez Canal, Israel and Saudi Arabia. Aqaba is aiming to increase its hotel supply room from just 4,000 to 20,000 over the next ten years. (atlastours 2012)

2. Petra:

Petra is a great tourist attraction and most valuable treasure among many other heritage sites in Jordan. It is located in Wadi Musa in southern Jordan, 250 km from Amman and 100 km from Aqaba and Wadi Rum. Capital of the Nabataeans who ruled from the 4th c. BC to 106 AD when Petra fell under the domain of the Roman Empire. (Browning, 1973)

Petra is a city carved into the sheer rock face by the Nabataeans. The Greeks gave it the name "Petra" which means "rock". It is well known for its "rose-red color". The city spreads over giant red mountains decorated by vast mausoleums which are well known for sculpted architectural facades such as the famous Al-Khazneh (treasury) with its well preserved columns and sculpted figures, 30 m. wide and 43 m. high. A major feature of Petra is the entrance through the Siq, a narrow passage, wide enough for a car, over 1 km. in length bordered on either side by swinging 80 m. high cliffs.

There are hundreds of elaborate rock-cut tombs with intricate carvings and a Roman-style theatre which could seat 3,000 people. Petra flourished as a result of being an important junction for the silk, spice and other trade routes that linked China, India and Southern Arabia with Egypt, Syria, Greece and Rome. Petra was rediscovered for the western world by a Swiss explorer Johann Ludwig Burckhardt in 1812. (McKenzie, 1990).

Petra is recognized as one of the World heritage sites in Jordan by UNESCO. It came second in the new Seven Wonders of the World competition in 2007 which gave it a great publicity as a tourist destination. There are several five star hotels, restaurants and gift shops which facilitates the tourist's stay. The number of visitors to Petra reached 975,285 in 2010. Petra offers jobs to many of the local people.



Al-Khazneh Architectural Façade, Petra.

3. Wadi Rum:

Is situated 70 km, to the north of Aqaba and 120 km south of Petra and is one of Jordan's important tourist destinations. It attracts large numbers of local and foreign tourists who look for adventures in a mountainous desert area. Jabal Rum (1,734 meters above sea level) is the highest peak in Jordan. The main attractions of Wadi Rum are trekking, mountain climbing, camel and horse safari, day trippers from Aqaba or Petra. (Escort 1994).



Scene of Wadi Rum.

Wadi Rum shaped massive mountains rise vertically out of the pink desert sand which separate one dark mass from another in a breathtaking scene cliffs eroded by wind look like faces of men, animals and monsters. Wadi Rum has been inhabited since prehistoric times with many cultures including the Nabataeans. A famous Nabatean temple is Allat dates to the 1st century BC. Inscriptions and ancient rock drawings are found in many locations in Wadi Rum.

Movie makers saw in Wadi Rum a great location shooting films such as *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Red Planet* and *Passion in the Desert* and more. Wadi Rum joined UNESCO World Heritage list in 2011. This win is considered as a recognition for Jordan and its heritage and will have a great impact on the country's tourism sector. It is the fourth UNESCO World Heritage listed site. 300,000 visited Wadi Rum in 2010 mostly foreigner, activities include guided four wheel drive (4WD) tours, horse and camel trekking, hiking and individual camping, 28 desert campsites are run by local Bedouin with the Wadi Rum management. Today the village of Wadi Rum is inhabited by few hundred Bedouin who depend on tourism to improve their income. (Amyan, Jawabreh, Alsaryreh, Malkawi, 2011).

4. Madain Saleh (Al Hijr):

Is one of the best known archaeological sites in Saudi Arabia. It is located in northwest Saudi Arabia, some 400 km north of Madina. A sister city of Petra and the southern capital of the Nabataeans. Inhabited some 2000 years ago. (Babelli, 2009). The city flourished because of the Nabataeans activities in the trade of incense and spice in particular between the East and the Roman Greek and Egyptian empires. (Ansary, Al-Hassan, 2001)

Madain Saleh resembles Petra in many ways. It has about 130 tomb and dwelling hewed out of the rock

formation extending over some 13 km. The facades of the tombs are decorated by columns, lions, eagles and snakes and some inscriptions.



Architectural Façade, Madain Saleh.

Madain Saleh is the first site in Saudi Arabia to join the list of World Heritage sites (2008) is a recognition of its cultural value. The site dates back to between 3rd BC and 1st century AD which represents one of the earliest examples of pre-Islamic society in Saudi Arabia. Near Madain Saleh is the Madain Saleh Train Station and a Turkish fort, that used to make a town of the Hejaz Railway. The line was built by the Turks during the Ottoman Empire to connect Constantinople, Madina and Mecca to ease the Haj pilgrimage for Muslims. It was operational between 1908–1917, when it was destroyed by Arabs fighting Turkish rule. The station has been well-preserved as a museum and features numerous buildings and several train parts.

3 MARKETING STRATEGY:

In light of the major touristic projects constructed or awaiting completion in Aqaba as has been described, this will transform Aqaba into a major tourist destination on the Red Sea. The billions of dollars being invested in touristic projects definitely require a new thinking of how to market Aqaba as a destination for tourists. The suggested marketing strategy of tourism destinations in southern region of Jordan will concentrate on the following:

1. Marketing the golden triangle (Petra, Wadi Rum and Aqaba) to include Madain Saleh, northwest of Saudi Arabia under the title the golden quadruple. Choosing Madain Saleh as a fourth tourist destination in the region is based on the similarities with Petra and Wadi Rum. They can be summarized as such:

- a. Petra is the capital of the Nabataeans in the north and Madain Saleh, sister city and capital in the south.
- b. Architectural monuments in both sites reflect the ingenuity of Nabataeans which intrigues tourists.
- c. Though rock colours and formations in both sites are different, in Petra rocks are red-rose and cream colour in Madain Saleh. Weathering effects shaped mountains in both sites in two styles alike.

- d. Distance between Petra and Wadi Rum is 100 km. and Madain Saleh is close to 400 km. A major road connects them which makes them accessible for tourists.
- e. Wadi Rum shares with Madain Saleh mountain climbing sports and hiking in desert areas Riding balloons and free jumping endurance horse racing, meditation tourism, new to Wadi Rum, can be also practiced in Madain Saleh which will attract more tourists to both sites.
- f. Madain Saleh attracts large numbers of local tourists, Saudis and foreign residents will be able to extend their trips to include Wadi Rum, Petra and Aqaba. Around 70 thousand tourists visited Madain Saleh in the past nine months, in 2011, it is interesting to say that Malaysians were among them. Recently, the Higher Commission for tourism in Saudi Arabia launched a program called, "Discover the Touristic World of Saudia" in cooperation with Saudi Arabian Airlines and local travel agencies. This campaign is directed towards foreign tourists from the world and to locals and residents. (Alriyadh, 2010)

In addition to what Petra, Wadi Rum and Madain Saleh have to offer to tourists we find Aqaba a resort city equipped to meet the tourist needs in terms of hotels of different classes and furnished dwellings, sporting activities, shopping centers, entertainment and many more. The golden quadruple should be marketed as a full package which opens the window to tourism from Jordan to Saudi Arabia and vice versa. This strategy will prolong the stay of tourists which is translated to increase the tourism receipts.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is opening its doors to tourists from around the World. New legislations are issued to control and organize incoming tours to visit a new destination which has so much to offer to tourists in terms of heritage sites, religious places, desert adventure, eco-tourism, geological tourism and many more. At this early stage of tourism in Saudi Arabia the suggested strategy of marketing the above mentioned golden quadruple will very much pave the road for creating new tourist destinations. It is to the benefit of the tourism industry in Jordan both on the government and private sector to adopt such marketing strategy which will enhance coming tourists who will have the chance to see a wide variety of tourist sites in both countries. In light of this a joint marketing campaign from Jordan and Saudi Arabia should be launched aiming at various countries exporting tourists, such as, Europe, North and South America, the Arab World, Africa and Asia. Starting from the window of Madain Saleh and with the help of tourism experts in Jordan, tourism in Saudi Arabia will very soon be on the world's tourist map. No doubt that great and various tourist projects being built in Aqaba do need an aggressive marketing strategy which will attract large numbers of tourists who will find all what they hope and expect in such a region whose tourist sites are unique and spread in geographical area accessible in a very short time.

2. Introducing Air-Cruise Tourism in the Region:

The location of Aqaba is the right place to make it a base or starting point for tourists who prefer to combine cultural and adventure tourism in Jordan and Saudi Arabia with beach and sea resorts tourism not only in Aqaba but along the shores of the Red Sea, in particular Taba and Sharm el Sheikh. This will enable cruise tourism in the region catch up with the fastest grown sector of tourism in the World. In the meantime, cruising around the Mediterranean is becoming very popular.

Tourists from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region can be transported to Madain Saleh by air and after visiting the site and neighboring attractions such as, Al Hijaz Railway Station and archaeological site of Dedan (Al Ula) 22 km., away they can continue their journey to Aqaba. Here the tourists have many choices to make and combine various elements in their programs by visiting Wadi Rum, Petra or other sites in Jordan. Those who desire to take cruise ships to Taba and Sharm el Sheikh where they can enjoy beach tourism and water sports can be flown back instead of returning by sea to Aqaba. Such programs will no doubt give the prospected tourist a multi facet types of tourism experiences.

When such marketing strategy is implemented the number of night stays will be extended which increases the rate of occupancies in hotels and other types of accommodations. (Vellas & Becherel, ed. 1999) The mega tourist facilities built in Aqaba as described before will meet the future demand of tourists. Aqaba will be the center of the golden quadruple where one expects to see a great flow of tourists coming from all directions.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Jordan has iconic tourist attractions spread all over the country and the southern region in particular which is being transformed to house quality accommodations exemplified in Aqaba, Petra and Wadi Rum. Partnership in planning and development, mobilized support from private and public sector will bear fruits when they develop a comprehensive marketing strategy with a clear vision leading to implementation. The mega tourist projects in Aqaba require from state holders and public sector a unified strategy based on worldwide marketing and promotion of the quadruple triangle in a new approach using E-tourism marketing and familiarization tours to various sectors in such as travel agencies, all media channels, airlines and others. Constant work on product development and upgrade skills of human resources through periodic high standard training.

Jordan and Saudi Arabia's co-strategy in planning and marketing is very much needed to make the flow of tourists, both ways, a real and beneficial business. This will result in the growth of domestic and international visitors. Increase tourist expenditure and creation of

new jobs. Ultimately it will raise industry competitiveness and business performance to facilitate long-term growth.

The strategy should include the cruise market between Aqaba and Sharm El Sheikh, which has not been marketed at the regional and global levels. This segment of tourism will serve millions of ex-patriots living and working in the Gulf countries with high incomes who look for new tourist destinations where they can spend their short holidays. Aqaba region with its diverse tourism products will be the right choice for visitors because of its proximity and security.

REFERENCES

- Ansary, A.R., Al-Hassan, H.A. 2001. *The Civilization of Two Cities: Al-Ula and Madain Saleh*, ISBN 9960930106.
- Babelli, M. 2009. *Madain Saleh*, Riyadh, Desert Publisher.
- Browning, I. 1973. *Petra*. Noyes Press, New Jersey.
- Escort, T. 1994. *Wadi Rum in Southern Jordan*, Harrow School, London.
- http://bouportal.com/en/category_det.aspx?id=64, Retrieved April 16, 2012
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/economy_of_Jordan, Retrieved February 14, 2012
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourism_in_Jordan, Retrieved April 12, 2012
- http://www.alriyadh.com/2010/article_576645.html, Retrieved May 3, 2012
- <http://www.doingbusiness.org/data/exploreeconomics/jordan>, Retrieved April 10, 2012
- <http://www.atlastours.net/jordan/wadirumhistory.html>, Retrieved April 30, 2012
- [http://www.visitjordan.com/MajorAttractions/WadiRum/\(tabid\)66/Default.aspx](http://www.visitjordan.com/MajorAttractions/WadiRum/(tabid)66/Default.aspx), Retrieved February 14, 2012, Amman.
- Mozfi, J., Omar, A. & Mahammad M. 2011. . Mutual Impact Between Tourism and the Host Community. (A Case Study of Wadi Rum). *European Journal of Social Sciences*. Vol.19, No. 1.
- McKenzie, J. 1990. *The Architecture of Petra*, Vol. 1, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp 11–32 and pp 33–46.
- The National Tourism Strategy, 2011–2015, p.21, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Amman.
- UNWTO (2010), *Tourism Highlights 2010 Edition*, World Tourism Organization, pp 236–237, Madrid.
- http://www.adc.jo/Public/English.aspx?Lang=2&Site_ID=1&Page_ID=1909&Menu_I..4/17/2012, Retrieved April 17, 2012
- Vellas, F. & Becherel, L., ed. 1999. *The International Marketing of Travel and Tourism: A Strategic Approach*, pp 307–309, MacMillan Press Ltd., London.

Tourism representation of Malay myths and traditional values in destination marketing

N.A. Razak

University Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The primary aim of this paper is to explore how Malay myths and traditional values have been represented in tourism marketing. The analysis focuses on the representation of two Malay myths which are embedded with the core traditional values and have been included in the Malaysian tourism brochures published from 1962 to 2007. Utilising a content analysis method, findings reveal that a range of themes portraying Orientalism, Otherness and globalisation are reflected in the representation of Malay myths. Malay values ingrained in the narrative of utilised myths include the significance of conveying crucial messages in a delicate way especially the rejection of a marriage proposal and that indirect communication is a symbol of politeness. Findings of this paper add to the understanding of the representation of myths in place marketing by demonstrating that a place's identity can be accentuated via the incorporation of unusual and unique tales such as those related to a strange request for a wedding dowry and a violent brawl involving kitchen pots and pans.

Keywords: myth, legend, representation, content analysis and tourism marketing

1 INTRODUCTION

Many destinations around the world have made use of ancient myths and legends to entice tourist visitation (Light 2007; Reiss 2006). In fact, mythological tales associated with the Celtic, Maori and Greek traditions continue to be featured in tourism promotional materials. In the context of legends, it is claimed that these tales are included in destination marketing as they can act as tourism appeals and motivation agents (Reiss, 2006). Although it is acknowledged that the incorporation of mythological stories can play significant roles in destination marketing, thus far, there are limited studies which have investigated into this area. Hence, the aim of this paper was to explore one of the under researched areas, the representation of mythological tales and traditional values in tourism marketing. The analysis focuses on Malay mythological stories which are ingrained with the core Malay values included in tourism brochures produced by the Malaysian national promotional bodies published from 1962 to 2007. The paper concentrates on the Malay myths as 'Malay' is the main ethnic group in Malaysia and there is a paucity of studies which have inspected this area in the context of tourism. The following section will explain the concepts used in this paper.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *The concept of 'Myth' and 'Legend'*

It is claimed that the meaning of 'myth' as story originated from the Greek term "*muthos*" (Larue,

1975, p.5) or "*mythos*" (Spence, 1949; Humphrey, 1996). In Greek, "*mythos*" can stand for "word", "saying" or "story" (Willis, 1993, p.10). Two of the key attributes of 'myths' identified from a number of definitions available in literature are that 'myths' are tales and these stories are sacred or regarded by some or traditional societies, as true. For example Hassan (1952) considered 'myths' as "a group of stories often sacred and often treating transcendental themes like death, afterlife, creation, and gods" (p.206). Rosenberg (1997) mentions that myths often communicate sacred tales. A reason for why myths can be viewed as sacred is because they usually depict religious beliefs and rituals (Bascom, 1965). Other characteristics of 'myth' that have been put forward are that they are closely linked to history, religious beliefs, worldviews and ritualistic practices (O'Connell, 1995; Othman, 2008; Davies, 1994).

Another term which is closely linked to 'myth' is 'legend'. Although a number of academicians (Bascom, 1965; Fontenrose, 1971; Dundes, 1984) have laid out the differences between these two terms, it is recognised that only scholars from specific academic fields such as folklorists have made an attempt to distinguish between 'myths' and 'legends' (Winzeler, 2008). In the context of this paper, the concept of 'myths' shall also comprise of 'legends' as a more holistic approach of the term is adopted.

2.2 *Key attributes of the Malay myths*

There are several criteria which are regarded as at the core of the Malay myths. The essence of the Malay

concept of myths is that myths represent an important component of the Malays' unique concept of history, which also encompasses mythical and legendary tales (Othman, 2008). Besides, it is argued that the choice of incorporating myths and legends in recording and writing the Malay historical texts represents one of the Malay cultural values referred to as the concept of "kehalusan" which can be explained as being polite or deferential (Brown, 1948, as cited in Phillipson, 2007). The second characteristic of the Malay myths is the presence of magic (Omar, 1993). It is said that magical elements captivated the interest of early Western scholars and contemporary academicians. In fact, Winzeler (1983) argues that the study of magic is one of the areas of the Malay myths which has captivated the attention of scholars the most. Another attribute of the Malay myths is they comprise stories of universal themes. Ismail (2000) states that both positive and negative universal themes associated with mythical stories such as love, sacrifice, faithfulness and envy are reflected in the Malay myths found on Langkawi Island. The representation of religious values is another core criterion of the Malay myth. In the discussion of Malay myths, several authors (Skeat, 1900; Winstedt, 1982; Othman, 2008) assert that although the Malays are mostly Muslims, their myths incorporate tales which represent a combination of past and contemporary religious beliefs.

2.3 *Tourism representation*

'Representation' is one of the important concepts in many fields including tourism. It is maintained that tourism is an industry that relies significantly on a selection of representations (Papson, 1981, as cited in Hunter, 2008). There are several reasons for why representation is considered significant in the context of tourism. To begin with, in place promotion, 'representation' is vital in "making destinations understandable and desirable to visitors" (Hunter, 2011, p.335). It is explained that representation is crucial as "tourism is not a product since it cannot be sampled in advance" (Dann, 1996, p.79) and it involves the selling of meanings and experiences through the production of romanticised images (Chatelard 2001; Dann 1996).

2.4 *Representation of mythological aspects in tourism promotion*

Past works which examined mythological components in tourism (Gingging, 2007; Adams, 1984; Buzinde, Choi and Wang, 2012) revealed that themes such as exoticism, traditional lifestyles and uniqueness of cultural identity are presented. The analysis of these works found that primarily some of these themes are used by tourism marketers to accentuate the portrayals of Orientalism and the exotic Otherness. Gingging (2007) reveals that even though the practice of headhunting is viewed by some as an embarrassing and a bizarre tradition, it can help the projections of exoticism and

mysticism in tourism promotion. Therefore, images and icons connected to headhunting have been presented in promotional efforts including the catchy tagline "I Lost My Head in Borneo" (Gingging 2007). Furthermore, it is reflected in the study carried out by Buzinde et al. (2012) that cultural and religious attributes containing mythical elements including feng shui and voodoo are represented in tourism promotion to create the portrayal of the exotic Other.

It is proposed that mythological elements can be used in tourism marketing to accentuate the distinctive identity of particular ethnic groups or destinations. For example the representation of Manas legend which depicts the epic tale of a well-known historical figure has been used in Kyrgyzstan Republic to highlight the distinctive Kyrgyz identity in destination marketing (Thompson, Schofield, Foster and Bakieva, 2006). The association of Kyrgyz people with Manas is an acceptable self-representation of the country's identity as it narrates the positive history, spirit and nationalism (Thompson et al., 2006). Gingging (2007) reveals that the promotion of the head hunting ritual is one of the effective approaches in maintaining the Kadazan Dusun native identity as the federal government in Malaysia strongly promotes nation building. Overall, it is reflected that mythological elements including legends and traditional rituals are normally associated with rare and unusual supernatural beliefs. As a result of the association with these elements, the uniqueness of particular ethnic groups and places can be accentuated in destination marketing.

Via the analysis of King Arthur's legend, Reiss (2006) argued that well-known legends can play an important role in encouraging tourist visitations and can be employed as a unique selling proposition (USP) in destination marketing. The legend associated with Count Dracula has also put Romania on the global tourist market (Cosma, Negrusa and Napoca, 2007). However, Light (2007) argues that Dracula's legends and the development based on this tale were not welcomed by Romanians. It is claimed that the myth of Dracula is not consistent with the image of a developed nation which Romania intended to portray (Light, 2007).

3 METHOD

3.1 *Content analysis*

The assessment of the representation of the Malay myths was carried out using a content analysis method. A content analysis method was adopted in this paper as it has been accepted by scholars (e.g. Krippendorff, 2004; Neuendorff, 2002; Weber, 1990) as a reliable means to examine communication content including brochures. It is a suitable tool to analyse the representation of myths and legends in brochures as this technique can be adopted to examine both quantitative and qualitative components (Graneheim

&Lundman, 2004). This paper adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches in exploring the tourism representation of myths despite the majority of past studies paying more attention to the qualitative aspects. A combination of these approaches can lead to a broader understanding of the investigation of the portrayal of the Malay myths. Moreover, it is possible to identify the significance of the representation of these tales in tourism brochures. The analysis conducted in this paper only comprises of the assessment of the textual part of the brochures. Besides, the analysis only involves examining the mythological tales that are represented directly in the brochures.

3.2 *Data collection and analysis*

During the data collection process all past brochures were analysed and digitally scanned at the Tourism Malaysia Resource Centre located at the Putra World Trade Centre. The time frame for the analysis of the brochures (45 years) was determined based on the earliest tourism brochures kept at Tourism Malaysia's Resource Centre. The earliest brochures kept at this centre are two brochures published in 1962. The latest editions of the brochures used in this study are brochures published in 2007. In the analysis of the representation, only Malay myths that are directly mentioned in the brochures are examined. The representation of these myths is then assessed based on the manifest and latent aspects conveyed within the tales. The operational definition of the term 'myth' adopted in this paper includes narrative of traditional stories describing supernatural events, magical acts, sacredness and mysticism. Other traditional tales that are represented as Malay myths are also included in the analysis. These mainly comprise stories which are introduced in tourism brochures using statements such as "according to myth", "legend says" or other similar openings.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Overall, 226 brochures published in English were analysed. Numerous myths and legends associated with multi-ethnic societies in Malaysia have been included in tourism brochures. There are 23 myths which can be linked to the Malay ethnic group directly are represented in tourism brochures. However, the analysis carried out in this paper only focuses on the tales depicting a brawl between Mat Chincang and Mat Raya and the Mount Ledang Princess as these stories are embedded with the core traditional Malay values.

4.1 *Legend of the brawl between Mat Chinchang and Mat Raya*

This legend is incorporated into 12 brochures published over four decades. It is integrated into the brochures as part of the promotion of two places on

Langkawi Island, Telaga Air Hangat (Hot Springs) and Kuah. There are several components of the tale of the brawl represented in the brochures. In the brochures published in the 1970s and 1980s, longer versions of the tale are featured to describe the site of Telaga Air Hangat. The main component of this legend which is represented in the earlier brochure publications includes a story of a fierce brawl between two families which started because of the rejection of a marriage proposal. Other parts of the legend consist of tales depicting how the fight resulted in the cooking utensils being shattered and scattered all over the place and the fight between two rival fathers ended after they were changed into two mountains. However, the analysis of the tale depicting the brawl between Mat Chinchang and Mat Raya reveals that over the years, some details of this legend have been omitted from brochures. With the exception of the brochure 'Langkawi 2005', the description of this tale in brochures published in the 1990s and 2000s has been shortened. Details such as the reason for the fierce fight between two fathers and how the brawl ended are omitted from these brochures.

Furthermore, in the 1990s and 2000s, this legend is added into brochures as part of the background description of the capital town of Langkawi, Kuah. It is stated in the later brochure publications that "the name Kuah is a Malay word meaning gravy and is associated with an ancient legend of two battling giants who overturned a gigantic pot of curry at the spot where the town now stands" (Brochures Langkawi, 1999; 2000; 2001; 2002; 2003; 2006; 2007). However, the brochure 'Langkawi 2005' featured a slightly longer version of the tale of the brawl. It is stated in this brochure that "The main town, Kuah, which in Malay means gravy, is associated with the legend of two giants who spilled a pot of gravy at the spot where the town is presently located. According to folklore, two of the highest mountains in Langkawi are named after the two giants – Mat Cincang and Mat Raya" (Brochure Langkawi, 2005). There is one additional element mentioned in the brochure 'Langkawi 2005'. The origin of the names of two of the highest mountains on Langkawi Island is stated. One element which has not been included in earlier brochures is that the legend is connected to two giants. Giants were first mentioned in the brochure 'Langkawi' published in 1999. In the brochures published prior to 1999, it is stated that the brawl occurred between two powerful fathers. Furthermore, earlier publication of the brochures includes other place names on Langkawi Island besides Kuah and Telaga Air Hangat which originated from this legendary brawl. Brochures published in the 1990s and 2000s have omitted these details.

The description of the legend associated with the legendary brawl is incorporated with a number of elements related to Langkawi Island. Firstly, the natural formation of Langkawi and the origin of place names on the island from the traditional view of the locals are depicted in the tale included in the brochures. The representation related to the cause of the brawl between

two fathers reveals one of the core Malay traditional values. It is reflected within the longer version of the legend in the brochures published in the 1970s and 1980s that a rejection of a marriage is a serious matter in the traditional Malay society and can lead to dangerous consequences. Although according to the traditional Malay belief, the legend of the wedding feast's brawl is a tale involving giants, this element has only been added to brochures from 1999 onwards. In the context of tourism, the inclusion of a tale involving giants can add a commercial value to lure tourists as legends involving giants are commonly found in various parts of the world including England, New Zealand and Ireland. Therefore, as Western tourists are familiar with this type of tale, it can be exploited to attract tourists from the West.

4.2 *The legend of the Mount Ledang Princess*

Another legend which showcases the social relationship involving marriage is the tale of the Mount Ledang Princess. The analysis uncovered that this tale is not represented widely in tourism brochures. The legend has been absent from the Malaysian brochures for four decades and has only been incorporated into the brochures published in 2001. Although this legend is included in two brochures which are published four years apart, there are some different elements that have been employed as part of the portrayal of the tale of the Mount Ledang princess. The brochure published in 2001 contains more details while the brochure published in 2005 comprises of brief descriptions relating to the princess and the mountain. The analysis of this legend identified that there are only two components of the stories that are represented in both brochures. These include details regarding Mount Ledang being the residence of the Mount Ledang Princess and the connection between the princess and Sultan Mansur Shah of Malacca.

Other components of the legend which are employed in the brochure published in 2001 include information relating to the secret cave on Mount Ledang which has been the dwelling place of the princess, connections to supernatural encounters and a twilight zone, and details of the dowry that the princess asked for from Sultan Mansur Shah. These elements are apparent in the description included in the brochure published in 2001. According to legend there was a beautiful princess who captivated the heart of Sultan Mansur Shah of Malacca during the 15th century. He wanted to marry her but she set impossible conditions for him. She asked him to build a golden bridge linking his palace in Malacca to the mountain. The princess also asked the sultan to bring her seven jars of women's tears, seven trays of the hearts of mosquitoes and seven bowls containing the blood of the Sultan's son, all of which the Sultan could not fulfil! (Brochure Malaysia Hill Resorts, 2001).

However, there is one part of the legend which only appears in the brochure published in 2005. This brochure includes the statement that the Mount Ledang

Princess is believed to be ill-fated. This brochure claims that "Popular folklore cites that this was the dwelling place of a beautiful but ill-fated princess who spurned a famous prince from Melaka in the 15th century"

4.3 *Discussions*

There are a few characteristics of the Malay myths mentioned in the literature review section that are identifiable in the narrative of myths included in brochures. These include the claims made by Othman (2008) that myths are intimately link to historical tales, the observation of the presence of religious beliefs and traditional worldviews (O'Connell, 1995; Bascom, 1965; Davies, 1994) and the reflection of universal and local values (Ismail, 2000). Elements depicting primitive worldviews are reflected in the legend of the brawl between Mat Chinchang and Mat Raya which depict the traditional Malay beliefs of the formation of Langkawi's natural environment. Traditional Malay values are embedded in these three tales. One of the essences of the Malay values associated with the concept of "*kehalusan*" (Brown, 1948, as cited in Phillipson, 2007) is evident in the Malay myths. It is shown in the representation of these two tales that it is crucial to convey important messages delicately. The legend of the Mount Ledang princess illustrates the proper way to reject a marriage proposal whereas the legend of the brawl demonstrates the serious consequence of the rejection of a marriage proposal in the Malay society.

The representation of these two Malay myths reveals tales which are selected to be used in tourism promotion and are utilised as part of the background description of two places in Malaysia. Findings of this paper support previous findings (Gingging 2007; Buzinde et al., 2012) via the assessment of the representation of Malay myths in tourism brochures showing that the incorporation of mythological components which mainly depict stories involving supernatural, magical and mystical aspects add to the projection of destinations in Malaysia as Oriental and Otherness destinations. These attributes are accentuated via the supernatural and traditional mythological tales which depict the aura of mysticism, exoticism and primitive worldviews. However, findings of this paper add that the representation of Malay myths also convey themes of globalisation via a tale involving a giant. Therefore, it is shown in this paper that the representation of Malay myths in tourism promotional brochures projects a combination of Orientalism, Otherness and globalisation themes. Findings of this paper also contribute to the understanding of the representation of myths in tourism marketing by showing the utilisation of myths which contain rare and unique supernatural tales such as those of a strange request for a wedding dowry and a severe brawl which destroyed and scattered pots and pans can enhance a distinctive image of particular ethnic groups and destinations.

However, only some of the attributes of the Malay myths are identifiable in the representation of the legends analysed in this paper as just small parts of the mythological stories are included in tourism brochures. It is recognized that the legend of the Mount Ledang princess has great potential to be utilised in tourism promotion as it is argued by Reiss (2006) that the exceptionally well-known legend has the power to lure tourists and to give a competitive advantage. Although the site that originally employed the legend of the brawl between Mat Raya and Mat Chinchang has been developed, it is still a good marketing strategy to adopt the legend in its tourism promotion or to employ the longer version of this legend as part of the background description of the island. Langkawi is well-known as a legendary island and it is proposed that the use of well-known legends can accentuate and give a competitive advantage in destination marketing.

5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, findings of this paper show that the legend associated with the brawl of Mat Chinchang and Mat Raya is fairly represented while the famous Malay legend, the Mount Ledang princess' tale, is under-represented in tourism promotional brochures. Over the years, the representation of the legend of the wedding feast's brawl has been incorporated into place marketing and has experienced several transformations. It is identified that some of these alterations were done in order to fit tourism development and to lure tourists. Overall, the inclusion of Malay myths in tourism marketing projects a range of themes and a number of traditional values are reflected in the narrative of Malay mythological stories featured in tourism brochures.

REFERENCES

Adams, K.M. 1984. Come to Tana Toraja, "Land of the Heavenly Kings": Travel Agents as Brokers in Ethnicity. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 11, 469–485.

Bascom, W. 1965. Three Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives. *Journal of American Folklore*, 78, 3–20.

Buzinde, C., Choi, Y. & Wang, A. Y. 2012. Tourism Representations of Chinese Cosmology: The Case of Feng Shui Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 975–996

Chatelard, G. 2001. Tourism and Representation: of Social Change and Power Relations in Wadi Ramm [Online]. Retrieved on Dec 20, 2009, from <http://www.wadiram.userhome.ch/fichiers/Tourism%20and%20representations.doc>

Cosma, S., Pop, A., Negrusa, A. and Napoca, C. 2007. Should Dracula be a Brand to Promote Romania as a Tourist Destination. *Interdisciplinary Management Research*, 3, 39–56.

Dann, G. 1996. The People of Tourist Brochures. In Selwyn, T. (Ed). *The Tourist Image: Myth and Myth Making in Tourism*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 61–82.

Davies, D. 1994. Introduction: Raising the Issues. In Holm, J and Bowker, J. (Eds), *Myth and History*, London: Pinter, 17.

Dundes, A. 1984. Introduction. In Dundes, A. (Ed), *Sacred Narrative: Readings in the Theory of Myth*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p.1–3.

Echtner, C.M., & Prasad, P. 2003. The Context of Third World Tourism Marketing. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30(3), 660–682.

Fontenrose, J. 1971. *The Ritual Theory of Myth*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gingging, F.A.M. 2007. "I Lost My Head in Borneo": Tourism and the Refashioning of the Headhunting Narrative in Sabah. *Cultural Analysis*, 6, 1–29.

Graneheim, U.H. and Lundman, B. 2004. Qualitative Content Analysis in Nursing Research: Concepts, Procedures and Measures to Achieve Trustworthiness. *Nurse Education Today*, 24, 105–112.

Hassan, I.H. 1952. Towards a Method in Myth. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 65 (257), 205–215.

Humphrey, E. 1996. Myth, Symbol and Reality in the Apocalypse. Bibl 679, *Beyond the Veil: Introduction to the NT Apocalypse*, Regent College, unpublished [Online]. Retrieved on June 17, 2007 from <http://www.pbcc.org/contactus/bell/ApocalypseMyth.pdf>

Hunter, W.C. 2008. A Typology of Photographic Representations for Tourism: Depictions of Groomed Spaces. *Tourism Management*, 29, 354–365.

Hunter, W.C. 2011. Rukai Indigenous Tourism: Tourism Representations, Cultural Identity and Q Method. *Tourism Management*, 32(2), 335–348.

Ismail, M. Z. 2000. *The Legends of Langkawi: Myths and Management* (Unpublished Master Thesis). Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Malaysia.

Knappert, J. 1980. *Malay Myths and Legends*. Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann Educational Books.

Krippendorff, K. 2004. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology* (2nd Ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Larue, G.A. 1975. *Ancient Myth and Modern Man*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Light, D. 2007. Dracula Tourism in Romania: Cultural Identity and the State. *Annals of Tourism Research* 34 (3), 746–765.

Neuendorf, K.A. 2002. *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

O'Connell, R. 1995. *Analyzing Mythology* [Online]. Retrieved on 10 March 2007, from <http://www.mythome.org/mythII.html>.

Omar, S. M.S. 1993. *Myths and the Malay Ruling Class*. Singapore: Times Academic Press.

Othman, H. 2008. Conceptual Understanding of Myths and Legends in Malay History. *Sari*, 26, 91–110.

Phillipson, S. N. 2007. Toward an Understanding of a Malay Conception of Giftedness. In Phillipson, S. N. and McCain, M. (Eds). *Conceptions of Giftedness: Socio-cultural Perspective*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Thompson, K.J. and Schofield, P. and Foster, N. and Bakieva, G. 2006. Kyrgyzstan's 'Manas' Epos Millennium Celebrations: Post-Colonial Resurgence of Turkic Culture and the Strategic Marketing of Cultural Tourism. In: Picard, D. And Robinson, M. (Eds), *Festivals, Tourism and Social Change*. Channel View Publications, Clevedon, pp. 172–190.

Reiss, S. 2006. Legend as Unique Selling Proposition for the Marketing of Destinations: The Case of Glastonbury and the Legend of King Arthur (Unpublished Master Thesis). University of Bournemouth, United Kingdom.

Rosenberg, D. C. 1997. *Folklore, Myths and Legends: A World Perspective*. Chicago: NTC Publishing.

- Spence, L. 1949. *The Outlines of Mythology*. London: Watts & Co.
- Skeat, W. W. 1900. *Malay Magic: An Introduction to Folklore and Popular Religion of the Malay Peninsular*. London: MacMillan.
- Weber, R. P. 1990. *Basic Content Analysis* (2nd Ed). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Willis, R. 1993. Introduction. In Willis, R. (Ed), *World Mythology*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Winstedt, R. O. 1982. *The Malay Magician: being Shaman, Saiva and Sufi*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.
- Winzeler, R. L. 1983. The Study of Malay Magic. *Bijdragen tot de Taal*, 39(4), 435–458.
- Winzeler, R. L. 2008. *Anthropology and Religion: What We Know, Think and Question*. Plymouth: AltaMira.

From drinking to tasting: An exploration amongst Malaysian wine connoisseurs

J. Dias Soeiro

School of Culinary Arts, Hospitality and Tourism, Taylor's University, Subang Jaya, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This study explores how a Malaysian wine consumer can become a wine connoisseur when it is known what it takes to achieve this status. As a non-wine producing country and recent importer of wine, the culture and the consuming habits can be considered quite young. The main objective of this research is to investigate on a possible pattern among different profiles of Malaysian wine connoisseurs in order to observe and point out the similarities and differences during the process. Structured interviews were designed according to certain profiles and conducted within Klang Valley. Results reveal a modification of the sociocultural dimension and the importance of a third party influencing the connoisseur during the process. Marketers and professionals from the beverage industry can use the outcome of this study and develop strategies and further stage opportunities to develop wine businesses.

Keywords: wine, wine connoisseur, drinking patterns, Malaysia

1 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a multi-racial country which consists of Malay, Chinese and Indian races with an estimated population of 28.4 million people in 2010. Islam is the largest and the official religion. The other large religions include Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity. The Malays are Muslims who therefore typically do not consume alcohol on religious grounds. Furthermore, the population and their religions create a real complexity in the wine market and its strategies as a Chinese or Indian may be Buddhist, Muslim or eventually Christian. The Malaysian wine market is highly dominated by the Chinese, who represent over a third of total population, hence, limit the size of the market for wine. (NZ Trade & Enterprise, 2007). In general, Malaysians associate wine with healthier lifestyle, due to marketing and publicity, it's the reason why red wine is sold much more than a white wine or rosé wine. Knowing that most of the Malaysian wine drinkers are located in urban areas (Euromonitor, 2007), wine market is really a sector which can be developed and which is not congested yet even if the competition is important. There is a need for wine marketers and wine related professionals to understand consumer behavior in order to forecast and influence consumer behavior to isolate specific groups of consumer based on their intention to drink wine, drinking habits and preference of wine.

Being a country in a non-wine producing region, what could be the parameters in what a wine consumer can climb the ladder of the consumption behavior?

What could be the influences involved to change the culture and the people drinking habits?

Most wine consumption researches in Malaysia done by Euromonitor, National Statistics and Market Research have barely enclosed questions and understanding regarding wine consumer preferences, consumption situation, lifestyle and perception and motivation toward wine drinking. However, according to New Zealand Trade and Enterprise report, the influence of western culture and its effect on the local culture let place to different type of consumption and drinking behaviors. "Wine is becoming a cultural symbol of refinement, affluence and sophistication for many, particularly for those exposed to western lifestyle" (NZ Trade & Enterprise, 2006, p2). The interest of the study concerns the wine connoisseurs. As non-wine producing country and seeing the modifications in the drinking habits of Malaysians, it can be very interesting to study how a Malaysian wine consumer can become a wine connoisseur when it is known what it takes to reach this level. The transition process from wine consumer to wine connoisseur can be studied and analyzed in order to observe and understand if a pattern can be observed amongst different profile of wine connoisseur.

2 KNOWING WHO IS A WINE CONNOISSEUR

2.1 *Wine customer drinking motivation*

Steve Charters (2006) suggests the exploration of consumer motivation using a threefold model, looking

at the utilitarian (physical) benefit, symbolic reasons and experimental motivation. Using the paradigm of consumer research as a means of exploring motivation – the factors’ influences the wine drinkers will be assessing through the field of study on anthropology, sociology, psychology and history, and insights of these disciplines will also applied, where relevant. (Charters, 2006) Why do people choose to drink wine? Consumer behavior which related to decision making in wine consumption is guided by consumers’ individual values, and as a result the appreciation of wine is the impact of satisfying those values of an individual (Charters, 2006). Charters (2006) has developed a framework for wine consumption based on the utilitarian, symbolic and experiential dimensions of consumption.

These three approaches, utilitarian, symbolic and experiential, have been conceptualized and applied in analyzing wine consumption purpose. However, it is important to stress that no single act of consumption fall into just one category, nor is a repeated act of consumption consistently giving the same motivational weighting at each repetition. It has been noted that there are cultural differences in the relative importance of the three purposes of consumption (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998), so that, for instance, in Chinese societies the display of close family ties may be a more important symbolic goal than European cultures (Charters, 2006).

2.2 Wine market segmentation

The wine market segmentation model (table 1), initiated by Spawton (1991), attempt to propose four segments of wine drinkers. From new wine drinkers to connoisseurs, the consumer goes through different steps involving changes in the behavior and consumption attitude. The framework acknowledges that wine consumers are becoming more knowledgeable about wine, and generally drinking less wine, but wine of a higher quality.

The table reveals the segmentation of different profiles of wine consumers. The four types of drinkers are clearly identified and allow a good reference in term of who are the actual wine drinkers.

Table 1. Wine drinker segmentation.

New wine drinkers	Who are yet to establish experiences. They drink wine socially, like coolers, and are unsophisticated.
Beverage wine consumers	Who are very keen to consume, with little desire to ‘appreciate’ the product and loyal to one style.
Aspirational drinkers	Who focus on social aspects of drinking. They are risk adverse and like to learn.
Connoisseurs	Who are knowledgeable, regular drinkers with a broad spectrum of tastes.

2.3 Identification

The definition from d’Hauteville given by Charters (2006) is one of the most specific on who is a wine connoisseur. For him, the connoisseur have to highly involve with wine by tasting wine often, going on wine tour, drinking almost daily and searching out new product and focusing on region of origin. He should be also a person who reads about wine, visits wineries and goes on wine courses. Even this definition is very detailed and interesting; it does not match with the local context of Malaysia as the people are culturally, socially and also geographically less or not in contact with wine.

For Spawton (1991) a wine connoisseur is a person who is knowledgeable, regular drinkers with a broad spectrum of tastes. This definition is giving more information about who is a connoisseur but it still gives free thinking about who he can be. A further literature review allows understanding a better definition more related to this study. By using the work of Mitchell and Greatorex about consumer behavior, Spawton (1991) identify five main factors which can be used to identify a connoisseur:

- Self-esteem, where wine knowledge and appreciation will create a favorable impression.
- Complementarity to meals, where the wine is projected to enhance taste and / or enjoyment
- Psychological risk, where making the wrong wine choice is being potentially damaging his self-esteem and maybe his recognition
- Functionality, where he will have the ability to determine if the wine is faulty and the techniques of appreciating the wine properly.
- Economics, where the perceived value of the product is of a standard that is relative to the price being paid (Spawton, 1991; Preszler et al., 2009).

To summarize this definition, a wine connoisseur has to be a hedonist person, curious, with experience in tasting and able to differentiate different types of wine. He has to know how to appreciate wine and have a certain basis in knowledge in order to be able to choose a product according to certain situations.

2.4 Becoming connoisseur

Becoming a wine connoisseur has to involve a lot the individual as the level of expertise of a connoisseur engage a high involvement as was detailed by d’Hauteville (2003). Proffitt (2008, p26) explains about several cognitive factors that appear to drive expert-level performance. Most important factors are the development of automaticity, perceptual learning and changes to knowledge structures. These factors imply the ability, knowledge, skills that a connoisseur should have in order to reach the level as expert. A wine connoisseur may detect and highlight different components than novices do.

Researches on wine connoisseur have revealed about expert-novice differences in their abilities to

perceive, describe, and remember the sensorial element of a wine. Little systematic attention has highlighted on how the connoisseur organizes and uses their knowledge base on winemaking and viticulture. Knowledge, organization, structural and conceptual principles are key component of the connoisseur package. Know-how and knowledge are important and the involvement in wine culture has to be intensively practiced and experienced. Connoisseur might consider how to reduce perceived risks.

2.5 *Connoisseur and expertise*

Wine expertise does not only focus on the cognitive management of sensory data but also on the communication and interpretation of the information revealed. Expectations about the taste profile for a particular varietal may determine which flavor characteristics they search for, subsequently identify, and ultimately remember about a wine (Hughson, 2003). Additionally, the possession of wine tasting vocabulary remains an important factor at this level of expertise as it will represent the hard work and focused effort to acquire it (Proffitt, 2008, p35).

Also researches conducted among wine experts show that there is proof of qualitative differences among connoisseurs, based on functional criteria (Proffitt, 2008, p12). Wine connoisseurs are people who can answer series of question based on wine knowledge. But it is important to know that their interpretation may differ according to their tough to the domain. As example it is important to take into consideration their goals and the ways they interact with the wine as it may differ in their representation and use of that knowledge. For example, although sommeliers and winemakers might both know a lot about a given wine, they may emphasize differently on a specific dimension.

It can be highlighted four criteria essentials to reach the status of expertise. The use of one of those criteria can be relevant when choosing a panel of experts: (1) years of experience (also known as the ten-year rule), (2) evidence of professional activity or certification, (3) word of mouth referrals and (4) testing. Ten years of experience in a domain has served as a common rule of thumb, or benchmark, for expert performance (Proffitt, 2008, p39).

As mentioned previously, in Malaysia, wine is not the local culture as there is no production of wine and history related to it. Becoming expert in this country is a very interesting matter by trying to understand how the diffusion of information is done. But also, it is very interesting to understand how connoisseurs can monitor an important dimension: the taste. The motivation developed by Charters (2006), will be supported with what mentioned Wilson (2004) as drinking is a key practice in the expression of identity. Even if drinking is itself cultural as it involve a practice, it is a practice which engage different dimension like social, economic and political as supported by organizations and actions of national and ethnic values.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 *Research instrument*

This exploratory research utilizes a qualitative approach to answer the research question. A structured interview session has been design for a 30 minutes face to face discussion.

Three different interviews were design in order to match to different profiles of connoisseurs:

- Connoisseurs with education
- Connoisseurs with trainings
- Connoisseurs without training neither education

By having these three categories it is possible to target all types of wine connoisseurs but it is important to notice that further identification can be done in order to collect more accurate data. It is important to note that not all the participants are from the wine industry. Being a wine connoisseur does not involve necessarily the work dimension as it can be a hobby, a pleasure of every day's life or a career prospect. The segmentation was done by thinking of the various possibilities in how a connoisseur can acquire his knowledge: academically, professionally or self-studies.

Globally the frame used for the interviews was quasi similar but each segment was given some specific questions. Some of the questions are adapted to the profile of the connoisseur, thus some may refer to the lecturer or the trainer. A selection of questions was asked to the interviewees to get the maximum information and understanding of their experience during the transition process. The final aim of this study is to try to find similarities or differences in the process of becoming connoisseur.

3.2 *Testing an interview*

An interview test was designed to verify the relevance of the questioned asked. During the interview test, some of the questions were revealed not appropriate as the answer given were not matching with the information expected. This test has been useful also to bring up the confidence of the interviewer as it is an important phase of the research. A lot of communication skill is required with an extremely well knowledge of the topic. The difficulty is to manage to extract personal and private information.

For privacy purpose, the name of the interviewees were hidden and replaced by letters for the analysis. It was clearly mentioned in the introduction that name won't be revealed in the study and all information given will be strictly used for research purpose only. All the data were audio recorded then typed before processed and analyzed.

3.3 *Conducting interviews*

The interviews were conducted where it was the most convenient for the interviewee. Since the field of research is mainly based in Klang Valley, it was not an

issue to go and find the persons. The interviews followed a sequential format and were audio taped with permission of the subjects. The interviewer explained the relevance and the need of the audio recording for note taking and analysis only; no individual names would be linked and highlighted. Then, the information recovered were transcript into a table form individually to each person. The tabling of the information allows to generate and to combine the idea given by one interviewee. Thus, it becomes easier to cross table the information and combine the said by the different interviewees.

Due to time limitation and constrains in this study, five interviews have been organized. The participants were selected according to the profile as connoisseur. The search to find the correct participant was a difficult task as the number of wine connoisseur is very low and their identification is not revealed. Local professional and non-professional networks were useful to find at least participants in each category.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Wine connoisseur continuum process

In the process of becoming connoisseur, it can be noted the presence of third parties who will influence more or less the wine consumer at any time of the process. Anybody is able to reach the level of connoisseur as the process can vary according to the contacts and contexts involved during the process. The figure 1 shows a continuum process where the consumer will go through in order to reach the connoisseur level. Of course some parameters need to be taken in account such as regularity and involvement of the consumption or interaction with wine. The curve shows different steps or phases during the process. According to the interviews all the connoisseurs show approximately the same profile as the theory comes first and the travel last as completion of the process and final immersion in the culture.

C "This trip brings a holistic approach to wine. In Asia, because you are not connected to the whole process you are only at the end. In Europe, what makes me realized was the whole link right after the time you plant the grape until you consume the wine"

D "The travel makes the appreciation more complete [...] you just not drink the end product, you experience the work, the effort people put into the growing and then the wine making".

All the interviewees tend to show similar characteristics in term of steps and importance of a third party to bring up their confidence and understanding of the product. If the basics are not strong then it may takes a longer time to get the necessary sum of knowledge to reach the ultimate level.

The figure 1 summarizes the evolution of the wine connoisseur process and many points could be questioned. When does the tierce person really influence? How many times and how many of them are necessary? Is it a need to accomplish one stage before

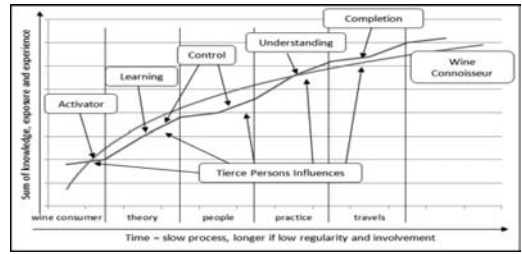


Figure 1. Chart of wine connoisseur continuum process.

going further? How much time does a step need to be accomplished and is there a sum of knowledge required?

Most of all, the data collection tends to show that travel will be the last phase as it will be the achievement of the whole process. As mentioned earlier, travels help to understand the wine in all dimensions as it will involve the actor implicated in the making and supply process.

5 DISCUSSION

Remembering that Malaysia is non-producing country and knowing what it takes to become connoisseur, it was interesting to identify the similarities amongst the interviewees. In the process, it seems that the individual will have to get information through different methods available in Malaysia. The wine consumer may have the ability to taste wine following guidelines mentioned in books, magazines and / or internet. Also thanks to training or education the consumer will get extra knowledge and enrichment of skills. But at his level, a wine consumer is not apt to be able to understand fully what wine is at a connoisseur level, as the cultural and human factor may influence in the process. What the consumer could get is an access to the upper level of the social class as wine is consider expensive. Also in many social organizations in the world, the dimension of taste is led by the elite which is the higher social status. The social factor will help the wine consumer to access to a certain environment. Therefore, he will be able to deal with people who know and who have experience with it. This factor is an important dimension as it will help the consumer to understand and access to information and people to deal with. Regarding this part, it can be also highlight the fact that normally the place where is the transition will be done is in area where it is easy to communicate and really seldom at home.

The cultural factor is the key dimension of the process. The qualitative advantage of a connoisseur is its ability to express himself and influence others thanks to his experience and exposure. The cultural factor can be shared from locals in Malaysia who have been in contact with the wine culture or it can be directly in the area itself. Then, travels, visits of wineries and vineyards, expositions become the motivation and the actions taken by the consumer.

6 CONCLUSION

This research represents a contribution to the understanding of the wine connoisseur process in Malaysia by examining the influences involved. The finality of this study may help professionals and marketers to develop customized concept for connoisseur and consumer in the process. Becoming connoisseur is achievable by any Malaysian interested and it will take a complex but fruitful and wonderful journey to reach that level. Nowadays for some of the Malaysians, wine becomes part of the lifestyle and their culture.

Wine connoisseur is a very small segment and it involves important budget as they need a wide choice from non-expensive to expensive wine. Therefore, this segment will be increasing as wine is more and more accepted by the local authorities and population. Consequently, the industry of wine still has a long future and opportunities.

The following suggestions focus on the connoisseur market but also on the consumer willing to reach that level. As studied in this report, the process involves many different steps in which marketers can help a consumer to develop his needs:

- Short courses and certifications
- Wine certification courses
- Wine Clubs and Tasting Dinner
- Wine Tourism

While doing this study, a lot of data collected allow an analysis but do not allow an in-depth understanding of the process. It is possible to understand and to explain the process but few points are still in the doubt or in the confusion. Others researches could focus on those matters as a lot of parameters need to be understood.

The actual study deals with the transition process between the consumer status and the connoisseur status. Other researches can actually be more specific and designed in various domains among the wine connoisseur in order to understand the motivation and interest and identifying the changes among the different ethnic groups or eventually determinate the existence of different level among the Malaysian wine connoisseur. The results seem to show that in Malaysia, a wine consume will go through a long process divided in many important phases: theoretical needs, social needs, human needs and cultural needs.

REFERENCES

Alba, J.W. & Hutchinson, J.W. 1987. Dimensions of consumer expertise. *Journal of Consumer Research* 13:411–454.

- Amunategui, M.F. 2004. Le vin de terroir, le vin de cépage. Quel futur pour le marché mondial du vin? Académie Internationale du Vin. Dossier MFA 12.
- Charters, S. 2006. *Wine and Society: The Social and Cultural Context of a Drink*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Charters, S. et al. 2009. "You Felt Like Lingerin...": Experiencing "Real" Service at the Winery Tasting Room. *Journal of Travel Research* 48(1): 122–134.
- d'Hauteville, F. 2003. The mediating role of involvement and values on wine consumption frequency in France. Paper presented at the International Colloquium in Wine Marketing. Adelaide: University of South Australia.
- Euromonitor International 2009. <http://www.portal.euromonitor.com/Portal/Statistics.aspx> [accessed 13 July 2010]
- Euromonitor International 2009. Alcoholic Drinks in Malaysia. http://www.euromonitor.com/Alcoholic_Drinks_in_Malaysia [accessed 13 July 2010]
- Groves R. et al. 2000. Imbibing, inscribing, integrating and imparting: a taxonomy of wine consumption practices. *Journal of Wine Research* 11(3):209–222.
- Hughson, A.L. 2003. *Cork and Talk: The Cognitive and perceptual bases of wine expertise*. Doctoral dissertation, Sydney: University of Sydney.
- New Zealand Trade and Enterprise 2006. Sector Profile for Wine in the Malaysian Market. New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Kuala Lumpur.
- Palloni, A. 1998. Theories and Models of Diffusion in Sociology. CDE Working Paper No. 98–11.
- Pettigrew S. 2003. Wine consumption context. *International Journal of Wine Marketing* 15(2): 37–46.
- Preszler, T. & Schmit, T.M. 2009. Factors Affecting Presence of New York Wines in Upscale New York City Restaurants. *Journal of Food Distribution Research* 40(3): 16–30.
- Proffitt, J.B. (2008). Differences in conceptual organization among types of wine experts: the impact of goals on representation. Doctoral dissertation, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University.
- Solomon, G. 1990. Psychology of novice and expert wine talk. *American Journal of Psychology* 105: 495–517.
- Spawton, A. 1991. Marketing Planning for Wine. *European Journal of Marketing* 25(3): 1–48.
- Spawton, A. 1991. Wine and the Marketing Mix. *European Journal of Marketing* 25(3): 19–31.
- Statistic Malaysia, Consumer Price Indexes, population 2010. <http://www.statistics.gov.my> [accessed 10 October 2010]
- Vigneron, F. & Johnson Lester, W. 1999. A review of conceptual framework of Prestige-seeking Consumer behavior. *Academy of Marketing Science Review* 1999(1): 1–15.
- Wilson, T. 2004. Globalization, differentiation and drinking cultures, an anthropological perspective, <http://aof.revues.org/index261.html> [accessed 10 October 2010]
- Wong, N.Y. & Ahuvia, A.C. 1998. Personal taste and family face: luxury consumption in Confucian and Western societies. *Psychology and marketing* 15(august): 423–441
- Woodside, A. & Martin, D. 2007. *Tourism Management: analysis, behavior and strategy*. Wallingford: CABI.

This page intentionally left blank

Determination of food acceptance in restaurants and sensory evaluation laboratory

Chemah Tamby Chik & Sabaianah Bachok

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Suria Sulaiman

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Permatang Pauh, Penang, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: According to food marketing, human acceptability of food is based on its experience. Thus different people with different experience of food will have different perception and acceptance of food. Consumer opinions of food are also influenced by the context in which it is examined and by the expectations of some external factors of food. Previous studies revealed that there are three different classes of variables for appreciation of food- the food itself, individual and the situation of environment. This study seeks to look into the student's acceptance of food at two different locations, the sensory laboratory and the restaurant at Universiti Teknologi MARA. Consumer panel ($n = 50$) were selected for hedonic test to extract their liking towards two different kinds of crackers in restaurant and sensory laboratory booth. Tests were conducted to examine the acceptance in terms of taste, colour, saltiness, creaminess and overall evaluations of crackers with (cracker 2) and without fibre (cracker 1). Findings showed that there is a significance difference in colour for cracker without fiber in both locations. Panels like the colour of the cracker differently when it is consumed in laboratory booth setting (mean 4.76) and in restaurant (mean 5.29). Cracker with fiber showed different results. There is a significance difference in taste, saltiness and overall evaluations for crackers with fibre. Panels like the taste, saltiness and overall evaluations of crackers with fibre better in laboratory booth than in restaurant. Therefore, different test locations do have impacts on the consumer's acceptance of food. Further study has to be conducted to test the potential of dine-in restaurant to become valid testing location for food tasting in hospitality research.

Keywords: Restaurant, laboratory, food tasting, acceptance, test location

1 INTRODUCTION

Consumer preference and acceptance of food are first being determined with their "eyes" before the consumption. Different people with different personal experience will have different perception and acceptance to food. Sensory evaluation is a "scientific discipline" used to evoke, measure, analyze and interpret reactions to those characteristics of foods and materials as they are perceived by the senses of sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing (Institute of Food Technologist, 1981). According to Cardello (2003), the main objective of sensory science is to uncover the basic visual, gustatory, olfactory and tactile mechanisms that influence approach and avoidance behavior toward foods. Depending upon research question, sensory food science utilizes physicochemical, physiological and consumer-based research methods. Sensory test of product consisted of several methods. One of the most common and simple method to gather consumer preference and acceptance of product is by using hedonic or affective test. This test require consumer panel to choose or rate product based on their degree

of likeness using a 9 point (Meilgard et al., 1986) or 7 point hedonic scales (Aminah, 1994). The term "preference" was often construed to be behavioral measure while "acceptance" or "acceptability" was reserved for affective ratings of foods that are actually tasted (Cardello et al. 2000).

Sensory evaluation has been used to obtain information regarding how consumers perceive products and also to measure consumers' likes, dislike and preferences of food (Ishii et al. 2007). When consumers are in the midst of consuming food, which they can taste, smell, feel and see the food, it is expected that the consumption emotions generated will critically impact the extent to which a consumer is satisfied with the experience (Philips, 2000).

In product quality evaluation and food marketing, the use of consumer panel to determine preferences and acceptance are common but they tend to have had little or no formal training, thus the amount of training and information that they may receive are dependent on the test, the product and the company (Lawless and Heymann, 1998). Their evaluations are also influenced by past experience and perception of

food. These product evaluation methods are based on the sensory food science discipline which dealt with human sensory perceptions and affective responses to foods, beverages and their components (Tuorila & Monteleone, 2009). It is multidisciplinary in nature and uses sensory evaluation as its central method of analysis (Tuorila & Monteleone, 2009).

According to Kramer (1959), sensory quality concept can be defined as “the composite of those characteristics that differentiate among individual units of a product and have significance in determining the degree of acceptability of that unit by the user”. Some authors emphasized on product oriented of sensory quality while another focused on the consumer oriented of sensory quality (Costell, 2002). Thus the use of consumer panel is deemed appropriate in determining sensory quality of food according to the second context.

Sensory evaluation of food is usually been done in formal testing location. Laboratory consumer tests are classically carried out in highly standardized conditions: product preparation and presentation are strictly controlled; samples are presented in “blind” conditions and labelled with random three-digit codes; precautions are taken to get independent measurements by placing subjects in individual tasting booths (Resurreccion, 1998). The environments are controlled from extraneous factor which can affect judgments on food. While in home use test or institutional test location, consumer tasted food in its natural location where the food are normally consumed.

Testing location exhibit different degree of control which will then affect consumer responses to the product being used (Meilgard et al., 1986). Pound et al (2000) found that consumers are more critical when evaluating attributes in a formal sensory laboratory. On the contrary, consumers perceived product favourably in terms of flavour, texture and overall preference when evaluated in the familiar setting of the home (Kennedy et al., 2004). Kozłowska et al. (2003) also found that hedonic values for low sugar level samples had higher scores as opposed to higher sugar juices when the test was carried out at home. However, repeated exposures, context with meal or social events may have an impact on hedonic judgements while in the laboratory the measurement was restricted to momentary impression (Kozłowska et al., 2003). Meanwhile Boutrolle et al. (2005) introduce a new criterion of robustness when tasting food in real eating location.

Some argue that testing food in laboratory location eliminate the human factors associated in food consumption (Jaeger 2000) while in attitudinal research, tasting of products are seldom incorporated into the protocols (Baker & Crosbie, 1994; Van Der Pol & Ryan, 1996). Therefore this study aimed to incorporate the tasting experience of food in real tasting location such as in fine dining restaurant and compare that with tasting food in formal laboratory testing facility. Research in the hospitality industry such as pertaining to menu and portion size of food need for it to be tested in a real eating location i.e the restaurant. Hence

testing the acceptance and preference of food in this platform could tab a potential test methodology sets in a restaurant.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Crackers were chosen as samples for food evaluation at both test location. Crackers from an international company brand (Kraft®) was selected based on its standard method of preparation and its popularity as a leading brand in healthy crackers. It is bought from local hypermarket and differences between the samples to be compared varied from texture to its fibre content.

The test in laboratory testing location followed the guidelines from ISO (1998; 1994). Samples were prepared in the laboratory and presented to the panels in blind 3-digit number coded and permuted. While samples for fine dining taste test was put in a each individual container, 3 digit coded and permuted for randomness. The test in foodservice institution was performed in mock fine dining restaurant in the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA. The restaurant that has close resemblance of actual restaurant can provide some control on many extraneous factors that may influence test results. Subjects were invited to the restaurant for lunch or dinner and the test sample was served randomly for each subject. They are allowed to taste as much as they like but the tasting time frame will be limited to 5–7 minutes in which the subjects need to rate their liking on the score sheet.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A paired sample t test was conducted to evaluate the impact of the intervention on student’s evaluation on both crackers at different locations. Generally panels rated their liking to the samples with mean score more than 4.00, which indicated that they neither like nor dislike the samples. Mean score value is as showed in Table 1. Score value of 5 indicates that they like the samples slightly. Mean score of the two types of crackers showed that results for samples tested in restaurant are higher than that from laboratory score. Colour attribute for crackers without fiber were found significant, with higher preference in the laboratory than in the restaurant. The ETA square statistic (0.007) indicated a small effect size. While attributes for taste, saltiness and overall acceptability for crackers with fiber indicate significance difference with moderate and large effect size. Panel evaluated higher preferences on the crackers in the laboratory than in the restaurant. All attributes for both crackers showed that panels rate samples differently in laboratory than when it was consumed in restaurant.

Stroebele and De Castro (2004) stated that ambiance might play a role when evaluating products.

Table 1. Mean score of crackers with and without fiber.

Crackers	Attributes	Mean score	
		Restaurant	Laboratory
Crackers without fiber	Colour	4.76	5.29*
	Taste	5.35	5.22
	Saltiness	5.08	5.04
	Creaminess	5.16	5.16
	Overall acceptability	5.41	5.35
Crackers with fiber	Colour	4.51	4.39
	Taste	4.10	4.69*
	Saltiness	4.16	4.63*
	Creaminess	4.18	4.18
	Overall acceptability	4.49	4.84*

**p*-value < 5%; paired statistics results.

However crackers is not food which normally consumed in restaurant. Meals are highly structured events that follow a series of implicit rules about where, when and in what sequence particular foods could be served (Marshall & Bell, 2003). Thus tasting crackers in a restaurant could have been introduced as embedded sequence in one of the meal structure. Furthermore, the crackers differ in its intrinsic characteristics and also in the ways of consumption i.e. snack/meal/diet, dip/dunk in beverages and individual/social consumption Boutroelle et al. (2007). Using more panels could have generated better results; however this is one of the limitations.

The differences in the mean score are not distinct which maybe due to the same panels that were used for both test locations. Using the same panels may have introduced halo effect to the test methodology.

Additionally, Edwards et al (2003) showed that customers when served identical food in different locations will use their existing expectations to rate the food in a non-institutional setting. Thus the similar results between restaurant and laboratory has been showed. Our study result was supported by Pound and Duizer (2000), which studied consumer overall liking in four test locations (central location, in-home, teaching laboratory and formal sensory laboratory) and found that panels gave similar results at all locations.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Consumer trend of eating food away from home created a need for it to be used as valid taste test location. However from this study, generalization could not be made due to several reasons such as the number of panels is low and the food sample used could not distinguish the difference in taste for both locations. Structured protocol in tasting food in restaurant taking into accounts the sequence of existing menu items and incorporating taste sample will need to be produced.

Tasting sample food in its usual context will benefits the hospitality industry especially when menu items changed rapidly to suits the demand of consumer.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to thank Universiti Teknologi MARA for the grant to fund this study-Excellence Fund.

REFERENCES

- Aminah, A., 1994. *Penilaian Sensori*, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia.
- Baker, G.A. & Crosbie, P.J., 1994. Consumer preferences for food safety attributes: A market segment approach, *Agribusiness*, 10:319–324.
- Boutrolle, I., Arranz, D., Rogeaux, M. & Delarue, J., 2005. Comparing central location test and home use test results: application of a new criterion, *Food Quality and Preference*, 16:704–713.
- Boutrolle, I., Delarue, J., Arranz, D., Rogeaux, M. & Kosher, E.P., 2007. Central location test vs. home use test: Contrasting results depending on product type. *Food Quality and Preference*, 18:490–499.
- Cardello, A.V., Schutz, H., Snow, C. & Leshner, L., 2000. Predictors of food acceptance, consumption and satisfaction in specific eating situations. *Food Quality and Preference*, 11:201–216.
- Cardello, A.V., 2003. Ideographic sensory testing vs. nomothetic sensory research for marketing guidance: comments on Garber et al. *Food Quality and Preference* 14:27–30.
- Costell, E., 2002. A comparison of sensory methods in quality control. *Food Quality and Preference*, 13:341–353.
- Edwards, J.S.A., Meiselman, H.L., Edwards, A., & Leshner, L., 2003. The influence of eating location on the acceptability of identically prepared foods. *Food Quality and Preference*, 14, 647–652.
- Institute of Food technology 1981. Sensory evaluation guides for testing food and beverage products. *Food Technology*, 35(11):232–233.
- Ishii, R., Kawaguchi, H., O’Mahony, M. & Rousseau, B., 2007. Relating consumer and trained panels’ discriminative sensitivities using vanilla flavored icecream as a medium. *Food Quality and Preference*, 18:89–96.
- International Standard for Organizations. 1988. “Sensory analysis – general guidance for design of test rooms”, Standard no.8589, Geneva: International Organization for Standardization.
- Jaeger, S.R., 2000. Uncovering cultural differences in choice behavior between Samoan and New Zealand consumers: a case study with apples. *Food Quality and Preferences*, 11:405–417.
- Kennedy, O., Stewart-Knox, B., Mithell, P. & Thurnham, D., 2004. The influence of context upon Consumer sensory evaluation of chicken-meat quality. *British Food Journal*, 106(3):158–165.
- Kozłowska, K., Jeruszka, M., Matuszewska, I, Roszkowski, W., Barylko-Pikielna, N. & Brzozowska, A. 2003. Hedonic tests in different locations as predictors of apple juice consumption at home in elderly and young subjects. *Food Quality and Preference*, 14: 653–661.
- Lawless, H.T. & Heymann, H. 1999. Sensory evaluation of food: principles and practices. Aspen Publ, New York.

- Marshall, D. & Bell, R. 2003. Mean construction: exploring the relationship between eating occasion and location. *Food Quality and Preference*, 14:53–64.
- Meilgard, M., Civille, G.V. & Carr, B.T. 1986. *Sensory Evaluation Techniques*. CRC Press, Boca Raton, Florida.
- Philips, M.D. 2000. How does it make me feel? A consumer's satisfaction response on food products. *Journal of Food Products Marketing*, Vol. 6 (2).
- Pound, C., Duizer, L. & McDowell, K. 2000. Improved consumer product development: part One. *British Food Journal*, 102(11):810–820.
- Pound, C., Duizer, L., & McDowell, K. 2000. Improved consumer product development. Part one: Is a laboratory necessary to access consumer opinion *British Food Journal*, 102:810–820.
- Resurreccion, A.V.A. 1998. *Consumer Sensory Testing for Product Development*. Aspen Publication, Gaithersburg, Maryland.
- Stroebele, N. & De Castro, J.M. 2004. Effect of ambiance on food intake and food choice. *Nutrition* 20:821–838.
- Tuorila, H. & Monteleone, E. 2009. Sensory food science in the changing society: Opportunities, need and challenges. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, 20:54–62.
- Van der Pol, M & Ryan, M. 1996. Using conjoint analysis to establish consumer references for fruit and vegetables. *British Food Journal*, 98: 5–12.

The role of price fairness, cleanliness and physical environment on customer retention in family restaurants

Malina Hanum Mohd Kamal, Najihah Abdul Rahim, Norhusniyati Husin,
Rosfatihah Che Mat & Irwan Ismail

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Terengganu, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this paper is to determine the influence of price fairness, physical environment and cleanliness on customers' retention. The study aims to address the significance elements in customers' decisions which are based on several factors including price fairness, physical environments and cleanliness on customers' retention. A single method research approach was used with strategies of inquiry that involve sequential quantitative data collection through questionnaire survey. Overall results revealed that customers' decisions do matters and have a significant influence on customers' retention. The findings obtained in this study particularly useful in helping the owner of food and beverage services in improving the quality of services, offer more reasonable prices and adding values for customers' dining experiences. It is suggested that the study will help the food and beverage operators to have clear view on how important is customers' retention and how it can be improved in the future.

Keywords: Customer retention, customer decision, price fairness, cleanliness, physical environment, food and beverage services.

1 INTRODUCTION

Customers' retention is often used as an indicator to see whether the customers will return to patronize a restaurant. While there is no guarantee a satisfied customers' will repeat a visit, it is almost certain that an unsatisfied customers' will not return. However, in food and beverage services, customers' decision seems to be more compelling. Hence, in order to succeed in this competitive industry, restaurateurs need to understand the factors that influence customer's decision when selecting a restaurant.

A review of past research emphasized various factors influence customers' retention in the family restaurant including food quality (Namkung & Jang, 2007; Sulek & Hensley, 2004), on the other hand, more researches focuses on service quality, emotional dissonance, dining experience, social status, geographic factors, promotions, brand images, trust, satisfactions, as an essential component to explain customer retention as well as customer royalty. However, despite this indication, Han and Kim (2009) advocated that little research in the service literature, particularly the restaurant sector, has examined the roles of these variables in forming customer loyalty. Furthermore, the role of price perception in increasing the level of satisfaction and in forming loyalty still remains unclear both empirically and theoretically. Thus, the combined effect of the elements that make up customer loyalty

in the restaurant industry should be empirically tested to create an overall conceptual model. The primary objective of this study, therefore, was to investigate the relationships among three components of the physical environment, price fairness and cleanliness on customers' retention and to better understand the most favorable factor influencing customers' retention in the family restaurants.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Price fairness*

Price fairness is defined as the superficial equality of the price or usage trade-off (Bolton & Lemon, 1999). The price fairness variable was begun as assemble on three supports: a cost-value relationship in quantitative which is portion size and qualitative such as food quality dimensions and the willingness to admit changes in prices. The result is customer satisfaction for what they traded, which includes costs and consumer features to service quality (Lin, 2006). Herrmann et al., (2007), concluded that customer satisfaction is directly influenced by price perceptions while indirectly through the perception of price fairness. The price fairness itself and the way it is fixed and offered have a great impact on satisfaction. So, the more reasonable a customer believes the price or usage trade-off preferred, the

more they satisfied of the service. Other studies that have the same results, suggested that perceived price fairness influences definitely customer satisfaction (Martin-Consuegra et al., 2007).

2.2 Cleanliness

Pettijohn et al. (1997) suggest there are three main factors contributed to customer retention, which are quality; cleanliness and value while the ambiance and menu as a second factor. In addition, Klara (2004) found that 75 percent of customers would not come back to the restaurant if the toilet rooms were not clean, while Amer (2003) found that 74 percent believed they will leave a restaurant if viewed unclean.

There are four categories of the cleanliness dimension in this study, which are internal environment, external environment, employee personal hygiene and restroom. This four categories of cleanliness dimension followed the previous research according to Barber and Scarcelli (2010). Internal environment is the first factor which representing some item including the cleanliness of the equipment, table, chair, floor, wall, and service counter. Lockyer (2003) indicated that the cleanliness of the carpets, furniture, and cushions of the hotel's guest room to be very important. The second factor is the external environment which representing some element of exterior cleanliness of the restaurant area.

The third factor is employee personal hygiene which representing the employee appearance in the restaurant. According to Swane et al. (2004), good personal hygiene must follow hygienic hand practice, maintain personal cleanliness, wearing clean and proper uniform, avoiding unsanitary habits and reporting illness. Swane et al. (2004) states that worker personal hygiene is extremely important. If the worker is not clean, the food can become contaminated. In this study, the employee personal hygiene that need to be consider are the uniforms of the employee and employee personal hygiene consider several factors such as the availability of soap, recycle bin, paper towers, floor and odor.

2.3 Physical environment

Previous studies demonstrated that, physical environments could guide consumers in evaluating a restaurant experience (Wall & Berry, 2007). The tangible elements indicate that ambiance and design features including aesthetics, and functionality plus social factors contribute to the physical environment (Bitner, 1992). In this perspective, physical environment consists of non-human elements, including equipment, facility layout, lighting and color which affect human cognition, emotions, and behavior (Tompkins et al., 2010). Restaurant decor is also known as a main aspect of a dining experience. The decoration in a restaurant with furniture style, comfort of seating, paintings, and other facilities can have an impact on how diners perceive and rate the restaurant (Sloan,

2004). The physical environment provides an important signals to all of the hospitality organizations, but most importantly to customers (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). The marketing literature has provided proof of how the physical environment influences consumer behavior (Bitner, 1992; Wall & Berry, 2007). The physical environment of the restaurant such as restaurant's atmosphere, ambience, décor and furniture can have a huge impact on the dining experience (Sloan, 2004) and behavioral intentions (Ryu & Jang, 2007). Physical environment should be focused upon maximizing the positive and meaningful impact for the customers (Berridge, 2010). Ryu and Jang (2007) empirically found a positive relationship between restaurant facility aesthetics, which included restaurant decor, and behavioral intentions, moderated by pleasure.

2.4 Customer retention

Customer retention has been exposed to be a primary goal in organizations that practice relationship marketing (Groenroos, 1991; Coviello et al., 2002). Successful organizations define what customer retention means for business and create the necessary measures to quantify their retention rate (Aspinall et al., 2001). Hoyer and MacInnis (2001), suggested that customer retention is "the practice of working to satisfy customers with the intention of developing long-term relationships with them". Blattberg et al. (2001) state that customer retention is taking place when a customer keeps on buying the same market offering over a long period of time. In term of product with short purchase, they define as occurring when 'the customer continues to purchase the product or service over a specified time period'.

3 METHODOLOGY

In this research, a single method research approach was used with strategies of inquiry that involve sequential quantitative data collection through questionnaire survey. In this study, the population refers to the total number of populations in Dungun, which are approximately 123,285 peoples (Majlis Perbandaran Dungun, 2011). Roscoe (1975) mentioned that the appropriate sample size must not be less than 30 and not more than 500. Therefore, 250 samples have been chosen as the sample size. Questionnaires have been distributed to the sample size, however, only 207 out of 250 questionnaires were returned. This study employed the use of quantitative research design with data generally gathered through questionnaire as the research instrument. A simple random sampling is being used where each item in the population has the same probability of being selected as part of the sample as any other item.

3.1 Research framework

The questionnaires were designed based on the variables indicated in the research framework shown in

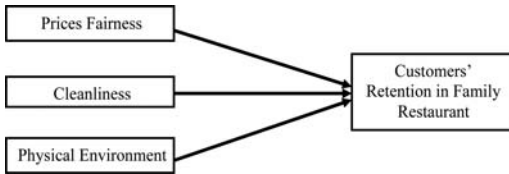


Figure 1. Research framework.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

Variables	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Price fairness	207	4.74	0.893
Cleanliness	207	6.31	0.703
Physical environment	207	5.14	0.973
Customers' retention in family restaurant	207	5.15	0.849

Table 2. Correlations

	Price fairness	Cleanliness	Physical environment	Customers' retention in Family restaurant
Price fairness	–	0.127	0.559**	0.665**
Cleanliness	0.127	–	0.406**	0.357**
Physical Environment	0.559**	0.406**	–	0.707**
Customers' retention in family restaurant	0.665**	0.357**	0.707**	–

Figure 1. Through literature review, this study has identified the independent variables that contribute to the customers' retention which are price fairness, cleanliness, and physical environments. The dependent variable is the customers' retention in family restaurant.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

All the variables indicated in the Table I above are measured on a seven point Likert-type scale. From the results it can be seen that the mean for all of the variables such as, price fairness (4.74); cleanliness (6.31); physical environment (5.14) and customers' retention in family restaurant (5.15) indicate that the general awareness and interest is on these issues has always been there.

Table 3. Coefficient.

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients <i>Beta</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	
	<i>B</i>	Std. Error				
1	Constant	0.395	0.366		1.077	0.283
	PriceFairness	0.390	0.050	0.411	7.803	0.000
	Cleanliness	0.160	0.058	0.132	2.773	0.006
	Physical Environment	0.370	0.050	0.424	7.423	0.000

Dependent variable: customers retention.

Table 4. Model summary.

Model	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate	R square change	F change	Sig. F change
1	0.615	0.527	0.620	110.466	0.000

4.1 Correlation analysis

If the p value > 0.05 the correlation is not significant, when p value < 0.05 the correlation is significant. From the table above, it seem to indicate that all independent variables are significant for this study.

4.2 Regression analysis

4.2.1 The predicts of customers' retention

To test whether the independent variable is strongly influence the customers' retention in family restaurant, a multiple regression model was proposed. The predictor variables are price fairness, cleanliness and physical environment. Based on the method used, the predictor variables which are price fairness, cleanliness and physical environment were found to be significance in explaining customers' retention in family restaurant.

As depicted in Table 3, all the independent variables, which are price fairness, cleanliness and physical environment are significant. Out of all the independent variables, price fairness and physical environment are significant at 0.000. The largest beta coefficient is 0.424 which is for physical environment. These further explain that this variable is the most favorable factor that influences customers' retention in family restaurant in Dungun. Meanwhile, cleanliness is the lowest of all the variables but still significant at 0.05.

As depicted in Table 4, the adjusted R-squared of 0.615 implies that the predictor variable explain about 61.5% of the variance/variation in the dependent variable. This is quite good and a respectable result. The ANOVA table revealed that the F-statistics (110.466) is large and the corresponding p-value is highly significant at 0.000.

Table 5. ANOVA.

Model		F	Sig.
1	Regression residual total	110.466	0.000(a)

As mentioned in the above discussion, it can be concluded that all the independent variables namely price fairness, cleanliness and physical environment do have a relationship and influences customers' retention in family restaurant in Dungun.

4.3 Estimated models

4.3.1 To predict of customer's retention

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3$$

$$Y = 0.395 + 0.390X_1 + 0.160X_2 + 0.370X_3$$

Y = dependent variable; a = constant (intercept); b_n = estimates;

X₁ = independent variable (price fairness); X₂ = independent variable (cleanliness); X₃ = independent variable (physical environment)

As we can see from the table of model summary, it shows that there is R² = 0.620 (62%) level of significant between all independent variables with customers' retention. The strongest level of significant is R² = 1.00 (100%). The three elements of factors influencing restaurant decisions F-change = 110.466, (p < .001) of the variation on customers' retention. The result from the table of coefficient (Standardize Coefficient = β) shows that price fairness, cleanliness and physical environments significantly influence with customer's retention in family restaurants. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS (β = 0.424) is the most favorable factor influencing customer's retention followed by PRICE FAIRNESS (β = 0.411) and CLEANLINESS (β = 0.132) respectively. Based on the result, it shows that all the elements give the positive influence towards customers' retention in family restaurant in Dungun.

5 CONCLUSION

The purposes of this study is to investigate the relationship between customers' restaurant decisions which are includes price fairness, cleanliness and physical environments towards customers' retention and to determine the most favorable factor that influence customers' retention in family restaurants in Dungun. After conducted this study, it was found that there is a relationship between price fairness, cleanliness and physical environments towards customers' retention. The most dominant factor that contributes to customers' retention when they make selection is physical environments. This indicates that Dungun consumers do concern on physical environment which include ambiance, environment, level of comfort and layout.

It is hope that the finding of this study will help the restaurant's operators to improve the quality of services, offer more reasonable prices and adding values for customers' dining experiences. Furthermore, it is also hope that restaurant's operators will understand and have clear view on how important is customers' retention and the way to retain them is very crucial. For future research, it is suggested that this study could be extended to another place in the food and beverage services and the conceptual model of this research hopefully can be develop widely to represent more accurate results from respondents in Malaysia. It is recommended that the systematic or cluster sampling procedures can be for the future research used to get more general results.

REFERENCES

- Amer, S. (2003), "A sinking feeling", *Restaurant Business*, 102(1), 84.
- Aspinal, E., Nancarrow, C. and Stone, M. (2001), "The meaning and measurement of customer retention", *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, Vol. 10 No. 1, pp. 79-87.
- Barber, N. and Scarcelli, J.(2010) "Enhancing the assessment of tangible service quality through the creation of a cleanliness measurement scale", *Managing Service Quality*, 20(1), 70-88.
- Berridge, G. (2010), "Event pitching: the role of design and creativity", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 29 No. 2, pp. 208-15.
- Bitner, M. J. (1992). "Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees". *Journal of Marketing*, 56(2), 57-71.
- Bolton, R. N. and Lemon, K. N. (1999). "A dynamic model of customers' usage of services: usage as an antecedent and consequence of satisfaction". *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36(2), 171-86.
- Coviello, N. E., Brodie, R. J., Danaher, P. J. and Johnston, W. J. (2002), "How firms relate to their markets: an empirical examination of contemporary marketing practices", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 66 No. 3, pp. 33-46.
- Gro'nroos, C. (1991), "The marketing strategy continuum: toward a marketing concept for the 1990s", *Management Decision*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 7-13.
- Han, H. and Kim, W. (2009), "Outcomes of relational benefits: Restaurant customers' perspective", *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, Vol. 26, pp. 820-835.
- Herrmann, A., Xia, L., Monroe, K. B., and Huber, F., (2007). "The influence of price fairness on consumer satisfaction: an empirical test in the context of automobile purchases". *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 16(1), 49-58.
- Hoyer, W. D. and MacInnis, D. J., 2001, *Consumer Behaviour*. 2nd ed., Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Klara, R. (2004), "Customer insights: the comfort zone", *Restaurant Business*, 103(15), 14-16.
- Lin, W. -B. (2006). "Correlation between personality characteristics, situations of service failure, customer relation strength and remedial recovery strategy". *Service Marketing Quarterly*, 28(1), 55-88.
- Lockyer, T. (2003), "Hotel Cleanliness: How do guest view it? Let us get specific: A New Zealand study", *Hospitality Management*, 22, 297-305.
- Majlis Perbandaran Dungun (2011). http://mpd.terengganu.gov.my/web/guest/jadual_mukim

- Martin-Consuegra, D., Molina, A. and Esteban, A. (2007). "An integrated model of price, satisfaction and loyalty: an empirical analysis in the service sector". *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 16 (7), 459–68.
- Namkung, Y. and Jang, S. C. (2007). "Does Food Quality Really Matter in Restaurants? Its Impact On Customer Satisfaction and Behavioral", *Intentions Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, vol. 31 no. 3 387–409.
- Pettijohn, L. S., Pettijohn, C. E. and Luke, R. (1997), "An evaluation of fast food restaurant satisfaction: determinants, competitive comparisons and impact on future patronage", *Journal of Restaurant and Foodservice Marketing*, 2(3), 3–20.
- Roscoe, J. R. (1975). *Fundamental Research Statistic for the Behavioural Science* (2nd ed). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Ryu, K., and Jang, S. S. (2007). "The effect of environmental perceptions on behavioral intentions through emotions: The case of upscale restaurants". *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 31(1), 56–72.
- Sloan, D. (2004). *Culinary taste: Consumer behaviour in the international restaurant sector*. Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Sulek, J. M., and Hensley, R. L. (2004). The relative importance of food, atmosphere, and fairness of wait. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 45(3), 235–247.
- Swane, M. D, Rue, N. R, and Linton. R. (2004), "Essential of food safety and sanitation", Fourth Edition, New Jersey, Pearson education, 91–97.
- Tompkins, J. A., White, J. A., Bozer, Y. A. and Tanchoco, J. M. A. (2010), *Facilities Planning*, 4th ed., Wiley, Chichester.
- Wall, E. A., and Berry, L. L. (2007). "The combined effects of the physical environment and employee behaviour on customer perception of restaurant service quality". *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 48(1), 59–69.
- Zeithaml, V. and Bitner, M. J. (2003), "Services Marketing: Integrating Customer Focus across the Firm", McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.

This page intentionally left blank

Relationship between yield management practices and hotel performance: A study on 4 and 5 star hotels in Kuala Lumpur

A.A. Khana

Kolej Poly-Tech MARA, Malaysia

S.M. Radzi

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Yield management has been successfully adopted by the airline industry following the deregulation in the late 1970's. In the hotel context, yield management is a profit maximization strategy that concern with the market sensitive pricing of fixed room capacity relative to specific market characteristics. The benefits of yield management are well accepted in the hospitality industry, where hotel companies that adopting yield management techniques have achieved good results. However, the research is missing a holistic examination of important elements of effective yield management. The literature shows that market segmentation, pricing, demand analysis; capacity management and competitors contribute to effective yield management. This study grouped these five elements into one concept and proposed that these five elements positively impact hotel performance. The results showed that market segmentation, pricing, demand analysis, capacity management and competitor relate positively with hotel performance.

Keywords: yield management, market segmentation, pricing, demand analysis, capacity management and competitor

1 INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to respond to the demands of a highly competitive market environment, excess capacity, a slow recovery from recession and high inflation, a number of a major international hotel began to adopt the management techniques known as Yield Management. Yield management is the term used in many service industries to describe techniques to allocate limited resources, such as airplane seats or hotel rooms, among a variety of customers, such as business or leisure travelers. In relation to hotels, yield management is a revenue maximization, which aims to increase net yield through the predetermined market segments at optimum price. Since these techniques are used by firms with extremely perishable goods, or by firms with services that cannot be stored at all, these concepts and tools are often called *perishable asset revenue management* or simply *revenue management*.

Hotels utilize yield management as profit maximization techniques that aim to increase net yield through the predicted allocation of available room capacity to pre-determined market segments at an optimum price. In this context, yield management is concerned with market sensitive pricing of fixed room capacity relative to specific market characteristics.

Judging by focus of the academic literature, the use of yield management tool is not entirely an innovation,

as most hoteliers currently practice some form of yield management, such as the adjustment of room rates to temper demand fluctuations between peak and off – peak seasons, midweek and weekend business. Despite this, previous studies have identified a low level of understanding of the concept and its precise function (Berkus, 1988; Solomon, 1990; Gamble, 1990; Donaghy et al, 1994).

Taking into account the aforementioned issues, the study aims to examine the adoption of Yield Management system in Malaysian hotel industry. In particular, this study intends to investigate the influence of Yield Management techniques on hotel performance in terms of profitability and capacity.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Defining yield management*

Yield, or revenue management, is the process by which sales of a limited quantity of goods, such as hotel rooms, airline seats, apartment leasing, rental cars, or etc. are managed in order to maximize profits. Successful yield management focuses on selling the product in such a manner that is timely, price competitive, and directed towards the right subset of

customers. First used by the airline industries beginning in the 1970s, yield management has evolved in more recent years as an important tool especially for the airline and hotel industries for staying economically competitive in otherwise saturated business playing field. The application of yield management has been most effective when applied to operations that have relatively fixed capacity, demand that is variable and uncertain, perishable inventory, a high fixed cost structure, and varying customer price sensitivity (Nikolis, 2009).

The basic concept of yield management is based in the economic principle of supply and demand: when supplies are short, prices go up; when supply is high, prices go down. Yield management is a studied, systematic method by which managers can logically place customers within the supply demand spectrum, and thus gain the highest yield for their products (Nikolis, 2009).

With the advent of the internet and other advances in technology, yield management also became increasingly complex (Elmaghraby and Keskinocak, 2003). As the scope of revenue management expanded beyond being an optimization issue to include pricing and demand behavior, revenue management became multidisciplinary in nature with pricing/demand and consumer research as one stream of focus, and capacity allocation, booking policies and related supply driven issues as the other (Kimes, 2003).

2.2 Demand analysis

Yield management borrows from the inventory related forecasting stream and uses methods such as smoothing, moving average, Box-Jenkins, etc. (Talluri and van Ryzin 2004). Arrival rates, unconstraining methods and aggregate forecasting methods all contribute to the quality of a forecast and differing use of these tools among six practitioners will lead to differences in forecasting quality. This literature emphasizes the importance of forecasting and the elements of a quality forecast. We extend this literature by testing how demand analysis affects performance.

2.3 Capacity management

Across industries, services differ and although they share many similar characteristics, no concerted attempt has been made to understand how capacity is constituted in different service firms. To practice yield management in an integrated manner, a service firm must first define what 'capacity' is. A helpful concept for identifying and analyzing capacity is the Theory of Constraints (TOC) (Goldratt, 1990). TOC is rooted firmly within the systems paradigm and was developed by Goldratt in the 1980s. Brown et al, (2005) defined capacity as the potential output of a system that can be produced in a specified time, determined by the size, scale and configuration of the system's transformation inputs.

2.4 Pricing

Pricing in yield management is also a large and growing research stream. A key ability in using yield management techniques effectively to maximize revenues is to segment customers based on their needs, business constraints, customer characteristics and willingness to pay. A pricing strategy to maximize the revenue potential requires customer segmentation based on the attributes of the customer base (Vinod, 2003). The price at which hospitality and tourism products are offered for sale affects the demand for those products (Relihan, 1989) and therefore revenue and profit. Bitran and Caldentey (2003) summarized analytical modeling research in this area. The core model assumes price is a function of inventory (or capacity) and time until the product perishes. To use yield management effectively, companies must develop logical differential pricing policies.

2.5 Market segmentation

Yield management operations in the hotel need to be able to define their market into clearly distinguishable segments. Previous research (Dillion, 1991; Bradley and Ingold, 1993) indicated that hoteliers already practice fragmented techniques of yield management and most have divided their customer base into segments such as business leisure, long and short stay. Yield management does encourage hoteliers to extend and refine the segmentation process to enhance net yield 'through the provision of a more profitable product or service which more accurately meets the needs of more clearly defined groups of guests' (Donaghy *et al*, 1995).

2.6 Competitor

Jones and Hamilton (1992) suggested that hoteliers must identify local competition and more specifically, be aware of the relative advantages held by each competitor. Further, the management team should clarify the hotel's strengths and weakness within the context of each target market to enable the setting of appropriate rates. Yield management adds a level of complexity to a hotel's pricing structure. At some hotels, one price may be replaced by several, each price associated with different service options or purchase restrictions. At other hotels the result may be better informed negotiation with groups and greater ability to suggest alternative dates that provide the group with lower room rates while increasing the hotels' revenues (Lieberman, 1993).

3 RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Sampling method

The data set consists of 21 five-star and 37 four-star hotels in the Kuala Lumpur metropolitan area. The hotel industry contains chains and non-chains

Table 1. Descriptive analysis with regression analysis ($N = 37$).

Item No	Scales	Mean	Std Deviation	F value	Sig
	<i>Pricing</i>	5.05*	1.09	14.2*	0.67*
Q1	My hotel has an effective policy for setting room rates	5.35	1.23		
Q2	Customers' price elasticity information is considered when setting room rates	4.94	1.18		
Q3	We rate ourselves based on ranking & service of our hotel	4.99	1.10		
Q4	Setting room rate based on competitor's rates	5.10	1.25		
Q5	We understand the value our customers place on our product or service and set rates accordingly	4.97	1.09		
	<i>Market Segmentation</i>	5.03*	1.15	13.6*	0.58*
Q6	We group customers into strategic clusters.	5.12	1.13		
Q7	We categorize customers based on similar buying characteristics	4.98	1.15		
Q8	We have distinguishable groups of customers who can be separated through identifiable characteristics.	5.05	1.24		
Q9	We promote our hotel differently to different groups of customers.	5.10	1.20		
Q10	We regularly review if we have appropriate, well-defined market segments.	4.92	1.18		
	<i>Demand Analysis</i>	4.51*	1.13	9.5*	0.65*
Q11	We use RM system forecasts to drive business decisions	4.42	1.27		
Q12	Our hotel tracks denial and regrets accurately	4.56	1.21		
Q13	We ignore RM system forecasts and use forecasts from other sources to drive business decision	4.57	1.18		
Q14	Our forecasting is based on the entire event throughout the year	4.40	1.23		
Q15	We use accurate and timely data for forecasting customer demand	4.59	1.15		
	<i>Capacity Management</i>	4.73*	1.12	11.6*	0.70*
Q16	We close availability of low-rate packages during high demand	4.74	1.21		
Q17	We practice block bookings to accommodate higher pay group	4.62	1.23		
Q18	Low rate promotion/discount during low demand	4.67	1.19		
Q19	We practice overbooking to overcome cancellations & no-shows	4.50	1.14		
Q20	We require minimum length of stay during peak period	4.88	1.20		
Q21	When analyzing the value of a given customer, we include customers' auxiliary spend (food & beverage, spa, etc) in addition to room rate.	4.77	1.30		
	<i>Competitor</i>	5.06*	1.15	14.9*	0.47*
Q22	We based our overall rate structure on rates available at competing hotel	4.98	1.25		
Q23	Our policy for setting room rates is based on rates achieved per market segment of all hotels	5.17	1.19		
Q24	We consistently monitor marketing and promotional activities of competing hotels	5.08	1.26		
Q25	Our hotel regularly tracks source of demand for accommodation at competing hotels	4.95	1.23		
Q26	We regularly review occupancy rate of competing hotels	5.10	1.18		
	<i>Hotel Performance</i>				
Q27	Revenue per Available room	5.08	1.25		
Q28	Occupancy Rate	4.90	1.20		

operations in multiple locations and is an appropriate research site for this research. We focused exclusively on hotels in the Kuala Lumpur metropolitan area because of the dynamic characteristics of this specific geographical market. The questionnaire and a request in the context of a cover letter were mailed

to the Front Office Managers and Sales Managers of each hotel solicited. This research used a survey-based questionnaire of hotels' front office, sales and marketing manager. Quantitative analytical techniques were used to draw inferences from this data regarding existing relationships.

3.2 Data analysis

The descriptive statistics were used to measure mean scores and standard deviation. The data collected was assessed by testing reliability and correlation was used to test the validity of measurement of the survey instrument.

The respondents were given 28 items in the questionnaire, which represents five techniques of yield management consist of pricing, market segmentation, demand analysis, capacity management and competitor. This followed by hotel performance in terms of RevPar and occupancy rate. The table also shows the F-ratio for the regression model. This statistics assesses the statistical significance of the overall regression model. The F-ratio is the result of comparing the amount of explained variance to the unexplained variance. The larger the F-ratio, the more variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable. Based on the Duncan's Post Hoc Test, the mean score for every item in the table was significantly different from each other.

In relation to the pricing, total mean is 5.05, where two items yielded above 5.0, which measure hotel's effective policy for setting room rates (Q1) and setting pricing rate based on competitor (Q4). Another three items yielded above 4.9, which measure setting pricing rate based on customer price elasticity (Q2), ranking & service (Q3) and value of product and service (Q5). These mean score present 4.94, 4.99 and 4.97. Furthermore, F value is 14.2, which is significant at the $p < 0.10$. Therefore, this indicates that the result is significant and null hypothesis is rejected because there is a positive relationship between pricing and performance.

In the context of market segmentation indicates three items score higher than 5.00, which measure the group of customers into strategic clusters (Q6), identifiable characteristics (Q8) and promotional to different groups of customers (Q9.) It was followed by Q7 and Q10 that measure customers buying characteristics and regularly review of market segmentation. These mean score present 4.98 and 4.92. With the F-value of 13.6 and significant at $p < 0.10$, null hypothesis is rejected because there is relationship between market segmentation and performance.

In term of demand analysis, the total score for all items are 4.41, which is very low. Most of the item represents the score less than 4.6. The highest score is (Q15) where hotel use accurate & data for forecasting and followed by (Q13) pertaining hotel's ability to tracks denial and regrets accurately. The rest of the items show the value of 4.42, 4.56 and 4.40. The result is very significant at $p < 0.10$ with the F-value of 9.5. Thus, null hypothesis is rejected because there is positive relationship between demand analysis and performance. Although reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean between the items are quite small.

In the context of capacity management, the total score of mean is 4.73 where each item represents different score of mean from 4.6 to 4.8. From the

Table 2. Summary of hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis	Regression (R ²)	Regression statistical significance	Correlation
H1: There is a positive relationship between pricing and hotel performance	0.512*	P < 0.10	r = 0.87**
H2: There is a positive relationship between demand analysis and hotel performance	0.478*	P < 0.10	r = 0.63**
H3: There is a positive relationship between market segmentation and hotel performance	0.488*	P < 0.10	r = 0.90**
H4: There is a positive relationship between capacity management and hotel performance	0.468*	P < 0.10	r = 0.68**
H5: There is a positive relationship between competitor and hotel performance	0.492*	P < 0.10	r = 0.89**

table the four items show high score of mean, which measures hotels operation during high demand (Q16), peak period (Q20), overbooking practice (Q19) and spending power of customer while staying in the hotel (Q21). These represent mean of 4.74, 4.50, 4.88 and 4.77. The rest of the item gave score of 4.62 and 4.67. With the F-value of 11.6 and significant at $p < 0.10$, null hypothesis is rejected because there is a positive relationship between capacity management and performance.

In competitor, the table shows high score of mean with the total score of 5.06. There are three items indicate the score of more than 5.0 which measure competitor's room rates (Q23), marketing & promotional activities (Q24) and occupancy rate (Q26). These items represent score of 5.17, 5.08 and 5.10. The rest of the items also yielded the value of 4.98 and 4.95. With the F-value of 14.6 and significant at $p < 0.10$, we can reject null hypothesis because there is a positive relationship between competitor and performance.

Additionally, the descriptive and regression analysis were carried out using SPSS to find out whether the null hypothesis should be accepted or rejected. The results illustrated that there is significant difference among all the items mainly in most of the variables. Furthermore, the result of hypothesis testing which is shown in table 2 concluded that all the yield management techniques used prove to be positive and significance predictors of hotel performance.

The results, which derived from the descriptive analysis, indicate that the mean scores of the related variables are slightly high. The highest corresponds

to hotel's policy in setting room rates (5.35), grouping customer into strategic cluster (5.12) followed by hotel's room rates based on rates achieved per market segment of all hotels. It is important to notice that overall demand analysis (4.51) and overall capacity management (4.73) yielded lower mean scores. This may suggest that for the hotel to be good in both demand analysis and capacity management, they need extensive data in order for a yield management to operate effectively.

4 CONCLUSIONS

This study is the first to empirically test yield management techniques across all four and five star hotels in Kuala Lumpur. This work contributes to the academic literature by empirically testing if the yield management techniques suggested by the academic literature impact hotel's performance. Considering, this is the first study of yield management on hotels in Malaysia, it seems that the managers interviewed did have a clear understanding of the concept of yield management and this is encouraging. However, it is also true that the managers were unsure of any clear definition of the techniques and the importance of implementation of such techniques to their types of organizations. I hope that this information will aid managers in allocating resources to improve their hotel's performance.

Hotel companies adopting yield management techniques have achieved good results. Clear plans and relevant criteria allow decision making to move downward within the organization leading to greater efficiency and heightened job satisfaction. The practices policies and system that contribute to yield management share a common orientation - namely, maximum return on a scarce resource (hotel room).

In conclusion, there is a growing evidence from the survey that yield management may improve yield performance but in short term. Yield improvement varies over time, probably in relation to the strength of demand. Most improvement is seen with respect to those periods when demand is strong. It is therefore clearly the 'right thing to do'. But the sophistication of a hotel yield management system means that improvement is also dependent on 'doing things right'. Not all hotels are necessarily optimizing all the benefits that might result from yield management. In the end, long-term success will continue to depend on a hotel or a chain outperforming its competitors on a range of factors - location, service, management expertise and not just one single technology: yield management.

Still, the issues dealt with in this paper can be further expanded in a number of directions. For example, an analytical study, which takes into consideration the

factors, which might influence the implication of yield management and usage of yield management, might be worthwhile. Furthermore, replication of this study using a larger sample to find out the effects of development of yield management awareness and usage over time is valuable. Additionally, a study, which explores the perceived fairness of yield management practice, is of interest.

REFERENCES

- Berkus, D. 1988. The Yield Management Revolution- an ideal use of Artificial Intelligence'. *The Bottomline*, June/ July, pp. 13-15.
- Bitran, G. and Caldentey, R. 2003. An overview of pricing models for revenue management', *Manufacturing and Service Operations Management*, 5, 3, 203-229.
- Bradley, A. and Ingold, A. 1993. An investigation of yield-management in Birmingham hotels' *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 5(1), 13-16.
- Dillion, E. 1991. Yield Management - in the balance'. *Caterer and Hotelkeeper*, 24 (24 April), 61-3.
- Donaghy, K., and McMohan, U. 1995. Managing yield: a marketing perspective'. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 2(1), 55-62
- Donaghy, K., McMohan, U and McDowell, D. 1995. Yield management - an overview'. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. 14(2), 139-50
- Donaghy, K., McMohan, U and McDowell, D. 1997. Implementing yield management: lessons from the hotel industry'. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 9(2), 50-4.
- Elmaghraby, W. and Keskinocak, P. 2003. Dynamic pricing in the presence of inventory considerations: research overview, current practices, and future directions', *Management Science*, 49, 10, 1287-1309.
- Gamble, P.R. 1990. Building a yield management system - the flip side'. *Hospitality Research Journal* 14(2), 11-22.
- Goldratt, E. M. 1990. *Theory of Constraints*, North River Press, Croton-on-Hudson, NY.
- Jones, P. and Hamilton, D. 1992. Yield Management: putting people in the big picture'. *The Cornell HRA Quarterly* 33(1), 88-95.
- Kimes, S. E. 2003. Revenue management: a retrospective', *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 30, 3, 14-19.
- Lieberman, W.H. 1993. Debunking the myths of yield management. *Cornell and Hotel Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 34(1), 34-41.
- Nikolis, N. 2009. The effect of yield management on hotels chains. *Best Management Articles*, Feb 9th, 2009.
- Solomon, A. 1990. Yield Management-Leaders sheds light on the 'dark science'. *Hotel and Motel Management Part 205*, 85-88.
- Vinod, B. 2003. Pricing for profit: path to profitability with revenue ad profit optimization'. Paper presented at the 14th Annual Spring Conference, Professional Pricing Society, Las Vegas, Nevada, April.

This page intentionally left blank

Measuring customer satisfaction: The case of Kelantan Delights Restaurant

Wan Ahmad Nasroun Wan Salman

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

Nur Musawirah Sebi

School of Hospitality, Saujana Academy of Hospitality and Tourism, Malaysia

Ida Rosmini Othman & Raja'ah Meor Yahyauddin

Faculty of Computer & Mathematical Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The aims of this study is to ascertain the restaurant attributes that associated with customer satisfaction, especially in one of the ethnic-theme restaurant, located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia namely Kelantan Delight (KD). In addition, this study also provides the critical factors that need high attention by the management in continuing to prosper. The restaurant attributes were adopted from previous study. Customers who dined in KD restaurant were solicited by using self-administered questionnaires. Importance-Performance analysis (IPA) is used in order to find whether the restaurant attributes offered are met with the customer satisfaction. The result indicates that five of the attributes need high attention by the KD management, especially with regards to the service, atmosphere and novelty. Overall, this study helps the management of the restaurant, especially the owner to understand and to take appropriate corrective action to survive in the competitive business environment.

Keywords: Restaurant attributes; ethnic-theme restaurant; customer satisfaction; Importance-Performance analysis (IPA).

1 INTRODUCTION

Many studies have been written on customer satisfaction in different types of restaurants. An earlier study by Pettijohn, Pettijohn and Luke (1997) had focused on customer satisfaction in fast food restaurant. Later, the study had been extended by Qin and Prybutok (2008), looking at the customer satisfaction and customer return intention within the same setting. Shoemaker (1998) had studied on the customer satisfaction in the university foodservice. Within the related context, Kim, Ng, and Kim (2009) had identified the factors involved in customer satisfaction for the college students dining facilities. Not only that, studies pertaining to full-service restaurants had also received an attention in order to capture the market (Sulek & Hensley, 2004; Han, 2007). In other perspective, Liu and Jang (2009) had recognized the satisfaction contribution of the customers in the ethnic-theme restaurant. As for the information, all the studies stated above had view the customer satisfaction based from the restaurant attribute. However, there is very little attention had been given to the ethnic-theme restaurant. This had been agreed by Liu and Jang (2009), in which Gupta, McLaughlin and Gomez (2007) asserted that the importance of a particular attribute varies

according to the type of restaurant and the type of customer.

Generally, ethnic-theme restaurant consists of ethnic art, décor, music, external facade, name and various stereotyped signals to create a unique and distinct setting which lays claim to being a reflection of some exotic but recognizable culture (Wood & Munoz, 2007). It can be said that ethnic-theme restaurant has a greater chance of providing consumers with a meaningful dining and entertainment experience, such as the opportunity to connect to their tradition (Negra, 2002) and interact with foreign cultures and cuisines (Barbas, 2003). As for this study, Kelantan Delight (KD) is considered as an ethnic-theme restaurant serving popular Kelantanese and Southern Thai cuisine in a stylish elegant restaurant setting. This restaurant has grown to a reputable brand name and establishing itself at Sooka Sentral, Kuala Lumpur. As with other types of restaurant businesses, the need to satisfy the customers is indeed an important element for the business survival. Therefore, the aim of this study is to identify the attributes of the restaurant that leads to customers' satisfaction, especially in KD restaurant. In addition, this study will use the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) matrix in searching the attributes that need a high attention by the management of KD.

2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Studies (Kivela, Inbakaran & Reece, 2000; Lee, 2004; Han & Ryu, 2009) have identified various attributes have a favourable effect on dining satisfaction. It is generally accepted that multi-attribute scale is appropriate for use in measuring customer satisfaction in restaurants (Kivela et al, 2000). As theorized by Dube, Renaghan and Miller (1994) that customer satisfaction in restaurants is a function of multiple elements of dining experience. Furthermore, it can be said that different classes of restaurant business should implement different managerial strategies to compete and succeed (Cheng, 2005).

Within the dimensions of restaurant attributes, Yuksel and Yuksel (2002) mentioned that food plays a key part but by no means is the only part in satisfying customer. This has been confirmed by Sulek and Hensley (2004) study, in which the authors stated that only three variables were found to be statistically significant in their findings, namely food quality, dining atmosphere, and seating-order fairness. On the other hand, price and nutrition information together with employee competency are considered as the most influential factors of college student's satisfaction level in the college dining experience (Lee, 2004). In spite of that, Okada and Hoch (2004) believed in which the décor or ambiance of a restaurant works simultaneously with the quality of service and the quality of food.

2.1 Food attributes

Food has been considered as a fundamental element and critical components in customer's dining experience (Ha & Jang, 2010; Namkung & Jang, 2008). It can be said that the food can build the relationship between the customer and the restaurant itself. This has been supported by Meng and Elliot (2008), in which the authors had highlighted on the importance of the food aspects in developing customer's satisfaction and their loyalty within the restaurant industry. A study by Qin and Prybutok (2009) in fast food restaurants has found that there is a significant relationship between food and customer satisfaction. In addition, they further noted that food characteristics still consider as an influential factor when customers make their decisions in selecting restaurants.

Generally, researchers have used a variety of attributes in measuring the food aspects (Ha & Jang, 2010). Kivela et al. (2000) have taken several attributes into consideration including tastiness of food, menu variety, and nutrition to examine the effect of excellent food on customer satisfaction. In the same perspective, Sulek and Hensley (2004) identified three general attributes on food, namely; safety, appeal, and dietary acceptability. They further explained that taste, food presentation, texture, color, temperature, and portion size are among the items under the appeal attributes. For this study, the notion from Weiss (2003) was found to be appropriate to be applied as it considered to have

a balance view for an ethnic-theme restaurant. The attributes used in the study by Weiss (2003) includes presentation of food, menu item variety, nutritious food, the tastiness of food, food quality, freshness of food and temperature of food as well.

2.2 Service

Service quality has been extensively researched within the service marketing field and considered as one of the most critical factors influencing customer satisfaction and future behaviors (Ha & Jang, 2010). Previous studies have quoted the importance of service quality in determining customer satisfaction with the service encounter (Chow, Lau, Lo, Sha & Yun., 2007). Generally, the service quality in foodservice operations has been characterized as individualized, intangible and subjective in nature (Chow, et. al., 2007). The question on how customers perceived and evaluate service quality would be highly dependent on the service provider's performance during service delivery. In addition to that, Sedlock (2010) in his article had further explained on service quality based on his experience and what research has shown. According to the same author, customers have common needs of a service, which are; timeliness, reliability, empathy, assurance, and tangibles (TREAT). This can be elaborated, in which customers always want services in a timely manner, on-time and complete service every time, want services that meet their needs, have confidence in the quality of their service provider, and see physical evidence of good service (Sedlock, 2010).

2.3 Atmosphere

The study by Johns and Pine (2002) had proved that atmosphere contributes among the fundamental factors to the customer satisfaction. The same authors also further elaborated that customers are looking for the feeling of comfort when they dine in a restaurant or stay in a hotel. In addition to that, Barber and Scarcelli (2010) had labeled the atmosphere as a physical environment, in which it refers to tangible elements of the service. On the same ground, Meng and Elliot (2008) identify that tangibles such as décor, dining area comfortably, and cleanliness of both the dining area and restrooms were all shown to impact on service quality. Likewise, Barber and Scarcelli (2010) further added that the appearance of the physical facilities, personnel, communication materials, and other physical features are comprised in the atmosphere and used to provide services in the service facility. This has supported the notion by Raajpoot (2002), in which he claimed that tangible factors are one of the few dimensions to have been consistently used by service quality researchers.

2.4 Novelty

Humans are endowed with two essential modes of consumption, namely thinking and sensing. An earlier

study by Hirschman (1984) posited that the consumption of products will stimulate the human thoughts and/or senses as the outcome. This has been further explained by Weiss (2003), in which the stimulation from the consumption consists of three constructs; cognition seeking, sensation seeking and novelty seeking. However, this study tends to focus more on novelty seeking behavior since the sample of the study is reflected the ethnic-theme restaurant. Generally, novelty seeking behavior relates to a person's desire to seek out novel experiences, or new sources of stimulation (Weiss, 2003), whereas Jang and Feng (2007) define novelty seeking behavior as the degree of contrast between present perception and past experience. With regards to the restaurant industry, a study by Weiss (2003) found that customer's satisfaction with novelty was significantly lower as compared to other attributes. Typically, ethnic-theme restaurants have tried to sell themselves on the promise of providing a new different experience to their customers. Unfortunately, Weiss (2003) further stated that the customers do not feel that these restaurants are providing the new dining experience. Although Weiss (2003) may have indicated that customers may less satisfy with novel dining experiences, the results may differ in the perspective of ethnic-theme restaurant in this country.

3 METHODOLOGY

Survey methods by using self-administered questionnaires were used, in which it was adapted from Weiss (2003) and respondents for this study were the customers who dined at KD restaurant. The questionnaire consists of three sections. Section 1 and 2 contained 26 items each, whereas Section 3 reflects on the demographic profile of the respondents. Items in Section 1 were used to assess on how important the restaurant attributes were to respondents. Meanwhile, items in Section 2 were used to measure if the KD restaurant has met respondents' expectations on the attribute. Referring to the study by Weiss (2003), the restaurant attributes are divided into four categories, namely food, service, atmosphere, and novelty. Altogether, there were 7 items listed under each food and service attributes. The remaining 8 items categorized under the atmosphere and the last 4 items is within novelty attributes.

Apart from that, the Importance-Performance analysis (IPA) or sometimes known as Quadrant analysis was used in searching the attributes that required high attention for KD restaurant. It is based on the concept that satisfaction is a result of a preference for an object or service and the performance is judged by the customers. The respondents were asked to rate restaurant attributes based on its importance and on the organization's performance of the selected attributes. This analysis can be visualized easily from quadrant analysis plot. The average of the importance scores given by the customer for each item was plotted on a scatter graph to make it easy to understand at a glance.



Figure 1. Caption of IPA plot.

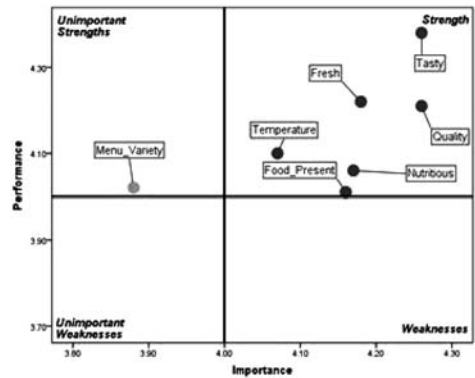


Figure 2. Caption of IPA for food attributes.

With the data obtained, the average importance score was plotted on the *x*-axis, while average performance scores was plotted on the *y*-axis for each item measured. Both reference lines were set at 4.0 based on a scale of 1 to 5. From this plot, the areas where there is a scope for improvement were highlighted and identified. The interpretation of the IPA plot is summarized in Figure 1. *Quadrant I* represent the company's strengths (high importance and high performance); *Quadrant II* shows the weaknesses (high importance, but low performance); *Quadrant III* contains items of low importance and low performance, hence low priority for improvement; and *Quadrant IV* contain items with low priority, but high performance, hence, over-utilization of resources.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 IPA for food attributes

Figure 2 shows the graphical presentation of the IPA on food attributes of KD. The top right-hand quadrant (Quadrant 1) of the plot shows that KD is already performing well in terms of *food presentation, nutrition,*

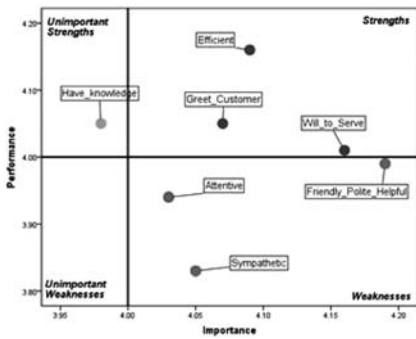


Figure 3. Caption of IPA for service attributes.

temperature of the food, quality, freshness and tastiness of food, as shown by the high importance and high satisfaction or performance.

The top left-hand quadrant (Quadrant IV) identifies only one item with low importance but high performance. That is, the customers did not consider menu item variety as important but they gave high scores for its performance. Thus, this item is considered to be low priority for improvement, and by way of performance is not forthcoming as well.

4.2 IPA for service attributes

Figure 3 shows the graphical presentation of the IPA on service attributes of KD. In service attributes, customers considered that *staff greeting customers, efficient staff and staff willingness to serve* as being important and they were satisfied with the performance of all these three attributes. The bottom-right side quadrant (Quadrant II) is the most important as it identifies current weaknesses in KD. The customers identified three items to be very important, but rated their performance low. These are *sympathetic handling of complaints, attentive staff and friendly, polite and helpful staff*. *Staff have food/beverage knowledge* attribute was considered to be low priority for improvement as it had low importance but was rated highly by the customers. In addition, there is no item that could be considered as low importance and low performance in Quadrant IV (unimportant weaknesses)

4.3 IPA for atmosphere attributes

Figure 4 shows the graphical presentation of the IPA on atmosphere attributes of KD. The result shows that many attributes associated with atmosphere were perceived by the customers to be important and were rated highly by the respondents in terms of the satisfaction these attributes provided or rendered. Specifically belonging to KD's strengths quadrant are *restaurant's temperature, level of comfort in the restaurant, dining privacy, restaurant's appearance and cleanliness of the restaurant*. In contrast, *staff appearance* was considered important but it was not rated highly, meaning the customers were not satisfied with the

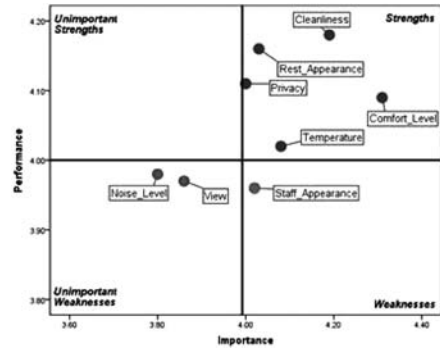


Figure 4. Caption of IPA for atmosphere attributes.

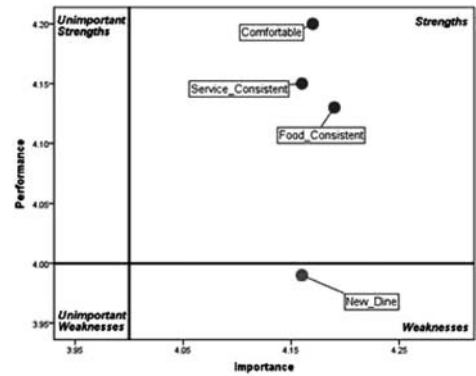


Figure 5. Caption of IPA for novelty.

staff performance in terms of appearance. The other attributes, *an important level of noise in the restaurant and view from the restaurant*, were considered neither not important, nor were the customers satisfied with them. That is, these attributes were considered low priority for improvement.

4.4 IPA for novelty

Figure 5 shows the graphical presentation of the IPA on the novelty of KD. KD has achieved as a restaurant that offers *food of a consistent standard, service of a consistent standard and pleasant ambience (feels comfortable to eat here)* as shown by the high importance and high performance quadrant. However, the management failed to *offer a new dining experience* to their customers since it was rated low in satisfaction or performance but this attribute was considered as high importance to the customers.

5 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

Overall, this study provides information on the customers' point of view with regards to their satisfaction dine in KD restaurant. With these findings, it can be

said that the management can establish an action plan in order to survive in the industry. This study also had identified the strengths and the weaknesses that need to be considered by the management.

The findings revealed that the majority of the attributes provided by the restaurant were found to be satisfied by the customers. Three of the restaurant attributes categories (food, atmosphere, novelty) were considered as the main contributor of satisfaction as rated by the customers. This was found to be in line with a study by Weiss, Feinstein and Dalbor (2004), in which the above mentioned categories were found to have a significant relationship with customer satisfaction. On the other hand, this study also highlighted five most critical attributes that need a serious attention by the KD management. Results portrayed that three of the items were from service attributes (sympathetic handling of complaints; attentive staff; friendly, polite and helpful staff), one from atmosphere attribute (staff appearance), and the other was from novelty attribute (a restaurant that offer a new dining experience). It is recommended that the issues exist within the service and atmosphere attributes can be solved by giving a proper training to the staff. Although the staff employed comes from various backgrounds, the need to explain about the nature of hospitality and service industry is essential. With regards to the novelty attributes, it would be suggested for the KD management to hire a proper consultant that would help in creating a new dining experience which suits with the food and the atmosphere of the restaurant.

On the whole, this study is focusing on KD restaurant only, in which the result may not be generalized to other types of restaurants. Perhaps, this study can be extended to all types of restaurants within the same setting. Apart from that, by adding the price/value as one of the attributes would provide a new finding for the study. In addition, the needs to look at customers' return intention involving internal and external factors for this type of restaurant would be recommended for future research.

REFERENCES

Barbas, S. 2003. I'll take chop suey: Restaurants as agents of culinary and cultural change. *Journal of Popular Culture* 36(4): 669–684.

Barber, N. & Scarcelli, J.M. 2010. Enhancing the assessment of tangible service quality through the creation of a cleanliness measurement scale. *Managing Service Quality* 20(01): 70–88.

Cheng, K. 2005. A research on the determinants of consumers' repurchase toward different classes of restaurants in Taiwan. *Business Review* 4(2): 99–105.

Chow, I.H., Lau, V.P., Lo, T.W., Sha, Z. & Yun, H. 2007. Service quality in restaurant operations in China: decision- and experiential-oriented perspectives. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 26(3): 698–710.

Dube, L., Renaghan, L.M. & Miller, J.M. 1994. Measuring customer satisfaction for strategic management. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 35(1): 39–47.

Gupta, S., McLaughlin, E., & Gomez, M. 2007. Guest satisfaction and restaurant performance. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 48(3): 284.

Ha, J. & Jang, S.C.S. 2010. Effects of service quality and food quality: The moderating role of atmospherics in an ethnic restaurant segment. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 29(3): 520–529.

Han, H. 2007. Restaurant customers' emotional experiences and perceived switching barriers: A full-service restaurant setting. A dissertation. Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

Han, H. & Ryu, K. 2009. The roles of the physical environment, price perception, and customer satisfaction in determining customer loyalty in the restaurant industry. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* 33(4): 487–510.

Hirschman, E.C. 1984. Experience Seeking: A Subjectivist Perspective of Consumption. *Journal of Business Research* 12(1): 115–136.

Jang, S. & Feng, R. 2007. Temporal destination revisit intention: the effects of novelty seeking and satisfaction. *Tourism Management* 28(2): 580–590.

Johns, N. & Pine, R. 2002. Customer behavior in the food service industry: A review. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 21(2): 119–134.

Kim, W.G., Ng, C.Y.N., & Kim, Y.S. 2009. Influence of institutional DINESERV on customer satisfaction, return intention and word-of-mouth. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 28(1): 10–17.

Kivela, J., Inbakaran, R. & Reece, J. 2000. Consumer research in the restaurant environment, Part 3: Analysis, findings and conclusions. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 12(1): 13–30.

Lee, S. S. 2004. College student's perception and preference of brand name foodservice in university dining operations. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, United States.

Liu, Y. & Jang, S.C.S. 2009. Perceptions of Chinese restaurants in the U.S: What affects customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions? . *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 28(3): 338–348.

Meng, J.G. & Elliott, K.M. 2008. Predictors of relationship quality for luxury restaurants. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 15(6): 509–515.

Namkung, Y. & Jang, S.S.C. 2008. Are highly satisfied restaurant customers really different? A quality perception perspective. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 20(2): 142–155.

Negra, D. 2002. Ethnic food, Fetishism, Whiteness and Nostalgia in Recent Film and Television. *The Velvet Light Trap* 50: 62–76.

Okada, E.M. & Hoch, S.J. 2004. Spending Time versus Spending Money. *Journal of Consumer Research* 31(2): 313–323.

Pettijohn, L.S., Pettijohn, C.E. & Luke, R. 1997. An evaluation of fast food restaurant satisfaction: determinants, competitive comparisons and impact on future patronage. *Journal of Restaurant and Foodservice Marketing* 2(3): 3–20.

Qin, H. & Prybutok, V.R. 2008. Determinants of Customer-Perceived Service Quality in Fast-Food Restaurants and Their Relationship to Customer Satisfaction and Behavioral Intentions. *The Quality Management Journal* 15(2): 35–50.

Qin, H. & Prybutok, V.R. 2009. Service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions in fast-food restaurants. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences: 1(1) 78–95.*

- Raajpoot, N. 2002. TANGSERV: a multiple item scale for measuring tangible quality in food restaurants as cultural ambassadors. *Tourism and Hospitality Research* 7(3/4): 242–255.
- Sedlock, R. 2010. TREAT Your Customers. The five characteristics of quality service. *Quality Progress* 43(12): 80.
- Shoemaker, S. 1998. A strategic approach to segmentation in university foodservice. *Journal of Restaurant and Foodservice Marketing* 3(1): 3–36.
- Sulek, J.M. & Hensley, R.L. 2004. The relative importance of food, atmosphere, and fairness of wait. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 45(3): 235–247.
- Weiss, R. 2003. The relationship between restaurant attributes satisfaction and return intent in U.S. theme restaurants. Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of Nevada, Las Vegas, United States.
- Weiss, R., Feinstein, A.H. & Dalbor, M. 2004. Customer Satisfaction of Theme Restaurant Attributes and Their Influence on Return Intent. The Haworth Press, Inc.
- Wood, N.T. & Munoz, C.L. 2007. 'No rules, just right' or is it? The role of themed restaurants as cultural ambassadors. *Tourism and Hospitality Research* 7(3/4): 242–255.
- Yuksel, A. & Yuksel, F. 2002. Measurement of tourist satisfaction with restaurant services: a segment-based approach. *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 9(1): 52-68.

The mediating effect of service quality on market orientation and business performance relationship of hotels in Klang Valley

M.B. Lopez

Nilai University College, Malaysia

S.M. Radzi

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Market Orientation (MO) is one of the major research streams in strategic marketing developed during the past twenty years. Samples comprised of 41 hotel managers from four and five star hotels in the Klang Valley, Malaysia and were obtained through a mail survey questionnaire. Market orientation was measured using the adopted 20-item MARKOR scale, while the 22-item SERQUAL scale was adopted for service quality for this study. As for the business performance, three performance measures were used in this study: i) occupancy percentage; ii) Return On Assets (ROA), and iii) Return On Sales (ROS). The research hypotheses were tested using the multiple regression analyses. The stepwise regression results revealed that service quality mediates the relationship between market orientation and business performance.

Keywords: market orientation, service quality, business performance, hotel industry.

1 INTRODUCTION

Although managers have long been exhorted to become close to their customers and adopt the marketing concept, academic marketing has been able to offer relatively little guidance as to the practical steps that might be adopted to transform organizations. The development of measures of market-oriented behaviours and subsequent research in the 1990s has begun to rectify this problem, but researchers are still a long way from providing comprehensive, empirically grounded guidance to assist hotel firms in developing a market orientation in their firms.

While it is important for a hotel to closely monitor and conform to the needs and expectations of its customer, it is equally essential to build a quality culture within the organization. The responsibility of pursuing a market orientation organization and the delivering of high quality service ultimately rests on the front-line employees (and their managers), and, therefore, the success of market-focused initiatives also depends on employees' acceptance of quality culture (Heskett *et al.*, 1994).

The research activity surrounding the market orientation construct is perhaps motivated primarily by the intuitive connection with business performance. By and large, the empirical confirmation for this relationship has come almost entirely from US and the UK. Very limited research on the market orientation-performance relationship has been conducted outside of Western cultures. Thus, this study examined the

degree to which service quality mediates the relationship between market orientation and business. Therefore by choosing the upper level manager as the focal subject of this study, their perceptions towards market orientation and service quality that may have an effect on business performance as the managers have greater knowledge of the hotels' goals and objectives and its market orientation strategy

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Market orientation*

The concept of market orientation has a long history in the marketing school of thought. The body of work in this field has expanded greatly, with numerous researchers focusing on market orientation in the 1982-1990 period particularly (Perkins, 1991). Market orientation is a marketing concept that involves the feeling of well-being and pleasure that results from obtaining what one hopes for and expects from an appealing product and/or service (WTO, 1995).

The marketing concept and the related construct of market orientation have been important components of marketing academe and practice of several decades (e.g. Jaworski and Kohli *et al.*, 2000; Narver and Slater, 1990; and Siguaw *et al.*, 1998). Due to the fundamental importance attributed to these concepts, numerous research projects have attempted to define the constructs and explore their application

and implementation in business. Over the course of the years, the marketing concept evolved to reflect a philosophy of doing business that can be considered the central ingredient of a successful organization's culture (Slater and Narver, 1995).

2.2 *Service quality*

Service quality incorporates the concept of meeting and exceeding the expectations of the customer and this has been growing in popularity since its inception in the late 1970s. Service quality has been derived from the field of marketing which values the human interaction between a business and its customers. Service quality is so intangible that objective measurement is impossible; the challenge lies mostly in managing appearances and perceptions (Harvey, 1998). This majority of the literature on service quality in the 1970s and 1980s reveals four main attributes: 1) intangibility, 2) heterogeneity, 3) perishability, and 4) inseparability. Intangibility is an attribute often cited as having no tangible quality. Customers cannot evaluate a service prior to consumption, during consumption and cannot store the service after consumption (Zeithaml, 1991). Heterogeneity relates to the potential variability in the actual performance of services and is supported by Looy *et al.*, (1998). The third attribute perishability is grounded in the theory that services cannot be saved or inventoried for future use. The last attribute is the inseparability of production and consumption occur simultaneously.

2.3 *Business performance*

Neely (1999) explains why there has been such an increase in interest in a more strategic perspective to performance measurement systems since the late 1980s. The researcher expresses the view that there are seven main reasons for performance measurement being necessary in the current business environment. The researcher also claims that the main reasons for performance measurement being so critical today are: 1) the changing nature of work, 2) increasing competition, 3) specific improvement initiatives, 4) national and international quality awards, 5) changing organizational roles, 6) changing external demands, and 7) the power of information technology. Thus, as pointed out by Dangayach and Deshmukh (2001) performance must have a strategic input to these issues.

2.4 *Market orientation, service quality and business performance*

Market Orientation is taking on increasing importance both domestically and internationally, in today's changing global environment, many businesses are facing intensifying competition and rapid deregulation, and in order to achieve competition advantage and efficiency, businesses have to seek profitable ways to differentiate themselves. It is one strategy that has been related to success in the delivery of high

service quality, especially during times of intensive competition.

As market orientation is becoming a major part of business practice, it is important to be able to measure and research its effectiveness. Managers should try to avoid perpetuating a corporate culture that emphasizes producing quality products, which sell themselves as this may damage business performance. Instead, managers should research markets to ensure their firms are producing services, which customers want rather than those, which managers perceive to be desirable. A market-oriented firm continuously monitors customers' changing needs and attempts to satisfy those needs by modifying its total offerings, while making a profit. In the long run, a market-oriented firm may produce higher profits through superior quality, which in turn, leads to higher productivity. (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1991).

3 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design with a structured questionnaire as the research instrument for primary data collection. The Malaysian Accommodation Directory published by the Malaysian Tourism Promotional Board (2009/2010) categorized the five star rated hotels as large-sized hotels, and four star hotels as medium-sized hotels. Based on the above information, there were in total 181 large-sized and medium-sized hotels (104 four star and 79 five star hotels) in Malaysia.

This study focused on the individual level of analysis. In regards to this consideration, the relevant unit of analysis of this study was the hotel firms from four and five stars hotel located in Klang Valley and the Federal Territory of Malaysia, because the highest distribution of four and five stars hotels are allocated within the areas mentioned. Respondents or participants (hotel general managers) were asked to rate their opinion on their individual hotels and in regards to the hospitality and tourism current economy trend in the Federal Territory and the Klang Valley of Malaysia.

The data collected for this study were primary data by means of a mail questionnaire. A total of 61 self-administered questionnaires with a cover letter explaining the purpose and procedures of the research were then distributed (via mail and hand delivered) through the Klang Valley's four and five star hotels and four star Service Apartments. The cover letter also requested for their sincere cooperation. The respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which a number of characteristics are related to their market orientation approach, their perceptions on service quality, and to indicate on their average occupancy percentage, average return on sales, and average return on assets. Twenty-two completed questionnaires were received (via mail) before the projected time-line and another eleven were received several weeks later (personal collection) and finally another eight more were received (via mail) after the projected time-line. A

Table 1. Stepwise regression results of occupancy upon market orientation and service quality variables.

IV	B	Std. error	Std B	t	Sig.
Constant	-5.021	5.192		-.967	.340
MO	10.012	2.032	.510	4.926	.000
Res	6.775	1.518	.462	4.462	.000

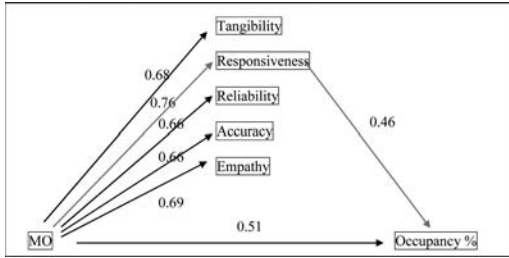


Figure 1. The Relationship between MO, SQ and Occupancy %.

total of forty-one completed questionnaires were collected, representing a 67.2% response rate. All 41 questionnaires were retained for analysis.

4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Hypothesis testing

H1: Service Quality (SQ) mediates the relationship between MO and Occupancy %

This hypothesis posits that service quality mediates the relationship between market orientation and business performance. The standard regression coefficients from the models in step one and step two were used to test the mediating effect of service quality on market orientation to business performance relationship. The results for stepwise multiple linear regression of MO and SQ variables upon occupancy % are provided in Table 1 below. MO and SQ was found to be significant predictors of Occupancy. The p-value for the residual scores was more than 0.05, indicating normality of the residual terms. The standardized regression weights of MO and Responsiveness (Res) are 0.51 and 0.46, respectively. The results identified the significant predictors of market orientation variables on service quality variables.

Based on the results from Figure 1, the standardized regression weights of MO on tangibility, responsiveness, relationship, accuracy and empathy are 0.68, 0.76, 0.66, 0.66 and 0.69, respectively. The standardized regression coefficients from the stepwise regression analyses are shown in Figure 4.2. The indirect effect of RMI on Occupancy % through Responsiveness is $0.76 \times 0.46 = 0.35$, which is more than

Table 2. Stepwise regression results of ROA upon market orientation and service quality variables.

IV	B	Std. Error	Std B	t	Sig.
Constant	-32.027	5.440		-5.887	.000
MO	5.994	2.346	.370	2.555	.015
Tang	7.524	1.997	.389	3.767	.001
Res	3.282	1.438	.268	2.282	.028

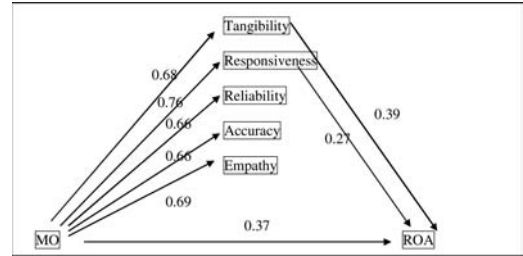


Figure 2. The relationship between MO, SQ and ROA.

0.085 (Hair, 2006). Thus, H1 is accepted and Responsiveness mediates the relationship between MO and Occupancy %.

H2: Service Quality (SQ) mediates the relationship between MO and ROA

Table 2 provides the stepwise regression results of Return on Assets (ROA) upon market orientation and service quality variables. As shown in the table, MO and Tangibility (Tang) and Responsiveness (Res) both service quality variables, were found to be significant predictors of Return on Assets. The p-value for the residual scores was more than 0.05, indicating normality of the residual terms.

The standardized regression weights of MO, tangibility (Tang) and Responsiveness (Res) are 0.37 and 0.39 and 0.27, respectively.

As indicated in Figure 2, the indirect effect of MO on ROA through Responsiveness is $0.76 \times 0.27 = 0.21$ which is more than 0.085. Thus, Responsiveness mediates the relationship between MO and ROA. The indirect effect of MO on ROA through tangibility is $0.68 \times 0.39 = 0.27$ which is more than 0.085. Thus, Tangibility mediates the relationship between MO and ROA. As a result, the hypothesis is accepted. That is tangibility and responsiveness mediates the relationship between MO and ROA.

H3: Service Quality (SQ) mediates the relationship between MO and ROS

Table 3 provides the stepwise regression results of Return on Sales (ROS) upon market orientation and service quality variables. MO and Responsiveness and Empathy (Emp), service quality variables, were found to be significant predictors of Return on Sales. The p-value for the residual scores was more than 0.05, indicating normality of the residual terms.

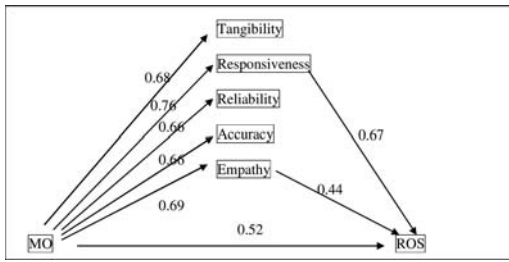


Figure 3. The Relationship between MO, SQ and ROS.

Table 3. Stepwise regression results of ROS upon market orientation and service quality variables.

IV	B	Std. Error	Std B	t	Sig.
Constant	-7.707	5.038		-1.530	.135
MO	6.024	1.761	.518	3.421	.002
Res	5.902	1.542	.671	3.827	.000
Emp	3.803	1.351	.442	2.815	.008

Table 3 depicts the standardized regression weights of MO, Responsiveness (Res) and Empathy (Emp) which are 0.52, 0.67 and 0.44, respectively. Based on Figure 3, the indirect effect of MO on ROS through Responsiveness is $0.76 \times 0.67 = 0.51$, which is more than 0.085. Thus, Responsiveness mediates the relationship between MO and ROS. The indirect effect of MO on ROS through Empathy is $0.69 \times 0.44 = 0.30$, which is more than 0.085. Thus, Empathy mediates the relationship between MO and ROS. As a result, H3 is accepted. That is responsiveness and empathy mediates the relationship between MO and ROS.

5 DISCUSSION

The results presented support Rust *et al.*, (1995) that service quality helps to generate higher revenue and yield a better profitability and both market orientation and service quality moderate offerings and have a positive impact on business performance. A market-oriented firm continuously monitors customers' changing needs and attempts to satisfy those needs by modifying its total offerings, while making a profit. Modifications often requires significant financial investment if the market has been neglected or misunderstood for an extended time period. Firms undertaking significant modifications, in response to customers' constant changing needs, may experience poor near-term profitability.

Conversely, a market-oriented organization is able to match the customers' needs with an organization's capability. Understanding what customers want and do not want can result in greater efficiency, reduce waste in management and manufacturing, and enhance competitive advantage. Although previous studies did

not incorporate intermediate variables in their models, the empirical support indicates a direct effect of market orientation on profitability.

The most common treatment of market orientation with a services domain has been as a source of competitive advantage, making a direct contribution to performance. The level of market orientation in a business unit is the degree to which the business unit obtains and uses information from customers, develops a strategy which will meet customer needs, and implements that strategy by being responsive to customer needs and wants. The most critical external environment in developing a market orientation is the customer. The second dimension of market orientation is the development of a plan of action or a customer focused strategy (Ruekert, 1992).

In general, the support for the market orientation-service quality suggests how a market-oriented service firm may achieve a higher quality level. This illustrates the importance of market orientation in developing and implementing a total quality management program aiming to improve delivered services. The intermediate role of quality in the market orientation-performance relationship provides a clearer picture on how the effect of a market-oriented effort should be evaluated.

The study has achieved the stated objective and all the posited research questions have answered. Congruent with such notion, the market orientation as well as the service quality was observed to have a significant predictive influence on hotel business performance. In summary, it is hoped that the study findings may offer some insights into Malaysian hotel organizations to better understand the implication of business performance and strategically manage the service quality in order to execute the market orientations. Owing to the current environment of professionally grooming the hotel managers to be market oriented, the application of service quality dimensions is imperative since they play a significant role in delivering superior business performance outcomes.

REFERENCES

- Danagayach, G.S., and Desmukh, S.G. (2001). Practice of manufacturing strategy: evidence from select Indian automobile companies. *International Journal of Production Research*, 39(11): 2353-2393.
- Driving Markets", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 28 (1): pp. 45-54.
- Hair, Jr. J. F., Black, W.C., Babin, B.J., Anderson, R.E., and Tatham, R.L. (2006). *Multivariate Data Analysis* (6th Ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.
- Heskett, J.L., Jones, T.O., Loveman, G.W., Sasser, W.E. Jr, Schlesinger, L.A. (1994). "Putting the service-profit chain to work", *Harvard Business Review*, pp.164-74.
- Jaworski, Bernard J., Ajay K. Kohli, and Arvind Sahay. (2000). "Market-Driven Versus
- Looy, V.B. et al., (1998). "Dealing with productivity and quality indicators in a service environment: some field experiences", *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, Vol. 9 No. 4, pp. 359-76.

- Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board. (2010). Annual Tourism Statistical Report, Kuala Lumpur.
- Narver, J.C. and Slater, S.F. (1990). "The effect of a market orientation on business profitability", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 55, pp. 20–35.
- Neely, A. (1999). "The performance measurement revolution: why now and what next?", *International Journal of Operations and Production Management*, Vol. 19 No. 2, pp. 205–28.
- Perkins, D.S. (1991). A consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction and complaining behavior bibliography: 1982-1990. *Journal of Consumer satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, 4, 194–228.
- Ruekert, R.W. (1992). "Developing a market orientation: an organizational strategy perspective", *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, Vol. 9, August, pp. 225–45.
- Rust, R. T., a. J. Zahorik, and T. L. Keiningham. (1995). "Return on quality (ROQ): Making service quality financially accountable", *Journal of Marketing* 59: pp. 58–70.
- Siguaw. J.A., Simpson, P. and Baker, T.L. (1998). "Effects of supplier market orientation on distributor market orientation and the channel relationship: the distributor perspective", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 62, July, pp. 99–111.
- Slater, S. F., Narver, J. C. (1995). "Market orientation and the learning organization", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 59 pp. 63–74.
- WTO (1995). Identification and Evaluation of those Components of Tourism Services which have a Bearing on Tourism Satisfaction and which can Regulated, and State Measures to Ensure Adequate Quality of Tourism Services, World Tourism Organization, Madrid.
- Zeithaml, V. (1991). 'How consumer evaluation processes differ between goods and services', in Donnelly, J.H. and George, E. (Eds), *Marketing of Services*, American Marketing Associate, Chicago, IL.

This page intentionally left blank

A preliminary study of internal reference prices and purchase intentions in hotels

Mohd Taufik Zimri @ Zamri, Norzuwana Sumarjan & Azdel Abdul Aziz
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: An internal reference price, which constituted from memory, is recognized to influence customer purchase decisions. There have been numerous debates in reference pricing literature pertaining to the most agreeable internal reference price dimensions used by customers when evaluating their purchase decisions. However, the questions of which internal reference price dimensions is the most agreeable especially in considering hotel prices has yet not been addressed. This preliminary study has surveyed 35 hotel customers to identify the relationship between internal reference price and purchase intentions. Besides, this study also examined which is the most agreeable internal reference price dimensions that influencing the purchase intentions among hotel customers. The Correlation analysis showed that there was a strong correlation between internal reference price and purchase intentions among hotel customers. The author identified market price as the most agreeable dimension among hotel customers when evaluating hotel prices.

Keywords: Hotel pricing, internal reference price, Malaysian hotel, purchase intentions, reference price

1 INTRODUCTION

Numerous studies have been conducted emphasizing on reference price points within marketing literatures (Bell, Bialogorsky and Carmon, 1997; Diamond and Campbell, 1989; Klein and Oglethorpe, 1987; Lewis and Shoemaker, 1997; Mazumdar, Raj and Sinha, 2005; Moon, Russell and Duvvuri, 2005; Ranyard, Carlton and Williamson, 2001; Roy, Chan and Cheema, 2007; Vaidyanathan, Aggarwal, Stem Jr, Muehling and Umesh, 2000). and focusing on how customer form their reference price points and utilize it to influence their purchase behavior. In addition, all of these studies examined the formation of reference price points that built into internal reference price (IRP), external reference price (ERP), and its effect on consumer behaviors, specifically purchase intentions. However, most of the studies emphasized more on the effect of reference price toward purchase intentions within physical or tangible products where the price is normally fixed unless a promotional activity such as discount is introduced.

Service organizations such as hotels, airlines, restaurants and other hospitality businesses are known in providing intangible products (rooms and seats). Many studies in hospitality field have empirically proved that hospitality services, specifically hotels and airlines are practicing dynamic pricing strategy or sometimes called differentiation pricing strategy, price segmentation and price discrimination (Jauncey,

Mitchell and Slamet, 1995; Kimes, 2003; Kimes and Wirtz, 2003; Mathies and Gudergan, 2007). Such practices are developed to maximize the utilization of fixed capacity against high variable demand. To illustrate this, a hotel with 500 rooms is unable to accommodate more than the capacity allowed at a particular night. The same goes to the airline seats. Therefore, an effective mechanism need to be developed to manage the demand so that it can perfectly matched and optimized the capacity and revenue. This practice is known as revenue management.

According to Lewis and Shoemaker (1997), reference prices for services are usually more complicated in the consumer's mind than reference prices for tangible goods. To illustrate the difference of reference price points between tangible and intangible products, consider this example. A customer has a fairly good idea of how much to pay for a kilogram of flour or a unit of refrigerator, but the price of hotel room is a big question for the customer. It is because, the price of flour is widely known due to its commodity value and the price of a refrigerator can be expected through its features and functions. However, a price of rooms is different according to its size, amenities, location and services. In addition, it is more complicated when the price of room is uneven especially due to the high and low demand. The application of revenue management where dynamic pricing is practiced adds to customers' confusion. This might results in the lack of consumer expectation ability to form a reference price

points to influence their behavioral intentions. Consequently, consumers often contemplate a price range rather than exact price of the room. Therefore, it is important to identify the question of how customers evaluate the uncertainty of hotel pricing structure in making purchase decision.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purposes of the study were to measure the relationship between internal reference price and purchase intentions among hotel customers as well as to identify which is the most agreeable internal reference price dimension among hotel customers in evaluating room prices.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Aspiration-based IRP

Aspiration level reference price can be defined as “a price point that represent consciously established goals or targets for an attribute” (Klein and Oglethorpe, 1987, pp. 184). Aspiration level of reference price also refers to a price expected based on social comparison for a similar product category (Mezias, Chen and Murphy, 2002). In other words, customers have their own understanding and awareness about the price of a product or service by observing and evaluating its attributes. According to Klein and Oglethorpe (1987), in order for customer to form an aspiration level of reference price, certain criteria must be considered which include interest in the product or the degree of involvement, knowledge of product or service attributes, and the importance of product or service attributes. They added that if the customers have low degree of involvement, knowledge of the product and unsure about their attribute preferences, no reference point may be formed. In this case, the customers need stimuli from ERP by exposing to the posted prices. However, if the customers have a very good product knowledge, high interest on the product and familiar with what attributes important to them, it will most likely resulting in the formation of conscious goal, thus raising an aspiration level.

2.2 Market-based IRP

Market level reference price is defined as the customers' perception about the price level in the marketplace (Vaidyanathan, 2000). This type of IRP is normally based on the evaluation of prices offered by several brands of a similar product or service category (Klein and Oglethorpe, 1987). In other words, customers are comparing competitive prices in brand choice decisions (Golman and Loewenstein, 2011). For example, if a customer knows that a price for X brand shampoo among several stores is RM10 per 1 liter in average, he or she will expect to get it at RM10 for every purchase.

2.3 Relationship between IRP and purchase intentions

Klein and Oglethorpe (1987) evaluated possible reference point effects on riskless choice outcomes and processes. They found that the role of knowledge about the attribute (aspiration-based) appears to play a significant role in making purchase decision. Diamond and Campbell (1989) investigated the practice of the framing of sales promotions and its effects on reference price change toward purchase intention. The purpose of this investigation was to observe the trends of participants' attitude towards the monetary and non-monetary promotions, and how they shift their reference price in making purchase decision. The results showed participants' reference price was affected by price promotions. However, the non-monetary promotions were more interesting rather than monetary promotions. This once again proposed that aspiration-based reference price play a significant role toward purchase intention.

Vaidyanathan et al. (2000) examined the impact of aspirational and market-based IRP on deal evaluation and purchase intention. They argued that the three constructs of IRP proposed by Klein and Oglethorpe (1987) were overlapped by assuming that aspiration and market-based IRP originated from historical-based IRP. Therefore, only two instead of three variables were investigated. Their results showed that customer in evaluating deal used both aspiration and market-based IRP. However, several factors such as price uncertainty may affect customer price judgments and this will influence their purchase decision.

Rob et al. (2000) also discussed about the role of IRP in consumers' willingness to pay judgments by replicating Thaler's Beer Pricing Task. Originally, this task was to measure the attitude of customers on transaction utility where customer would prefer to pay for a product below their reference price rather than product higher than their reference price. The authors showed that generally, general IRP (aspiration, market-based and historical) play significant roles in making purchase decision. In contrast, Mazumdar et al. (2005) reviewed past literatures on various effects of IRP on purchase intentions. Based on their review of various IRP conceptualization mainly expectation-based, normative (fair or just prices) and aspirational-based IRP, they concluded that expectation-based pricing is to be used for a product with high competition or with many alternatives, stable price over time and having transparent pricing. The normative IRP can be applied to monopolistic type of businesses such as medicine and gasoline where customer is locked in to the product category that is essential for living. Meanwhile, aspirational IRP is suitable to be applied in businesses that practices discriminatory pricing strategy and lack of transparency such as in airlines and hotels.

Finally, Roy et al. (2007) conducted an experimental study for online store investigating the pre and post formation of IRP and its effects on purchase decisions.

Their results showed that the purchase decision was more likely to be higher during pre evaluation of prices

rather than post evaluation. They concluded that customer prefer forward looking type of IRP in making purchase decision.

3 METHOD

3.1 Sample and data collection method

This pilot study employed self-administered questionnaire to describe the characteristics of the variables of interest. Thirty five customers of Hotel UiTM, Shah Alam were selected as the participants in this study. The hotel was selected due to its convenient location and the sample can represent the actual sample of the study. A convenience sampling was chosen as the study depends on the willingness and availability of the respondents to participate (Creswell, 2003). A letter seeking permission to conduct the study at the hotel was sent to the manager a week before questionnaires were distributed. Customers were approached and invited to fill in the survey after they have completed their check-out procedure. A 100% response rate was obtained.

3.2 Instrumentation

The questionnaire was divided into three sections and developed by adapting items from Tong Yin and Paswan (2007), Karande (2011) and Klein and Oglethorpe (1987) to measure two different constructs of internal reference prices including aspiration and market price. Besides, the questionnaire also adapted Doods et al. (1991) items for purchase intentions. The first section identified the variety of possible IRP conceptualized by the customers. This sections used five point Likert-scale on the level of agreement from (1) “strongly disagree” to (5) “strongly agree”. The second section measured the purchase intentions of the respondents using the same scale. While, section three asked customers’ demographic profile includes gender, age, nationality, purpose of trip, frequency of stay and the income level. The questionnaire was written in two languages: Malay and English, as both languages are well accepted, spoken and written in this country. The clarity and understandability of contents, as well as appropriateness of scales and time were also asked during this pilot study.

3.3 Questionnaire analysis

Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation, frequencies, percentages, skewness and kurtosis) were used to examine the distribution of the data. Cronbach Alpha was run to measure the reliability of items. A correlation test was run to satisfy the purposes of this study.

4 RESULTS

Data appeared to be normally distributed as the skewness and kurtosis of all the variables were within ± 2 .

Table 1. Correlation between internal reference price and purchase intentions.

		Internal reference price	Purchase intentions
Internal reference price	Pearson correlation	1	.515**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	35	35
Purchase intentions	Pearson correlation	.515**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	35	35

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The variables also were found reliable with the Cronbach alpha value of 0.82. Additionally, majority of the respondent stated that they took 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire and most of them commented that the questionnaire was readable and understandable. The only recommendation was to improve on the Malay language as certain words and phrases used were not clear.

Female respondents represented 80% of the total respondents and most of them (77%) were within the age group of 25–34 years old. 97% of the respondents’ have at least a Bachelor’s Degree and 63% of them earn RM1000–RM2000. Majority of the respondents (85%) were students and their purpose of trip was mostly account for leisure.

4.1 The relationship between internal reference price and customer purchase intentions

Table 1 provides an overview of the relationship between internal reference price and purchase intentions among customers in Hotel UiTM, Shah Alam. There was a significant correlation between internal reference price and customer purchase intentions, $r = .52, p < 0.01$.

4.2 The relationship between aspiration price and market price on purchase intentions

The Pearson analysis showed that there was a significant correlation between aspiration price and customer purchase intentions ($r = .38, p < 0.05$) as well as market price and customer purchase intentions ($r = .58, p < 0.01$). Refer Table 2.

5 DISCUSSIONS

The objectives of this pilot study were to identify the correlation between internal reference price and purchase intentions as well as to examine the most agreeable internal reference price dimensions on purchase intentions among hotel customers.

Table 2. Correlation between aspiration price and market price on purchase intentions.

		Aspiration price	Market price	Purchase intentions
Aspiration price	Pearson correlation	1	.506**	.380*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002	.024
	N	35	35	35
Market price	Pearson correlation	.506**	1	.577**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002		.000
	N	35	35	35
Purchase intentions	Pearson correlation	.380*	.577**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	.000	
	N	35	35	35

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results suggested that there was a significant correlation between the internal reference prices and purchase intentions among hotel customers. It means that most of the respondents agreed that they used past memory to evaluate the room prices before deciding to purchase it. Additionally, market price was showed to have a strong significant correlation with purchase intentions as compared to aspiration price which only showed a moderate significant correlation with purchase intentions. This finding is in support to Mazumdar et al. (2005) who found that a business that practice discriminatory pricing and provide little transparency on their pricing term is suitable to use customers' IRP as the basis of their pricing strategy. This also implies that due to the uncertainty of hotel room pricing, customer prefer to use their past memory especially the market price when comparing and evaluating their purchase decision. Klein and Oglethorpe (1987) also corroborated that when customers are knowledgeable and highly involved in pricing practices, they tend to use IRP more than ERP. Although Vaidyanathan et al. (2000) found that both aspiration and market price were simultaneously played a major role in determining the value of deal evaluation and customer purchase decision; they stated that the results may be different under the influence of price uncertainty. In support to their findings, this study is seen to fill the gap and provide evidence that under price uncertainty (hotel pricing), customers have greater dependence on the market price over aspiration price. Therefore, through the correlation analysis, the objectives of this pilot study have been fulfilled.

6 CONCLUSION

This pilot study provides a preliminary knowledge on the IRP orientation in hotel purchases. IRP plays a crucial role in determining customers' willingness to buy a hotel room. Perhaps, the results of this study may help hotel managers to further clarify their market segmentation strategy focus on customers who are more prices sensitive. Besides, the reference price also could help managers to estimate for the right timing of promotional activities such as discounting and packaging of services. Further, findings of this study could help customers to fully understand the pricing concept of hospitality industry especially hotels that are practicing dynamic pricing. By recognizing the reference price effects, customer will know what, when and how to evaluate the price and purchase hotel rooms that worth their money.

REFERENCES

- Bell, D., Biyalogorsky, E., Cormon, Z., 1997. New directions in reference price research, *Advances in Consumer Research*, 24, pp. 328–329.
- Creswell, J.W. 2003. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Diamond, W.D., Campbell, L. 1989. The framing of sales promotions: effects on reference price change, *Advances in Consumer Research*, 16, pp. 241–247.
- Dodds, W.B., Monroe, K.B., Grewal, D. 1991. Effects of price, brand, and store information on buyers' product evaluations, *Journal of Marketing Research*, 28 (3), pp. 307–319.
- Golman, R., Loewenstein, G. 2011. Explaining nonconvex preferences with aspirational and status quo reference dependence, Department of Social and Decision Sciences, Carnegie Mellon university.
- Jauncey S., Mitchell I., & Slamet P. 1995. The meaning and management of yield in hotels, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. 7 (4), pp. 23–26.
- Karande, K., Magnini, V.P. 2011. The relative set of contextual and temporal reference price components in hotel and airline purchases, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 35 (1), pp. 119–141.
- Kimes, S. E. 1994. Perceived fairness of yield management. *The Cornell H.R.A Quarterly*, pp. 22–29.
- Kimes, S. E., & Wirtz, J. 2003. Has revenue management become acceptable?. *Journal of Service Research*, pp. 125–135.
- Klein, N.N., Oglethorpe, J.E., 1987. Cognitive reference points in consumer decision making, *Advances in Consumer Research*, 14, pp. 183–187.
- Lewis, R.C., Shoemaker, S. 1997. Price-sensitivity measurement: A tool for the hospitality industry, *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*.
- Mazumdar, T., Raj, S.P., Sinha, I. 2005. Reference price research: review and propositions, *Journal of Marketing*, 69, pp. 84–102.
- Mezias, S.J., Chen, Y.R., Murphy, P.R. 2002. Aspiration-level adaptation in an American financial services organization: A field study, *Management Science*, 48(10), pp. 1285–1300.

- Moon, S., Russell, G.J. 2002. Profiling the reference price consumer, *Journal of Retailing*, 82(1), pp. 1–11.
- Ranyard, R., Charlton, J.P., Williamson, J. 2000. The role of internal reference prices in consumers' willingness to pay judgments: Thaler's beer pricing task revisited, *Acta Psychologica*, 106, pp. 265–283.
- Roy, S., Chan, T., C, A. 2007. Price expectations and purchase decisions: Evidence from an online store experiment, *Center for Research in Economics and Strategy, Olin Business School, Washington University*.
- Vaidyanathan, R., Aggraval, P., Stem Jr, D.E., Muehling, D.D., Umesh, U.N. 2000. Deal evaluation and purchase intention: The impact of aspirational and market-based internal reference prices, *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 9(3), pp. 179–192.

This page intentionally left blank

Islamic hospitality and tourism

This page intentionally left blank

The expectations of Muslim religious customers in the lodging industry: The case of Turkey

I.M. Ozdemir & O. Met

University of Balikesir, The School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Balikesir, Turkey

ABSTRACT: As the world tourism market is constantly growing, at the same time market segmentation practices also increase. One of the new and growing market segments is religious tourism. Also, religious tourism is being sub-segmented according to different religions and different countries. Being secular and also having a Muslim majority in its society, Muslim-religious tourism in Turkey began in 1990s and there is an increase in the number of Islamic hotels which meet the demand. Muslim-religious tourism has been studied little around the world. And in Turkey, there are few non-empirical studies about the subject. This study is the first empirical research ever conducted about religious tourism subject in Turkey. The object of this study is, to determine expectations and experiences about the hotel services of domestic tourists who take part in Islamic tourism. The study is based on a survey which implemented on customers who accommodate at Islamic hotels. Results indicate that, the expectations and experiences of Muslim religious (devout) domestic tourists in Turkey have distinctive characteristics.

Keywords: Islamic hotel, satisfaction, hijab

1 INTRODUCTION

Contemporary marketing approach requires businesses to make a market research, choose the most convenient market segment(s) by segmenting the market and develop appropriate products for target market before producing products (Kozak, 2010). The situation is no different than this in tourism market where there is a highly intense competition. Lodging businesses which serve to the tourism market, have been tending to find new market segments and even develop niche markets to gain competitive edge (Weidenfeld, 2006).

In recent years, one of the emerging market trends over the world is religious tourism. Religious tourism contains environments and services which religious (devout) people can fulfill their religious needs and practice their religions comfortably along with their common needs with other tourists during their travels. In religious tourism, primarily lodging businesses, along with some other tourism businesses, meet the religious needs of religious (devout) customers.

Inherently, religious tourism market has segments within itself. Different religious (devout) tourists by having different religious beliefs have different religious needs, so initially; it is inevitable for religious tourism to be segmented according to different religions such as Islam, Christianity and Judaism etc. It is also possible to consider, the religious (devout) tourists who are members of different sects and denominations

which are quite different from each other as a different market segment. However, there are some groups with quite different insights and practices even though they are members of the same sector denomination. Briefly, religious tourism market is in a highly heterogeneous state.

Although the researchers have conducted researches about the various aspects of the hospitality industry, they have attached very little importance regarding devout tourist market segment and their special needs (Weidenfeld, 2006). In Turkey, there are a few studies on Islamic tourism and there are not any empirical studies. With a better understanding of the religious needs of devout Turkish tourists, lodging businesses which operate in this market segment could improve their customer satisfaction and raise their market share.

In this study, domestic Turkish Islamic tourists' religious needs and expectations from lodging businesses are studied. The extent of the study is kept limited to the determination of the importance of which religious factors that affect domestic Muslim devout holiday makers about their choices of lodging facilities. Without doubt there are lots of devout tourists coming to Turkey from other Muslim countries. But foreign Muslim devout tourists have different vacation habits. For example, Muslim tourists arriving from Arab countries usually take their vacations by renting houses with their large families. On the other hand, Turkish people prefer to take their vacations at accommodation facilities which have the qualities of an Islamic hotel.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The semantic confusion between religious tourism and Islamic tourism has not been over yet. In this field, preferred concepts might not be mutual for all nations and religions. It is also possible that according to countries, nations and religions there might be different sensitivities and misunderstandings on this matter. For instance, the term "Muslim tourist" is used frequently in literature. This term includes all the Muslim tourists and causes a false perception hence not all Muslims are religious. So a non-devout Muslim or an adherent of another religion does not demand any religious services from lodging businesses. As a matter of fact this type of people forms the rest of the tourism market apart from religious tourism. Therefore in this study the term "Muslim devout tourist" will be used.

Some researchers define religious tourism briefly as individuals visiting sacred venues (Collins-Kreiner ve Kliot, 2000). Some other researchers define religious tourism as a type of tourism which is formed by holiday makers who travel particularly because of religious reasons. And devout tourists are holiday makers who travel based on their religious motivations. Devout tourists can visit a spiritual location or travel due to religious purposes blended with secondary purposes such as; visiting relatives, doing business and attending to occupational meetings (York, 2002; Vukonic, 1996).

Islam is a religion which is related with all the areas of life. Muslim devout tourists would like to maintain their religious life styles during their travels and accommodations. Devotions (prayers), food and beverage, manners and relations have to be appropriate to the mentality of devout Muslims. As a result, Turkish Muslim religious customers accommodate at Islamic hotels for the purpose of pleasure rather than religious services. While accommodating for such purpose they demand the religious services which they always need such as masjid, providing Quran in rooms, et al.

Islamic rules is called "Sharia" and it contains some commandments and prohibitions for which its adherents to follow. Some of the most well-known prohibitions are; gambling, consuming pork, drinking and selling alcohol, dressing up inappropriately et al (Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010). Religious rules does not only contain prohibitions. It also contains some devotions to be practiced. For example, a Muslim must pray five times a day and must fast for a month once in a year. In addition to this, Muslims must avoid "immorality" (Hashim, Murphy and Hashim, 2007). Most of the conducted studies about religious tourism are associated with pilgrimage tourism or pilgrim tourism (Collins-Kreiner and Kliot, 2000; William vd., 2002; Western, 1998; Sizer, 1997, 1998; Shachar and Shoval, 1999; Mishara, 2000; Digance, 2003; Fleischer, 2000; Gibbons, 1999; Dhar and Gupta, 1999). Needs of Muslim, Jewish and Christian customers are examined in some studies (Mansfeld vd., 1995; Hoffman, 1994; Fleischer, 2000;

Fleischer ve Nitzav, 1995; Collins-Kreiner ve Kliot, 2003; Weidenfeld, 2006).

Lodging businesses which provide services to the segment of devout tourist market can prefer two approaches to meet the religious needs of their potential customers. First, accepting the devout customers along with the other non-religious "ordinary" customers and adding adequate religious services to their hotel products that is specific for devout customers. In this option, customers would be in a heterogeneous form at lodging facilities. In the second option, hotel management can decide to accept only devout customers exclusively due to the needs of the devout tourists. In which case, the hotel products would be designed entirely based on the requests of devout tourists. "Islamic Hotels" in Turkey which operate in devout tourist market have chosen the second option.

Whether there is a mixture of customer compositions or devout customers only, it is inevitable for hotels that operate in this segment to add religious elements to their product in order to meet the religious needs. For example, providing Quran, prayer rug and compass in the room, prohibition of selling and drinking alcohol, serving only "halal" food, limitation on the apparel of the staff, separation of common areas such as; pools and discotheques between men and women, organizing religious activities, providing prayer rooms inside hotel or proximity to a mosque etc (Henderson, 2010; Weidenfeld, 2006; Weidenfeld and Ron, 2008; Battour vd., 2011). The products of the hotels which satisfy the religious needs, are required to be in a structure that integrates religious and non-religious elements. Although the needs of the devout customers who are adherents of various religions are different, there might be some mutual points. For instance, providing Quran and prayer room for devout Muslims or providing Bible and chapel for Christian customers. Content and combination of the facilities and services which the religious aspect of hotel product contains is closely associated with the satisfaction of the target group. Hotel's marketing department should create a database for devout customers as they have a database for ordinary customers and collect characteristics, needs and other service information of devout customers in detail. When devout customers check out from hotel, communication with them should be continued and personal religious services should be provided on their revisits. In this way, by satisfying devout customers occupancy rates and revenues can be increased.

3 METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is, to determine the religious needs of the domestic devout Muslim tourists who accommodate at hotels in Turkey for the purpose of vacationing. In addition to this, the study intends to determine whether or not there is cohesion between the religious needs of devout customers and religious aspects of Islamic hotels' products. Data

of the research is collected by implementing a survey to devout Muslim customers who accommodate at Islamic hotels. First, a survey sheet is designed and implemented for pilot research and redesigned according to participants' views. Foundations of the Islamic Law, religious understanding of Turkish People and limited literature on related matter are used in the design of the survey's queries. The survey is implemented on 304 devout customers who accommodate at Islamic lodging facilities. The survey has two sections: In first section there are questions to determine their demographical characteristics and vacation habits. In the second section, 5-point Likert Scale is used to determine hotel services which they request and satisfies customers' religious needs and to determine the levels of importance of such services at Islamic hotels. The data obtained from the survey is analyzed by SPSS 15.0 statistics program. Frequency analysis and standard deviation are used to analyze the data.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Demographical characteristics of participants

Participants of the survey are mostly male (81%). And also most of the participants are married (93%). Age range is evenly balanced between young, adult and middle aged. The vast majority of Islamic hotel customers are mostly families with children. 40 percent of the participants have a bachelor's or a master's degree. Most of the consumers who participate in Islamic tourism have a high level of income, mostly businessman and self-employed.

4.2 Vacation habits of participants

The majority of the participants take vacations with their families (91.5%). The choice of lodging facility is largely made by all family members unanimously (68,4%). Father is the sole decider of family's facility choice in 23.4 percent of the participants. Almost half of the participants take vacation once a year. The other half takes vacation twice or three times a year. 53.6 percent of participants take vacations between 11 and 20 days and 42.1 percent of them take vacations less than 10 days. The majority of the participants take vacation for the purpose of recreation-entertainment (69.1%). The rate of participants who take vacation for the purpose of healthcare or wellness is 16.4%. More than half of the participants prefer to stay at five star hotels (52%). The rest of the customers prefer four star hotels and holiday resorts and time-share facilities. The majority of the participants obtain information about the hotel from their friends and relatives (72.7%), The rest uses the internet (27.3%). On choice of vacation season, 45.4 percent of the participants take vacation both in winter and summer. 42.1 percent of the participants take vacation only in winter. Only 10.9 percent of the participants take vacation only in summer.

The majority of the participants reach their destination with their own car (81.9%).

4.3 Religious needs of Muslim tourists

The religious needs and degrees of importance of devout customers who spend their vacations at "Islamic Hotels" in Turkey are presented in Table 1.

Devout Muslim Turkish people, primarily care about their food to be eligible with religious law. Especially prohibition of selling and drinking alcohol at hotel is very important. In addition to this, usage of "pork meat" and related ingredients are commandments which are perceived with highest sensitivity. One of the other matter about food is, following the religious rules on animal slaughter. All these can be called as "halal food". These are the main limitations about food and beverage in Islam and these are the primary services that devout customers request from hotels. 99 percent of the Turkish community is Muslim so there is no compliance issue with Islamic rules about food in daily life. In Turkey, alcoholic drinks aside, the others became a part of societal culture.

In Islam, one of the matters which devout people consider as important is, gender relations. In such relations clothing of women plays an important role. Separation of men and women at some places and in some activities is an essential request of customers. Propositions on this matter have a high level of approval. Such as "separate swimming points at sea for men and women", "separate swimming pools for men and women", "separate discotheques for men and women" and "not allowing unmarried couples".

The third group of religious needs which devout hotel customers consider as highly important are about praying. The most important needs about religious rituals are indicated here. Such as "providing Quran, prayer rug, beads, compass etc. in rooms", "providing a prayer room inside the hotel or nearness to a mosque" and "providing convenient meeting rooms for religious and cultural activities".

Although customers consider them highly important, there are some relatively less important religious requests. Such as "not playing foreign music in common areas", "providing squat toilets", "serving males by male personnel", "compliance of the personnel with the Islamic dress code", "separation of sports activities between men and women and Sports activities".

In this part, religious requests and needs are indicated which customers consider "important". The questions in this category are less important than the ones above. These are "leisure activities with religious content", "usage of religious symbols and decorative materials", "all women customers wearing hijab", "devout hotel personnel" respectively.

The only question that the customers are hesitant about is "allowing non-Muslim customers to hotel". The reason of this indecision is that customers have never encountered with such situation since domestic and Muslim tourists accommodate at Islamic hotels.

Table 1. Religious needs of devout customers in hotels.

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Prohibition of alcoholic beverages	5	.00
Compliance of the food with islamic rules	4,99	.057
Prohibition of pork meat and related substances	4,99	.057
Separate swimming points for men and women at sea	4,97	.169
Providing Quran, prayer rug, beads, compass etc. in rooms.	4,97	.169
Separate pools for men and woman	4,96	.234
To have a "Halal" certificate for hotel	4,95	.216
Providing an adequate prayer room inside the hotel that or proximity to a mosque	4,88	.339
Not allowing unmarried couples	4,72	.481
Separate discotheques for men and women	4,66	.478
Providing convenient meeting rooms for religious and cultural activities	4,65	.475
Not playing foreign music in common areas	4,62	.588
Providing squat toilets	4,60	.553
Serving males by male personnel	4,56	.636
Compliance of the personnel with the Islamic dress code	4,54	.611
Separation of sports activities between men and women	4,50	.500
Leisure activities with religious content	4,46	.499
Usage of religious symbols and decorative materials	4,36	.598
Serving females by female personnel	4,23	.864
All women customers wearing hijab	4,13	.807
Choosing devout hotel personnel	3,59	1,094
Not allowing Non-Muslims to hotel	3,24	1,083
Providing Miswak at rooms	2,69	1,011
Not allowing singles to hotel	2,51	.783

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree.

The two questions which customers consider as unimportant are "providing miswak in rooms" and "allowing single customers to hotel". Using a miswak is a sunnah so it is not mandatory. At the same time, miswak usage is not common in Turkey. Devout Muslims maintain their dental hygiene with toothbrush. Allowing singles to hotel might contradict with the customers' family values. Another reason might also be single and young people in customers' families.

4.4 Islamic hotels in Turkey

Islamic lodging facilities in Turkey can be divided into two groups: Coast hotels and thermal hotels. These type of hotels have become popular in the past decade (Doğan, 2011). There are 61 hotels that fit this description. Total number of beds is 32.761 (Duman, 2011). 43 of these hotels are coast hotels and the remaining 18 are operating in thermal tourism. These hotels

Table 2. Success of Islamic hotels on meeting customer needs.

	Mean	Std. Dev.
I maintain my religious sensitivity during my vacations and during my stays at lodging facilities as I maintain them in my everyday life.	4,82	.382
The Islamic lodging facility which we spend our holiday complies with religious rules.	3,56	.917

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree.

consist of three, four and five star hotels and holiday resorts. There are some hotels which are still under construction. Thermal hotels are mostly located at inlands of Turkey. Almost all the Islamic hotels have similar religious qualities.

Promotion, marketing and sales activities are conducted through some web sites or directly through TV channels, newspapers, magazines and internet sites. The Islamic hotels which cooperate with travel agencies are selective about their choices. They only work with limited number of travel agencies which are appropriate with their concept. Not working with travel agencies or working only with Islamic travel agencies, Islamic hotels have the advantage of choosing and controlling their customers according to their own preferences. (Doğan, 2008).

When our findings are compared with services and features of Islamic hotels, a partial conflict can be observed between them. It is important that, at what level the religious needs which customers consider as highly important are met and if there are any unmet needs. For this purpose, two basic questions are asked to customers to determine whether or not they are completely satisfied.

Customers do not consider the religious services that Islamic hotels provide as sufficient to meet their religious needs (See Table 2). Customers are uncertain about whether or not the Islamic hotels meet their religious needs completely. It can be said that lodging facilities meet the religious expectations of devout customers minimally. Devout tourists maintain their religious sensitivities while accommodating at a hotel as they maintain them in their everyday life.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this study, for the first time in Turkey an empirical research is conducted that aims to determine the basic important religious needs of the customers who participate in Islamic tourism. According to the findings of the research, devout Muslim Turkish citizen tourists, have various religious needs as a result of characteristics of Islam and their own religious insights. To meet these needs, all the aspects of the hotel are required

to be designed due to such needs. At the same time, to meet such needs, all the customers of the hotel are required to be in a homogeneous form. At present, customers do not consider the current Islamic hotels are suitable for their religious expectations. Findings of this study shed light on religious services which Islamic hotels should make them as part of their hotel product. There is a difference between the presentations of Islamic hotels and the expectations of customers, so this proves that there is a lack of customer satisfaction. Islamic hotels can try to develop appropriate products through better analysis of the requests and the needs of devout customers and might increase their competitive strength.

This research also indicates a lack of conducted researches on the aspect of supply. Religious and other presentations of the hotels which operate in the field of Islamic tourism should be determined in detail. Thereby, the cohesion between supply and demand would become more apparent. This study is conducted to determine the religious needs of the domestic customers in Turkey who participates in Islamic tourism. In the same way, religious touristic needs of the other Muslim communities should be compared through investigation and the differences should be determined. In conclusion, currently Islamic tourism is at the stage of development around the world and in Turkey and it is in a dynamic state. Primary customers have high levels of income in this developing market segment. In the near future, it is expected for middle-class to create demand. So that Islamic tourism can be sub-segmented within itself. The lodging facilities which predict this new demand might gain a competitive edge.

REFERENCES

- Collins-Kreiner, N. & Kliot, N. 2000. Pilgrimage tourism in the holy land: The behavioural characteristics of christian pilgrims. *Geojournal*. 50: 5–67.
- Dhar, T. N. & Gupta, S. P. 1999. Tourism in Indian Himalaya. Indian Institute of Public Administration. U.P. Branch. Lucknow.
- Digance, J. 2003. Pilgrimage at contested sites. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 30 (1): 143–149.
- Din, K.H. 1989. Islam and tourism patterns, issues, and options. *Annals of tourism research*. 16: 542–563.
- Doğan, M. 2011. Türkiye’de islami turizmin gelişimi: 2002–2009. Political Economy, Crisis and Development. London: IJOPEC Publications.
- Duman, Teoman. (2011). Value of islamic tourism offering: Perspectives from the turkish experience. *World Islamic Tourism Forum*. s.1–17. Malaysia.
- Fleischer, A. & Nitzav, Y. 1995. Christian pilgrims— the tourism potential for peripheral regions in Israel. Center for Development Studies, Rehovot, Israel.
- Gibbons, P. P. R. 1999. Tourist or a pilgrim, Association for Heritage Interpretation. Journal Article, St Mary’s University College. Strawberry Hill. Twickenham. http://www.hertiageinrepretation.org.uk/j4A_tourist.htm
- Hashim, N.H. & Murphy, J. And Hahim, N.M. 2007. Islam and online imagery on malaysian tourist destination websites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*. 12: 1082–1102.
- Henderson, J. C. (2010). Chapter 6: Islam and tourism. In bridging tourism theory and practice. Scott, N. And Jafari, J. (eds), 75–89. Emerald Group Publishing.
- Hoffmann, M. 1994. Annual survey of tourists. The Israeli Ministry of Tourism.
- Mansfeld, Y. & Ron, A. and Gav, D. 1995. Moslem tourism in israel-characteristics, trends and potential. Center for Tourism, Pilgrimage and Recreation Research. University of Haifa.
- Kozak, N. 2010. Turizm pazarlaması. Detay yayıncılık. Ankara.
- Mishara, L. 1999. Religious Tourism in India. Mohit Publications. New Delhi.
- Okhovat, H. 2010. A study on religious tourism industry management case study: islamic republic of Iran. *International Journal of Academic Research*. 5 (2): 302–306.
- Shachar, A. & Shoval, N. 1999. Tourism in Jerusalem: A Place to Pray, in Judd, D. and Fainstein, S. S. (eds) *The Tourist City*. Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Sizer, S. R. 1997. The hidden face of Holy Land pilgrimage tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. 9 (1): 34–35.
- Vukonic, B. 1996. Tourism and religion. Pergamon, New York.
- York, M. 2002. Contemporary pagan pilgrimages, in William, H., Swatos, J. And Tomasi, L. (eds) *From medieval pilgrimage to religious tourism: The Social and Cultural Economics of Piety*, Praeger, Westport, CN.
- Zamani-Farahani, H. & Musa, G. (2008). Residents’ attitudes and perception towards tourism development: a case study of Masooleh. *Tourism Management*. 29 (6): 1233–1236.
- Zamani-Farahani, H. (2010). Tourism and pilgrimage among OIC member countries. *Economic & Trade Integration among OIC Member Countries: Opportunities and Challenges*. 2. International Conference. S. 1–13. Tahrán.
- Weidenfeld, A. 2006. Religious needs in the hospitality industry. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*. 6 (2): 143–159.
- Weidenfeld, A & Ron, S. (2008). Religious needs in the tourism industry. *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research*. 2 (19): 357–361.
- Western, L. 1998. India is touting Buddhist sites in its latest tourism campaign. *Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly*. 20 (41): 10.
- William, H. & Swatos, J. and Tomasi, L. 2002. *From medieval pilgrimage to religious tourism: The social and cultural economics of piety*. Praeger, Westport, CN. ast name, First name or Initials (ed.) year. Book title. City: Publisher.

This page intentionally left blank

Pull and push motivation in Islamic tourism

Yusrina Hayati Nik Muhammad Naziman, Syukurriah Idrus & Nadia Farleena Mohd Aznan
Faculty of Business Management, UiTM Kelantan, Malaysia

Rosidah Musa
Faculty of Business Management, UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Malaysia is one of the Islamic country that been blessed with multicultural and heritage, political stabilize and lots of beautiful places to be visited. But somehow, there are lack of studies that emphasis on motivational factors that influence tourist to visit a certain Islamic countries such as Malaysia. This will include identifying which variables (push or pull) motivation that had a relationship to tourist experience and destination loyalty which contradict with the previous researchers that tested on push and pull motivation towards customer satisfaction and destination loyalty. The objectives of the study will be to examine the tourist motivation that influence the destination loyalty and to assess the effect of tourist experience contribute to destination loyalty in Islamic tourism. Stuctural equation modelling will be used as a tools to measure the hypothetical analysis in this study. Furthermore, scope of study will be focussing the tourist particularly Malaysian tourist that have experiencing travelling inbound and outbound places. The originality of the paper will contribute to the new hypothesis model on the Islamic tourism perspective. Apparently, the expected result will be used to recommend in order having better understanding in consumer buyer behavior particularly on Islamic tourism to the management on how to strategies to Muslim customers.

Keywords: pull and push motivation, Islamic tourist, tourist experience, and destination loyalty

1 INTRODUCTION

There is not much known about the influence of religion on consumer and buyer decision making and marketplace behaviors in marketing areas. In fact, there is little common understanding among previous marketing studies in measuring the effects of religion.

Islamic marketing should be addressed to this issue which has not attracted the attention while current market become rather isolated from the main stream development of marketing strategies and approaches. Culture influences buying habits and consumer behavior in service context is constantly increasing (Mattila, 1999; Ueltschy and Krampf, 2001). However, evidence from the previous research show that existing service quality research failed to cover comprehensively the diversity of perceptions of service quality of people from different cultures (Smith and Reynolds, 2001). Culture is a part of factor affecting the consumer buyer behavior. While subculture can be divided into four types: nationality groups, religious groups, racial groups and geographical regions where religion is one of the most influential determinants of human behavior (Alam et al, 2011).

There are communities of Muslims worldwide and it has been calculated that they number 1.57 billion

or 23 per cent of the global population. The phrase 'Islamic Tourism' usually describes Muslim tourists travelling to destinations where Islam is the official or dominant faith, often for reasons connected to religion (Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), 2008).

In fact, tourism is a very important sector that could play a significant role in the socio-economic development of the OIC countries not only due to their existing and potential tourism resources, but also because their citizens travel in large numbers around the world for business, leisure and other purposes.

Tourism industry is very crucial industry since it contributes to the growth of economy particularly in Muslim countries. The role of tourist motivation experience has been overlooked. Not much papers discussing on halal tourism motivation. This study aims to address this issue.

2 LITERATURE REVIEWS

2.1 *Islamic marketing*

Basically, subculture can be divided into four types: nationality groups, religious groups, racial groups and geographical regions where religion is one of the most

influential determinants of human behavior. Religion is an important cultural factor to study because it is one of the most universal and influential social institutions that have significant influence on people's attitudes, values and behaviors at both the individual and societal levels (Mokhlis, 2009). According to Kotler (2000), religion is part of culture that can shape people's behavior. Specifically, what this means is that people who have religion hold certain values that are able to influence their actions and decisions. Islam is a religion that guides Muslims in every aspect of life, not just in specific acts of worship. For instance, in the Quran verse, Al Isra':26-27, Allah commands Muslims not to consume or spend extravagantly, but to spend in a way of Allah. Some other guidance which have been provided for by Islam are how and what to trade, how to interact with others and what can be consumed. Islamic tourism can be defined as tourism mainly by Muslims, although it can extend to unbelievers motivated to travel by Islam, which takes place in the Muslim world (Al-Hamareh, 2008; OIC, 2008b; Henderson, 2009).

2.2 Motivation

The idea of the push-pull model is the decomposition of a tourist's choice of destination into two forces; Push- a tourist away (from home), it attempts to model the general desire to go and be somewhere else, without specifying where that may be, while Pull- a region-specific lure that's pulls a tourist towards a (general) destination. An internal motive is associated with drives, feelings, and instincts. An external motive involves mental representations such as knowledge or beliefs. From an anthropological point of view, tourists are motivated to escape the routine of everyday life, seeking authentic experiences (MacCannell, 1977).

According to Leiper (1990), tourists are pushed by their own motivation towards places where they expect their needs to be satisfied. Push motivations have been seen to be useful in explaining the desire for travel, as they are recognized as the starting point of understanding tourists' behavior (Crompton, 1979). Pull motivations are those that attract people to a specific destination once the decision to travel has been made. They are destination-specific attributes, such as natural attractions, food, people, recreation facilities, or activities. Thus, pull motivations determine which destination travelers will choose to go from those destinations that match travelers' motivations. As push and pull motivations clearly have a connection, it is important to understand the relationship between them (Baloglu and Uysal, 1996).

The proposed study will use the hypothesized model by Uysal and Yoon (2005) but the difference contribution is instead of testing the satisfaction as the moderating variable the researchers are interested to look on experience rather than satisfaction which have been agreed by Gentile, Spiller and Noci (2007). They pointed out that, it is important to create value to the

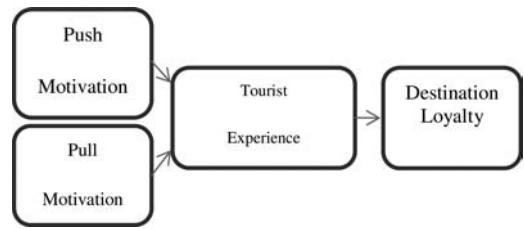


Figure 1. Proposed theoretical framework.

customer by engaging them in an experience and participation. The authors attempt to expand the notion of customer relationship and satisfaction toward a more meaningful Customer Experience. They further illustrated the specific dimensions on customer experience that are a) Sensorial Components, b) Emotional Components c) Cognitive Components d) Pragmatic Components e) Lifestyle Components f) Relational Components.

The significant contribution in the study of total tourist experience came about in many conceptual papers and articles, which one of those came from the work of Macarenhas, Kesavan and Bernacchi (2006). The authors discuss the approach of a total customer experience in ensuring a lasting customer loyalty. They advocated the importance of having 'an emotional involvement' across all the interaction between the customer and seller. Mascarenhas et al (2006) defined total customer experience as a totally positive, engaging, enduring, and socially fulfilling physical and emotional customer experience across all major levels of one's consumption chain and one that is brought about by a distinct market offering that calls for active interaction between consumers and providers.

2.3 Destination loyalty

Travel destination can be considered as products, and tourists may revisit or recommend travel destinations to other potential tourists such as friends or relatives (Uysal and Yoon, 2005). The study of the usefulness of the concept of loyalty and its applications to tourism products or services has been limited, even though loyalty has been thought of as one of the major driving forces in the competitive market (Dimanche & Havitz, 1994). Tourists may have a favorable attitude toward a particular product or destination, and express their intention to purchase the product or visit the destination. Thus, loyalty measures consumers' strength of affection toward a brand or product, as well as explains an additional portion of unexplained variance that behavioral approaches do not address (Backman & Crompton, 1991).

3 METHODOLOGY

A structured questionnaire will be used to collect data from the tourists that stay at Malaysia. The Muslim

tourist either from Malaysia or foreign tourist will be taken as a sample in this study. The sample is being taken based on convenient sampling bases.

Reliability Analysis (Cronbach Alpha) will be used in determining the consistency and stability of each variable in this study. The demographic variables will be analyzed using the frequency analysis. Regression analysis will be used to identify the relationship between a response variable and one or more predictor variables.

3.1 *Exploratory factor analysis*

A principal component extraction with varimax rotation was utilized in reducing these large items to a more manageable set, since it has been recognised to be a valuable preliminary analysis when no sufficient theory is available to establish the underlying dimensions of a specific. In achieving a more meaningful and interpretable solution in the iterative process, items with low factor loadings (<0.5) or high cross-loadings (>0.3) were removed and EFA was performed again. The results for all emerging factor structures within the respective constructs showed high factor loadings and that the Alpha coefficients of these factors ranged from 0.769 to 0.903, well above acceptable value of 0.70.

3.2 *Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)*

A more rigorous statistical procedure was further recommended to refine and confirm respective factor structures generated from the initial EFA. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) has been proposed as an analytical tool to ascertain unidimensionality of measures. Hence, all the resulting measures derived from EFA were validated using a CFA analytic procedure by employing AMOS 16 analytical software program. In order to achieve an acceptable ratio of observations to estimate parameters, four separate measurement models were conducted using CFA.

From the result, the fit indices suggest that all these models fit the data well. Construct reliability was also assessed by estimating the average variance extracted (AVE), which reflects the overall amount of variance captured by the latent construct and Composite Reliability (CR). CR reflects the internal consistency of the construct indicators, while AVE reflects the amount of variance captured by the construct indicators. All CR scores ranging from 0.86–0.96, were much higher than the recommended cut-off point of 0.7. Thus, each of the factors reliably measured its respective constructs. The AVE scores ranged from 0.60 to 0.89, exceeding the recommended cut-off point of 0.5.

Construct validity was subsequently assessed in terms of convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is established through high correlations between the measure of interest and other measures that are supposedly measuring the same concept. The

critical ratio (t-value) of the items varied from 6.29 to 16.36 and the standardized item loadings varied from 0.48 to 0.81, thus supporting the convergent validity of the constructs. Discriminate validity is established through low correlations between the constructs and it is evident, when the correlation between factors was lower than 0.8. Thus, discriminate validity is achieved as the correlation coefficients ranging from 0.06 to 0.66. For a rigorous test of discriminate validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct was computed and found to be greater than the squared correlation between that construct and any other constructs in the model. In conclusion, it is reasonable to claim that all the measures used in the study possess adequate psychometric properties.

3.3 *Result to be discussed*

Usually Muslim tourist will be associated with travel for umrah and also Hajj. But the core things that the researchers would like to highlight is to look at the Muslim behavior on how he /she decide to go for holiday. For example, are they making the decision on holiday package because of the places itself or also taking into consideration the other aspects like halal food offers, facilities for Muslim prayers, entertainment part: separate between man and women and so on. Hopefully the result gathered will show that Muslim behavior is significant in term of making selection of the places (pull motivation) and also desire to visit (push motivation). Thus, correct strategies can be developed to the Muslim tourist.

REFERENCES

- Alam S. S., Mohd. R., and Hisham B., 2011, Is religiosity an important determinant on Muslim consumer behavior in Malaysia?' *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp 83–96.
- Backman, S. J., & Crompton, J. L. 1991. The usefulness of selected variables for predicting activity loyalty. *Leisure Science*, 13, 205–220.
- Baloglu, S. and Uysal, M. 1996, "Market segmentation of push and pull motivations: a canonical correlation approach", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 32–8.
- Crompton, J. 1979, "Motivations for pleasure vacation", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 408–24.
- MacCannell, D. 1977. *The tourist*. New York: Schocken
- Dimanche, F., & Havitz, M. E. 1994. Consumer behavior and tourism: Review and extension of four study areas. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 3(3), 37–58.
- Gentile, C., Spiller, N. and Noci, G. 2007, "How to Sustain The Customer Experience: An Overview of Experience Components That Co-Creat Value With The Customer", *European Management Journal*. Vol 25, No. 5, pp. 395–410.
- Kotler, P. 2000, "Consumer market and consumer behavior", *Principles of Marketing*, 8th ed., Prentice-Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Leiper, N. 1990, "Tourist attraction systems", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 367–87.

- Mascarenhas O. A, Kesavan R., & Bernacchi M., 2006. "Lasting customer loyalty: a total customer experience approach". *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. Vol. 23, No. 7, pp. 97–405.
- Mattila, A.S. 1999, "The role of culture and purchase motivation in service encounter evaluations", *The Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 13, Nos 4/5, pp. 376–89.
- Mokhlis, S. 2009, "Relevancy and measurement of religiosity in consumer behavior research", *International Business Research*, Vol. 2 No. 3, pp. 75–84.
- Smith, A.M. and Reynolds, N.L. 2001, "Measuring cross-cultural SQ: a framework for assessment", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 19 No. 5, pp. 450–81.

Detection of non halal ingredient for halal verification in bakery and confectionery in Malaysia

Sabaianah Bachok, Chemah Tamby Chik, Aliffaizi Arsat & Jazziana Jamil
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

Maaruf Abd Ghani
Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Bakery products have gained popularity in Malaysia recently. However Muslim consumers are still concerned of the safety, quality composition and 'halalness' of bakery product. They want to know the origin of the ingredient used and the way it was processed. Therefore the bakery ingredient should be inspected and tested for permissibility to meet the Halal compliance. This study is designed to identify the origin of non halal ingredient in bakery industry. In producing Halal bakery product, all of the raw ingredients must be Halal and must not come into contact with any equipment that has been used for non-Halal food. Pork, gelatine and alcohol and its derivatives were assessed in the bakery products using Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) methods to detect the non halal items in bakery ingredients. Ten samples of ingredients and bakery products were tested. The aim of this study is to increase the consumer knowledge towards the halal bakery product. It also acts as reference for any future study in the related field mainly in Malaysia.

Keywords: non-halal product, halal verification, bakery and confectionery.

1 INTRODUCTION

Halal and Haram issue in food has been discussed quite extensively because food are consumed into our body system. The term *Halal* is from (halla), Halal food is food that is prepared, stored, manufactured, slaughtered and served in a manner required by the *Syariah Law*. The term *Haram* is an Arabic word which means prohibited or unlawful. Eating and drinking haram food and drinks is forbidden for every Muslim. The ingredients and the preparation of foods must be permitted based upon Islamic teachings: the equipment used in preparing and processing the food must be clean from the Islamic point of view, in addition, the food is stored and served in a manner required by *Syariah* (Hayati et al., 2008).

Various incidents of breach of regulations has been seen in the food operators, who openly seems not to care and do not respect the rules that have been prescribed in Islam. Issues of food mixed with haram substances such as involving swine and its derivatives has been heard and reported in the news. In line with the issues, consumers often received anonymous news regarding certain food products that suspectedly contained haram substances that lead to the dilemma in the Muslim consumers. Therefore, these create a syubhah and lessen the consumer confidents to the food manufacturers in the market. If one does not know the Halal or haram status of a particular food or drink, such a

food or drink is doubtful. A practicing Muslim prevents himself from consuming doubtful things.

From the Muslim consumer perspectives, products with Halal logo are much more meaningful and crucial compared to those with International Organization for Standard (ISO) recognition for Halal foods (Bachok et al., 2011). And in line with the emergent of Muslim population all over the world, the awareness of halal food are also increasing. Additionally, the global market for Halal Food is estimated to be about RM 560 billion per annum thus this will be a golden advantage for Malaysia to become an important base for Halal food production (Evan, 2005).

Bakery products are a new emergent business in Malaysia. Baked goods are enjoyed whether as a substitute for our staple food rice or also as an item for leisure in the afternoon with coffee. Even bakery home business has mushroomed and this adds to the bakery consumption among local consumer. Thus it is the intention of this study to detect the halalness of the raw ingredients used in the making of bakery products. Therefore the bakery ingredient were inspected and tested for permissibility to meet the halal compliance. Laboratory work has been conducted to evaluate the ingredient used in producing the bakery product. Pork is a susceptible target due to some issues associated with adulteration of halal food product with pork and its derivatives (Yahya-Ishmael 2005). To assess the pork, Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) method

Table 1. Samples for PCA test.

Result	Interpretation
Positive	Coloured signals are observed on internal control spots and testing spot. Porcine DNA is detected.
Negative	Coloured signals are observed on internal control spots. No coloured signal developed on testing spot.
Invalid	No colour signal is observed on internal control spots. Repeat, check and confirm all reagents are put in as instructed.
Invalid	Coloured signals are observed on Negative control spots.

were used to detect the fat derivatives originated from pork fat in bakery ingredient. The aim of this study is to increase the consumer awareness and trust on halal bakery product.

2 MATERIAL AND METHODS

Six types of fat and 4 types of sausages usually used as bakery ingredients were tested (Table 1). Raw meat from swine were used as control. These raw ingredients were obtained from local market in the area of Shah Alam, Selangor. All the raw meats and food samples were stored at -20°C before DNA extraction to avoid degradation of DNA. Spin-column protocol extraction of gelatine or food samples were used. Fifty mg of sample was weighed, and place in a 1.5 mL microcentrifuge tube. 180 μL buffer ATL was added. 20 μL proteinase K was added. The mixture was vortexed and incubated at 56°C until the tissue is completely lysed (3 hours). Samples were placed in shaking water bath. After incubation, samples were vortexed for 15 seconds. 200 μL Buffer AL was added to the sample, and mix thoroughly by vortexing. Then 200 μL ethanol (100%) was added, and mix again thoroughly by vortexing. The mixture including its precipitate was pipetted into the DNeasy Mini spin column placed in a 2 mL collection tube. The mixture was centrifuged at 8000 rpm for 1 min. The DNeasy Mini spin column was placed in a new 2 mL collection tube, 500 μL Buffer AW1 was added and centrifuged for 1 min at 8000 rpm. Flow-through and collection tube were discarded. Another 500 μL Buffer AW2 was added and centrifuged for 5 min at 13,000 rpm to dry the DNeasy membrane. The DNeasy Mini spin column was placed in a clean 1.5 mL microcentrifuge tube. 50 μL Buffer AE was pipetted directly onto the DNeasy membrane and was incubated at room temperature for 1 min, then centrifuged for 1 min at 8000 rpm to elute. This elution step was repeated once. DNA yields were quantified.

By using PCR and Southern hybridisation methods, PORCINE Gene Chip is able to identify even small traces of porcine constituents in processed foods and complex-composition products. The detection of porcine DNA is carried out by detecting the species-specific sequence of the mitochondrial

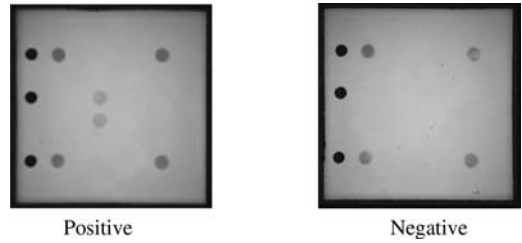


Diagram 1. Examples of positive and negative control results.

Table 2. The result interpretation for Olipro™ PORCINE Gene chip.

Sample	Porcine
Ovalette	Negative
Gel fix	Negative
Shortening	Negative
Gelatine	Negative
Margerine	Negative
Soft Butter	Negative
Chicken sausage (A)	Negative
Chicken sausage (B)	Negative
Beef sausage (A)	Negative
Beef sausage (B)	Negative

sequence by using molecular biological techniques. The sample to be tested is homogenised before the genomic DNA is extracted. Multiplex Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) is performed with biotin-labeled primer sets to amplify species-specific target DNA, internal control sequences. The corresponding pair of sequence-specific probes are immobilised onto membrane and hybridised with the biotinylated PCR products. The biotin label allows the bound PCR products to bind to Streptavidin-alkaline Phosphatase and thereafter detected by the colourimetric substrate, NBT/BCIP. The coloured signal is captured, analysed and stored by Scanner System. Detection of Polymerase chain reaction of porcine DNA was an optimize method according to Olipro™ PORCINE (2011).

The result is interpreted by the pattern formed on the chip. Porcine-specific nucleotide probes are designed and pre-spotted on the chip to capture specific targets generated from PCR reaction. After hybridisation reaction and colourimetric development, perfectly matched probe-target hybrid would form blue-purple precipitants on the chip as a result of enzymatic reaction. Chip pattern is read and identified by scanner with chip analysis software. Diagram below shows the layout of the internal control spot and testing spot on Olipro™ PORCINE Gene Chip.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The test result showed that all ten samples contained no pork and its derivatives (Table 3). Thus it is confirmed that these raw ingredients frequently used in

Table 3.

Sample	Food sample
Ovalette	Sponge cake
Gel fix	Cake and pastry products for finishing
Shortening	Cake, bread, pastry and cookies
Gelatine	Candies, cake decoration, confectionary
Margerine	Cake, bread, pastry and cookies
Soft butter	Cake decoration, pastry and confectionary
Chicken sausage (A)	Pastry
Chicken sausage (B)	Pastry
Beef sausage (A)	Pastry
Beef sausage (B)	Pastry

making bakery items proven to contain no pork and its derivatives. The presence of pork and pork derivatives sometimes were detected as an adultration into food that does not contain any pork. The result is interpreted by the pattern formed on the chip, and it shows that all the important ingredients tested are negative pocine. Thus this PCR method has proven beneficial in detecting pork fat in food.

4 CONCLUSION

The study sought has been conducted as part of the understanding on the type of halal and non halal ingredient available in the market generally and Bakery and Confectionery specifically. Hopefully this study has given all the benefits to the Malaysian especially muslim to be more particular on the type of products they consumed. In addition, it had been as a reference to

Malaysia's Halal certification policy and procedure. Furthermore, this study perhaps can be a reference for any future study in the related field mainly in Malaysia. This study will benefit to all Malaysian especially Muslim to be more particular on the type of product they consume. In addition, it had been as a reference to Malaysia's Halal certification policy and procedure. Furthermore, this study can be a reference for any future study in the related field mainly in Malaysia.

REFERENCES

- Arsat, A. 2009. The Implementation of Halal Logo and Certification Towards Restaurant Performance. (Unpublished master thesis, UniversitiTeknologi MARA, Malaysia).
- Bachok, S., TambyChik, C., AbdGhani, M., Arsat, A., Jamil, J. & Sulaiman, S. 2011. The impact of halal logo implementation on Malaysian Restaurant Operators. In proceedings of 9th APACHRIE Conference. School of hotel and Tourism Management. Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- Bonne, K. and Verbeke, W. 2008. Muslim consumer trust in Halal meat status and control in Belgium. *Journal of Meat Science*, 79, 113–123.
- Blumberg, B., Cooper, D. R., and Schindler, P.S. 2005. *Business research methods*. Maidenhead, Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Che Man, Y.B and Abdul Latif, M. 2003a. Global perspective of Halal food. Paper presented at the Halal Seminar: The concept and its business opportunities, Malay Chamber of Commerce Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.
- Evans, A. H. 2005, April. Halal perspectives: Understanding the muslim market. *The Halal Journal*, pp 10.
- Hayati et al., 2008. Quality assurance in Halal food manufacturing in Malaysia: A preliminary study. *Proceedings of International Conference on Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering*, Johor Bahru, Malaysia.
- Yahya-Ishmael, R. 2005. When ignorance is not bliss: The Halal Journal.

This page intentionally left blank

Muslim guest perception of value towards *Syariah* concept hotel

Azmira Zulkharnain & Salamiah A. Jamal
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The success of *Syariah* concept hotel for could be guided by observing Islamic teachings in hospitality activities. This study aims to explore the attributes that are significance to Muslim guest that can serve as a basis for tailoring a *Syariah* concept hotel package. A proposed conceptual framework is presented in examining the Muslim guest perceived value of *Syariah* concept hotel and its association with satisfaction and word of mouth. Two important dimensions are identified that might attract more Muslim guests that should lead to higher satisfaction and favorable word of mouth.

Keywords: Islamic dimension attributes; Muslim tourist; perception values; *Syariah* concept hotel.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Islamic Hospitality market is referred to as Muslim guest in association of Islamic guideline pertaining to hospitality activities (Battour, Ismail & Battor, 2010). This market is among the fast rising hotel segments in most Muslim countries and even in several western countries. It represents 10 percent of the world tourism market for accommodation which can be considered as a segment with highly financial potential (Heyer, 2008).

The Islamic Hospitality segment may be considered as one of the target by lodging providers as well as hospitality marketers. Considering religion as an important factor in making decision with regards to hotel accommodation (Collins & Tisdell, 2002), it is essential to explore the related attributes that might enhance *Syariah* concept accommodation.

In Islam, the teaching requires their followers to consume lawful products that are accordance to religious standard (Ireland & Rajabzadeh, 2011). Muslims are abiding by Islamic teachings either direct and indirectly affect their choices pertaining to hospitality activities (Zamani-Farahani & Henderson, 2010). It is crucial to make sure those Islamic religious characteristics are available in accommodations. This will lead to Muslim guests' satisfaction and consequently create multiple revisits in the future. Therefore, plans considering hospitality activities should follow according to *Syariah* (Islamic code of life) guidelines (Battour et al. 2010).

The religious concept for Islamic hospitality and tourism has yet been theoretically articulated. Islamic resorts, hotels, destinations and programmes will shape tourism activities such as alcohol free accommodations where gender segregation and moderate dressing will be strictly respected and controlled; available prayer rooms on site; Islamic transportation

facilities; gender segregated sport and wellness facilities; and Islamic entertainment and programmes. Elements of this concept are already implemented in domestic tourism in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Iran (Halal Journal, 2010).

Religion attributes lies in the products that reflect the lifestyles, expectations and culture of the religion (Heyer, 2008). Weidenfeld (2006) reported that those hotels that satisfy the needs of their Muslim guests through the provision of necessary holy services experienced an increase in performance and the same time resulted to higher hotel rates. Unfortunately, there is yet no standard guideline or certification of *Syariah* compliant in place (Heyer, 2008).

It is quite difficult to know the status of whether a hotel is a *Syariah* compliant accommodation and most of today's *Syariah* compliant hotel's neither provide a neither religious experience nor value for money (Reuters, 2011). Many hotels portray their image as Islamization in attracting Muslims guest while in real fact they are not actually *Syariah* compliant. Thus, the demand issue remain unsolved (Heyer, 2008).

2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The "Look East Policy" initiated in 1991 by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has attracted many Muslim countries to visit Malaysia (Pandian, 2005). The big Muslim market has generated an increasing demand for the *halal* products and services including the needs for *Syariah* compliant hotels and accommodations. However, there are no forthcoming guidelines or certification in place yet (Heyer, 2008). The opportunities for the hospitality and tourism industry to supply the products and services that reflects the Muslim lifestyle, culture and believes are yet to be grasped.

Despite having more than 2,500 hotels operating in the country by fourth quarter of 2011, only the De Palma hotel is recognised as an official *Syariah* compliant hotel by *Halal Journal Award 2011* (Wan, Suhaimi, Khairil & Yaakob, 2011). Previous studies have look into several aspects of *Syariah* compliant hotel including destination attributes on Muslim tourist's choice (Battour et al. 2010) and implementation of *Syariah* Compliance Concept Hotel (Wan, Suhaimi, Khairil & Yaakob, 2011), but no study was found looking into the Muslim guest perception towards *Syariah* compliant hotels.

2.1 Purpose of inquiry

The purpose of this paper is to understand the Muslim guest value perception of *Syariah* compliant hotel. Therefore, the inquiry questions for this paper are:

- (1) What are the dimensions of Muslim guest perceived value towards *Syariah* compliant hotel?
- (2) Which value dimension is the most importance from the Muslim guest perception?
- (3) Does Perceived Value affects guest Satisfaction and Word of Mouth?

The answer to the inquiry questions will be based on an extended review and analysis of literature.

2.2 Significance of the inquiry

This conceptual paper is significant because it explores the Muslim guest perceptions of value towards *Syariah* hotel in Malaysia. It examines all possible dimensions of perceived value and makes recommendations for future research.

3 SYARIAH COMPLIANT HOTEL

3.1 *Syariah* compliant hotel: Definition

Syariah is an Arabic word defines as way or path for the Muslims (Doi, 1984). It is the Allah's commands for all Muslim to practise Islam in every single aspect of life (Shamim, 2009). Shamim (2009) defines *Syariah* compliant hotel as a hotel that produce services in accordance to the *Syariah* principles. *Syariah* compliant in a hotel should be according to its principles not only covering the *halal* aspect but also the entire hotel operation (Wan, Suhaimi, Khairil & Yaakob, 2011).

3.2 *Syariah* compliant hotel worldwide

The increasing numbers of Arab and Muslim travellers and their purchasing power has creates a demand that results into the existing and rising units of *Syariah* compliant hotels. These hotels operated base on the principles of Islam. The World Tourism Organisation reported that the Arabic tourist spends of at least 10 to 50 percent more compared to average tourist in leisure and business (Nathalie, 2007).

Almulla launched world's first international *Syariah* compliant hotel chain name as Abjar Hotels International. By 2013, Almulla groups aiming to achieve 150 properties worldwide including 35 in Europe as well plans in spending over \$2billion to reach its goal. Another example is Shaza Hotels, is a joint venture between Kempinski Hotels and Guidance Financial Group, target to have 30 hotels in 10 years of time. Their first hotel in Dubai has already launched in 2009, and aiming to achieve eight to ten five-star hotel chain across the Middle East by 2012 (Visele, 2007).

In these hotels, not serving alcohol brings to direct results on loss of alcohol revenues, but at the same time it will indirectly results by decreasing their number of guest who intended to eat at the hotel's restaurant and also reducing the number of guest who may have intention to stay at the hotel (Florian, 2007).

The Al Jawhara Group of Hotels and Apartments is a part of the UAE based conglomerate S.S. Lootah Group became the first Islamic hotel to receive the highest 'Crescen-rating' of seven for *Syariah* compliant services. The Singapore base 'Crescent-rating' is a new rating system that focuses on the Halal travel market segment worldwide and rates hotels on a scale of one to seven bases on the services and facilities provided to *Halal* conscious travellers. As a pioneer in Islamic hospitality, they have been setting benchmarking trends in *Syariah* compliant service offerings and are committed to strengthen Dubai's position as a leader in the sector. Beyond catering *Halal* certified food, offering prayer related facilities and an alcohol free environment. Jawhara also provides separate amenities for men and women and other *Syariah* compliant hospitality services in line with the heritage of the region, catering to the privacy and family oriented needs of the Gulf society. Al Jawhara Group of Hotels and Apartments is the first Islamic hospitality established in 1979. It has to its credit the coveted Dubai Quality Appreciation Program for the tourism sector and The Halal Journal Award for 'Travel & Hospitality 2009' (Halal Journal, 2010).

3.3 *Syariah* compliant hotel in Malaysia

De Palma Ampang has been recognised as one of the pioneer *Syariah* compliant hotel in Malaysia. The facilities include an Islamic floor offered prayer room, direction of *Qiblat* in each room, prayer veils, Quran, Yassin and hand bidet in the toilet for ablution. The *Azan* will be heard in the rooms each prayer time. The hotel has a large spacious prayer hall with a full-time *Imam* to lead daily prayers and Friday prayer. This is the only hotel that conducts Friday prayers in the country. The hotel makes it compulsory for the staff to cover their *aurat*. They also provide *halal* food in their hotel restaurants which is certified by JAKIM (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia). In addition, the hotel also provides services for conference and business meeting package that comply with Islamic culture such as offering the *doa* recital by the *Imam* and

provision of *zam-zam* water and dates at the opening of meetings. Moreover, the hotel also conducts special religious classes on Al-Quran recital, *Qiamullail* and *Tazkirah* programs for hotel guest and staff in order to improve their religious knowledge. Malaysia is still in need to raise the numbers *Syariah* compliant hotels due to only a little number that available currently to cater the Muslim's needs (Wan, Suhaimi, Khairil and Yaakob, 2011).

Klana Beach Resort Port Dickson, a 3 Star *Syariah* compliant resort is also another example in Malaysia. The resort is wholly owned by Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan and managed by the Klana brand of resorts. The resort set within calm and tranquil environment boast 85 guest room, swimming pool, restaurant, an astronomy gallery with an interactive kiosk, a boardwalk and jetty and meeting room facilities will be able to cater for the needs of both the business and leisure communities. The resort coffee house with a seating capacity of 80 persons serves up a sumptuous array of mouth-watering International *halal* cuisine and non-alcoholic beverages. It is one of the designated places in the country located along the popular Teluk Kemang for the sighting of the moon during the auspicious holy month of *Ramadhan*. This gives advantage of the astronomy interactive kiosk to unravel the mysteries of the cosmos. As a *Syariah* compliant hotel, guests can be assured of high quality service and standard, warm hospitality and their staff will be there to attend to all guests needs (Klana Beach Resort Port Dickson).

3.4 Perceived value

Guest perceived value is the difference between the guest's evaluation of all the benefits and all the costs of an offering and the perceived alternatives (Bhasin, 2010).

3.5 Tangible dimension

The tangible dimensions are concerned with prayer facilities and *halal* product. The prayer facilities are concerned on the prayer room or mosque that should be available to the public with providing materials such as Quran, *Qiblah* direction, prayer mat and ablution area.

The *halal* products refer to food and product. *Halal* food meaning it is alcohol free and using only certified *halal* item including the method of preparing the food using *halal* utensils and cooked by Muslim worker.

Product such as guestroom toiletries also must content only from the *halal* certified item in providing the soap, shampoo, perfume, cologne, toothbrush and toothpaste to the guest (Battour et al. 2010).

3.5.1 Intangible dimension

Islamic Tourism is not only limit to religious tourism but it is also in all forms of tourism except those are against Islamic principles. The intangible dimensions are categorized into Islamic entertainment, Islamic dress code and general Islamic value.

Islamic entertainment such as recreational park, swimming pool and sport facilities are to be segregated of men and women. Muslims are also prohibited from gambling and alcohol consumption. There also should be restriction of adult video on television channel that would influence children behaviour (Battour et al. 2010). Islamic dress code referring to staff covering *Aurat* especially women should be wearing scarf to cover their hair and not wearing short skirt (Battour et al. 2010).

Islamic values includes environment that respects noble human and family ethical values and manners. It includes all types of responsible tourism which are committed to family morals, humanitarian and Islamic values (Halal Journal, 2010). General Islamic morality is referring to no sexual interaction such as kissing in public and prostitution that may affect children ethics (Battour et al. 2010).

3.6 Satisfaction

Guest satisfaction is important because many researches shown that guest satisfaction has a positive effect on an organisation's profitability. Due to this, the consequences of guest satisfaction and dissatisfaction must be considered. There is also a positive connection between guest satisfaction, loyalty and retention (Singh, 2006).

3.7 Word of mouth

Word of mouth is an unpaid form of promotion in which satisfied guests tell other people how much they like or dislike a business, product or service. It is triggered when a guest experiences something far beyond what was expected. Word-of-mouth is an advertising tool which is important for every business, as each happy guest can steer dozens of new ones their own way. It's one of the most credible forms of advertising because a person puts their reputation on the line every time they make a recommendation and that person has nothing to gain but the appreciation of those who are listening (uslegal.com).

4 INNITIAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PERCEIVED VALUE

The primary interest of this study is the Muslim guest perceived value of *Syariah* compliant hotel and its association with satisfaction and word of mouth. The independent variable is perceived value comprised of five dimensions: prayers facilities; *halal* product; Islamic dress code; Islamic entertainment and general Islamic morality. The dependent variable is word of mouth and the proposed mediating variable is satisfaction.

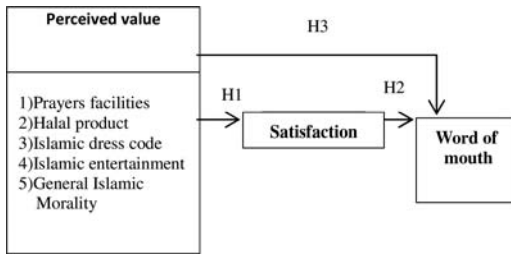


Figure 1. Proposed research model. Adapted from: (Battour, Ismail & Battor, 2010).

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings from the literature review led us to draw conclusions about which dimension attributes affect Muslim guest and satisfaction that could be used as base for tailoring *Syariah* compliant hotel package and make recommendations for future research. The tangible attributes include prayer facilities and *Halal* food while intangible attributes include Islamic entertainment, Islamic dress codes and general Islamic morality. In order to cater the demand of Muslim tourist, policy makers must recognize all dimensions that structure Muslim perception of value towards *Syariah* compliant hotel. They should include all the perceived value dimensions in the development of marketing to promote *Syariah* compliant hotel.

The finding is hope to assist the government and tourism related bodies as well as the managers of the related hotels to better comprehend the Muslim guest perceived value towards *Syariah* compliant hotel in the country. Effective strategies will be recommended for compliant hotels in the country as to attract more Muslim guest to their accommodation. Thus it should be of value to the Government, hotels and tourism related bodies in assisting them expanding their guest base and eventually raising Malaysia's image as an Islamic country. Further research should be conducted to look more in-depth related to perception of value towards *Syariah* Compliant Hotel study.

REFERENCES

- Alam, S. S., Mohd, R., & Hisham, B. 2011. Is religiosity an important determinant on Muslim consumer behaviour in Malaysia? *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 2(1), 83–96
- Battour, M., Ismail, M.N. & Battor, M. 2010. The impact of destination attributes on muslim tourist's choice. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 13, 527–540. Retrieved April 8, 2012 from proquest database.
- Bhasin, H. 2010. Customer perceived value, CPV. Retrieved April 18, 2012 from <http://www.marketing91.com/customer-perceived-value-cpv>
- Collins D, Tisdell C. 2002. Gender and differences in travel life cycles. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41(2), 133-143.
- Doi, A. R. I. (1984). *Shariah The Islamic Law*. London: Ta-Ha Publishers Ltd.
- Florian, J. 2007. *Shariah-compliant hotels rise in the Gulf*. Retrieved April 8, 2012 from <http://www.ameinfo.com>
- Hassan, S.H., 2011, "Consumption of functional food model for Malay Muslims in Malaysia", *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, Vol. 2 Iss: 2 pp. 104–124
- Heyer, H. 2008. Rise of the sharia-compliant hotel? Retrieved April 8, 2012 from http://www.economist.com/blogs/gulliver/2009/03/rise_of_the_shariah-compliant-hotel
- Ireland, J & Rajabzadeh, S.A. 2011. UAE consumer concerns about halal products. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, Vol. 2 Iss: 3, pp.274 – 283. Retrieved April 8, 2012 from emerald insight database.
- Malaysian Association of Hotel Owners. (n.d.). Retrieved April 8, 2012 from <http://www.maho.org.my/index.html>
- Mokhlis, S. 2009. Relevancy and measurement of religiosity in consumer behavior research. *International Business Research*, Vol. 2 No. 3, pp. 75-84.
- Pandian, S. 2005. Legasi Mahathir. Utusan Publications & Distributors. Cet. 1.
- Religious Population Worldwide (n.d.). Retrieved June 1, 2012 from <http://www.religiouspopulation.com>
- Reuters, T. 2011. Opinion shariah compliant hotels. Retrieved April 30, 2012 from <http://halalfocus.net/2011/08/02/opinion-shariah-compliant-hotels/>
- Shamim, Y. 2009. The real sense of Shariah hospitality concept. The World Halal Forum Paper, Perpustakaan Negara Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- Singh, H. 2006. The importance of customer satisfaction in relation to customer loyalty and retention. Retrieved April 18, 2012 from <http://www.ucti.edu.my/wps/issue1/wp-06-06-abstract.pdf>
- The Halal Journal. 2010. Our best muslim friendly travel picks for 2011 plus the deal with "Islamic Tourism"(issue 36,September-October)
- Visele, N. 2007. Almulla launches world's first international Sharia compliant hotel chain. Retrieved April 18, 2012 from <http://www.zawya.com/story/ZAWYA/SecIndustries/pagTravel&Tourism/>
- Wan,S., Suhaimi, A.R., Khairil, C.A., & Yaakob,C.M. 2011. The Implementation of Shariah Compliance Concept Hotel: De Palma Hotel Ampang, Malaysia. International Conference on Humanities, Historical and Social Sciences 17.
- Weidenfeld, A. 2006. Religious needs in the hospitality industry. *Tourism and Hospitality Research* 6(2), 143–159.
- Welcome to Klana Beach Resort Port Dickson. 2011. Retrieved May 7, 2012 from <http://www.klanabeachresortpd.com.my>
- Wilkes, R.E., Burnett, J.J. and Howell, R.D. 1986. On the meaning and measurement of religiosity in consumer research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 14, pp. 47-56.
- Word-of-Mouth Advertising Law & Legal Definition. (n.d.). Retrieved April 18, 2012 from <http://definitions.uslegal.com/w/word-of-mouth-advertising>
- Zamani-Farahani, H. & Henderson, J.C. 2010. Islamic tourism and managing tourism development in Islamic societies: the cases of Iran and Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 12(1), 79–89.

Gastronomy

This page intentionally left blank

Contesting locality and sustainability of food tourism in Taiwan

H.A. Su

*Graduate Institute of Taiwan Food Culture,
National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism, Kaohsiung, Taiwan*

ABSTRACT: This study aims to examine food-themed tourism in Taiwan by adopting an analytical approach of endogenous touristification, instead of popular exogenous othering. Concepts of displaced commodity and geographical knowledge are applied to discriminate local food from unauthentic substitutes of “world of production”, on which the case of two famed goatmeat towns and their food tourism is based. Issues of practicability, palatability and valorization respectively from perspectives of society, culture and economics are discussed and linked to the dialectical themes of locality and sustainability. The study finds imported substitutes are not necessarily considered a barrier while developing food tourism; instead, strategies developed from connecting “real-world hybridity” with humanized reflexivity between food and tourists are keys to sustain the globalized tourism.

Keywords: food tourism, displacement, geographical knowledge, localization

1 INTRODUCTION

Traditional foods/cuisines are recognized as major sources of local tourism attractions (Bessière 1998; Hall & Mitchell, 2002), and even as an enhancer of food tourism development. Food tourism, according to Hall & Mitchell (2001, p. 308), indicates a kind of tourism behavior primarily motivated by food tasting and experiencing, including visits paying to touristic sites of specific local food production, food festivities or restaurants’ themed dishes.

Cases of local specialties-themed food tourism are varied and plenty. Slow Food Movement originated from Bra, Northern Italy, is an evident one by recalling “renaissance” of local food culture, and with its successful paradigm, it further comes into being a worldwide trend. However, when local food is marketed as a popular tourism product, it brings about substantial substitution by outside sources to make up insufficient local supplies, and ends up an unauthentic realm which is deprived of a sense of places that food tourism really relies on.

Though the local-induced food tourism is well initiated, related academic studies so far mostly tend to the topics of “food in tourism” from the viewpoints of tourists touring in a remote or foreign land, a sense of “eating the other”. The approach of “exogenous” othering from superiority-arisen “arrogance” or “a condescension flowing from a benign superiority” (Shurmer-Smith & Hannam, 1994, p. 89) is probably the main reason resulting in tourists’ cognition of “attraction or impediment” (Cohen & Avieli, 2004), of “edible or palatable” (Long, 2004) or of “tourist’s paradox” (Mak, et al., 2012, p. 177) toward “the other”

local food. On the contrary, local-oriented viewpoints, initiated from “endogenous” touristification of local food, are rarely studied. This suggests “exogenous othering” and “endogenous touristification” respectively represent different approaches of “eating and tourism go hand in hand” and “eating is tourism” (as defined as before-mentioned food tourism) (Molz, 2004, p. 53).

What is “eating is tourism”? Despite the rare approach of local-oriented viewpoints can be evidenced from the local agro-food-induced IRT’s (Integrated Rural Tourism) model, however, its viewpoints of endogenous food subject are not enough. Thus, properties of social life and cultural biographies of food are hardly comprehended (Appadurai, 1986; Kopytoff, 1986). Short of this stance, it is unable to truly understand how endogenous food from local resists and responds to globalizing challenges. Therefore, “eating is tourism” in this study means a conceptualized “globalized food tourism” which is however simply termed again as “food tourism” in the following text to avoid wordiness. This study uses “goatmeat” as the theme to examine the endogenous touristification of food tourism in Taiwan. “Displaced food identity” extended from displaced commodity chain (Crang, 1996; Hughes & Reimer, 2004) is adopted to investigate how local food stimulates, from local identity to endogenous touristification stage, strategies for sustainable food tourism.

1.1 Food tourism and its challenges

Local food can be deemed as an essential tourist attraction, but when it is too commodified to meet tourists’ demands in quantity, serious issues of authenticity or

orthodoxy comes next to challenge all actors of the commodity supplying network (Sims, 2010). Due to the unbalanced supply and demand, global capitalist suppliers are applying the manufacturing way of “precision agriculture” by even concealing consumers’ concerns of food scares, to emphasize the efficiencies of “worlds of production” (Murdoch et al., 2000, p. 109). Also, they practice the routines by means of appropriation (natural manufacturing replaced by industrial technologies) and substitution (traditional and natural products replaced by industrial products) to conquer insufficient supplies of local natural food (Goodman, Sorj & Wilkinson, 1987).

Accordingly, what roles do all actors (within the network of “from farm to fork”) play to implement sustainable food tourism, especially when competitions and crowd-out appear between local traditional food and imported substitutes/frauds? The followings show, from perspectives of food origins and its cultural meaning, related literature for further insights on local identities.

1.2 *Displaced identities and geographical knowledge*

According to Crang (1996) and Cook & Crang (1996), what customers perceive a commodity is closely related to its revealing and concealing geographical knowledge/lores. The production of geographical knowledge is not unalterable, but is originated from Crang’s (1996, p. 47) “displacement of commodities”, meaning that commodities travel among multiple networks without boundaries, and “origins”, ‘destinations’ and forms of ‘travel’ surround the various flows of people, goods, and services in these networks ... [from where all actors] find themselves positioned and position themselves in terms of their entanglements with these flows”. Thus, geographical knowledge provides insightfully theoretical lens for examining life biographies of commodities (Morris & Kirwan, 2010, p. 132). Crang (1996) accordingly proposes four geographical knowledges: the first, “sweeping geographical images” (commodity is closely linked to place image); the second, “realist knowledge” (production background of commodity, such as biographies of commodity origin and manufacturing processing); the third, “discursive knowledge” (reflexive thinking induced from commodity proper, such as fair trade-marked commodity); the fourth, “appropriate settings for product use” (message recommended for customers to best use commodity by adding specific condiments or flavors).

Cook and Crang (1996) also indicate manufacturers or advertizing agents like to use the displacement characteristics of from-farm-to-fork commodities, and manipulate the mental fetishism from de-contextualized relationship between production and consumption to strengthen their marketing sales, but these strategies often lead to “amorality of contemporary consumer cultures” (p. 135). The vacuumed and distorted meanings from severing the commodity

and its value is, as Cook and Crang’s (1996) argument, the first fetishism of “double commodity fetishism”. The second fetishism indicates commodity suppliers use the imagination of “touristic quality” to exaggerate the origin of a commodity by linking to its traveling images to intensify consumers’ purchasing desires.

Globalized “world of production” is a catalyst to accelerate the formation of displaced commodity network. It may not cause vacuumed or distorted meanings of the displaced commodities, but alternatively, may reflect a “local” product from “real-world hybridity” by practicing reflexive localism (Johnston et al., 2009, p. 528). Based on the literatures, this study introduces “displaced food identity” as the core concept, to investigate and compare the central Xi-hu township and the southern Gang-shan township in Taiwan where are best famed on goatmeat food tourism (in terms of goatmeat sources, one use local product and the other, mostly imported, instead). Focuses of the study are to examine how local goatmeat and imported goatmeat are negotiated and identified considering the latter has accounted for more than 90% of national supplies, as well as what/how sustainable food tourism strategies are materialized.

2 FOOD TOURISM IN TAIWAN

The bloom of Taiwan’s local food tourism can be attributed to the governmental policy of OTOP (One Town One Product) since 1989. It appears the bright economic sides of promoting domestic/rural tourism, but also implies the awakening ideology of locality to resist agricultural imports, especially since Taiwan’s entrance into WTO in 2002. For example, Xi-hu and Gang-shan (Fig. 1 [shown with population sizes]) have both been best recognized as “the towns of goatmeat eating”. Shop signs of goatmeat eateries with their place names can even be found any elsewhere in Taiwan.

2.1 *Goatmeat food tourism and study method*

In Taiwan, goatmeat is not a staple diet; it is periodically used as worship offerings when needed and mostly, as medicinal tonic dishes which, with warm property, can help invigorate one’s body. As such, goatmeat with angelica broth has always been the

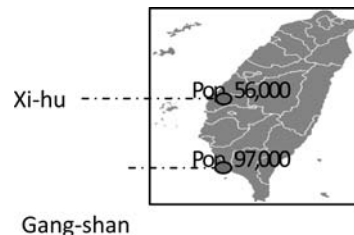


Figure 1. Locations of Xi-hu and Gang-shan.

most recognized dish and nowadays, goatmeat hotpot is also becoming popular among young customers. Despite the market share of goatmeat is quite stable, local goat husbandry/slaughter industries show declining trend, whereas imported frozen goatmeat maintains at average 26,000 tons per year (see Table 1).

Since goat has a habit of gnawing ground weeds, Taiwan government thus announced a policy in 1992 suggesting goat raisers not to increase heads and to adopt costly pen-raising management (Council of Agriculture, 1992). This is perhaps why frozen goatmeat imported from Australia has since then become the main source of goatmeat in Taiwan. Notwithstanding the threatening trends of “world of production”, both Xi-hu and Gang-shan boast their goatmeat cuisine and goatmeat-eating cultural festival (since 2003) to claim their “authentic” local origin of goatmeat. But in fact, goatmeat eateries in Gang-shan use a great deal of imported frozen goatmeat, which is consequently proved no inferior to Xi-hu in terms of business and food tourism.

Despite specialty goatmeat is the themed product to promote food tourism at Xi-hu and Gang-shan, these two towns have their own strategies to sustain their business, no matter adopted goatmeat is authentic or not. The local identity constructed from endogenous consensus manifests their practical experiences of touristification by means of different definitions of goatmeat productions (Picard, 2005). Tourist attractions for domestic tourists (medicinal tonic consumption, for instance) at these two towns, are definitely not like what really interests “exogenous othering” foreign tourists. Thus, this study, based on viewpoints of domestic/rural tourism, argues that displaced food identity and geographical knowledge within the circuit of culinary culture provide analytical lens for understanding the links between food tourism and various perspectives of society, culture and economics, as well as touristification of goatmeat eating culture.

This study started in 2009. Since part of this research is related to food culture, documentary

analysis of historical records during Qing and Japanese colonial periods was conducted in the beginning. For those after Taiwan Restoration, agricultural statistics since the Japanese period onward were collected and a number of old goatmeat eatery owners (mostly from the 2nd generation) were interviewed by taking their oral historiographies. During 2010–2011, in-depth interviews were conducted to cover all related actors in the cultural circuit, including those in-charge persons from: township governments, livestock research institute, goat farmer association, local farmers’ associations, goatmeat auction markets, legal/illegal slaughters, sale middlemen, goatmeat eateries, goat raisers, goat leisure farm, goatmeat importer, local culture and history studios, spicy soy sauce (dipping sauce for goatmeat) and goatmeat customers/tourists. Also, participative observations were conducted at the events of goatmeat festivals during 2009–2011.

2.2 Social perspective: relative practicabilities

Imported frozen goatmeat since 2008 has contributed to about 90% of national supplies, which explains its competitive advantages in Taiwan’s domestic market. This can be attributed to that the cost of imported goatmeat is only 30% of the local’s (goat farmer association, 2009), and that importer’s customizing services have offered local eateries any business-sized cuts of goatmeat to prevent time-consuming trivia. It is probably the reasons that Xi-hu and Gang-shan governments are determined to set up goatmeat festivals since 2003, followed by the origin-guaranteed certification of “Local Goatmeat” since 2005, to resist the substitution of “world of production”. These measures suggest the localization is aimed to strengthen touristic attractions of goatmeat food tourism for domestic tourists. However, under the well-intended “renaissance” movement, adoption of local goatmeat by eateries between these two towns is extremely different, which can be evidenced by slaughtering trends from the two goat auction centers in the last decade (Council of Agriculture, 2012).

In this vein, Xi-hu eateries’ insistence of adopting local goatmeat explains their determination to invest and set up the first professional goat-only electric slaughtering facility to guarantee their acquisitions of the freshest and most hygienic goatmeat from local raisers. This also indicates why they always like to show their most recommended specialties of “ginger-threaded goatmeat hotpot” and “whole goat eating”, both of which emphasize the simple eating ways of goatmeat slices/offal with goatmeat broth. As seven owners (2nd or 3rd generation) stress while inspecting goats at the auction center that locality and freshness are musts to cater to locals, homecoming compatriots and outside gourmets (2011). Freshness aside, certificate of Local Goatmeat hung on walls also symbolize the eateries’ pride of adopting local goatmeat, all of which demonstrate their intentions of showing “realist knowledge” and “discursive knowledge” (certificate

Table 1. Comparison of domestic raising and imports during 2000–2010*.

Year	Raised no. (heads)	Imports (tons)
2000	263,763	21,142
2001	184,717	21,296
2002**	161,858	26,065
2003	155,565	23,512
2004	164,362	28,033
2005	178,123	28,385
2006	195,712	26,581
2007	181,557	24,672
2008	170,578	27,401
2009	152,236	19,450
2010	147,342	23,039

*Source: Council of Agriculture, Taiwan (2012).

**Accession time to WTO.

is a reminder of increasing threatening from imported goatmeat). What's more, the goatmeat festival here has since 2003 manifested the branding image of "Xi-hu means genuine local goatmeat" (interview with livestock research institute researcher, 2011), undoubtedly assuring its "sweeping geographical images".

In Gang-shan, there are two major reasons contributing to local eateries' tending to adopt imported goatmeat. One is, as many goat raisers opine, government's established policy of opening domestic goatmeat market to the foreign suppliers while refraining goat raisers from keeping "intolerable" number of goats, and leaving the local auction center outdated, thus leading to its complete termination since June, 2009. The other is simply about cost. Due to there being about 70 small eateries in Gang-shan, competition among them is harsh and cost becomes these eateries' main concern. This accordingly results in their searching for cheaper substitution from importers, considering at the same time that local goatmeat supplies become less and less. According to the interviews with the importer closely located to Gang-shan, local eateries' adoption of imported goatmeat account for more than 90% of their total needs because the importer can supply them cheap and quality goatmeat that comes from the best goat-raising environment (2009). As the importer further indicates, the substitution with imported goatmeat also alleviates moral condemnation caused from slaughtering goats because "those who slaughter goats often bring disasters to their descendants" (interview with managing staff of the importer, 2009). All these reasons contribute the local eateries to adopt imported goatmeat in spite of its insufficient freshness and non-locals, which translates that most actors' attitudes are likely to tend to practicabilities. But with this extremely high ratio of substitution of imported goatmeat, it is worthwhile to ask how Gang-shan eateries well fetishize and promote the production of imported goatmeat while enjoying successful goatmeat food tourism.

2.3 Cultural perspective: segmented palatabilities

Palatability is originally representative of a coordinated relationship between food-in-the-mouth and tongue tasting buds. Long (2004, p. 33) further extends it, surmounting simple "edibility", to the aesthetic beauty of a pleasurable sensory system, due to the fact that an edible food cannot be appreciated if it were not aesthetically savory.

Xi-hu is located in central Taiwan and proximate to the interchange of Highway 1, which provides convenient accesses for group tours and independent tourists to visit the goatmeat-eating town. In terms of sensory aesthetics, "realist knowledge" and "discursive knowledge" of Xi-hu goatmeat have in fact claimed a sense of "fresh sweetness" of palatability, which is closely related to the fact that the local auction center slaughters more than 50% of total auctioned goats during the past few years (National Animal Industry Foundation, 2009). The palatability of "fresh sweetness" stresses

freshly slaughtered/cooked goatmeat and this premise is by no means matched by imported frozen goatmeat.

Different from Xi-hu goatmeat, what palatabilities Gang-shan goatmeat emphasizes are "traditional tonics" and "creative cuisine". These two features with heavy flavor conditioning and complicated cooking technologies happen to echo what a local typical eatery owner's (2nd generation) recalls: "beginning of the Restoration, the locals usually have rice/fried fritters with goatmeat angelica soup, or rice noodles with goatmeat angelica soup; after the 1970s, stir-fried goatmeat with satay become popular. . . ." (2009). In terms of tonics, both goatmeat and angelica possess tonic function in Chinese medicine, and strong herbal flavor with dark color of angelica is a perfect match of stewed goatmeat.

In terms of creative cuisine, following 1970s-onward satay-flavored dishes comes the new style of "cuisine nouvelle". Unlike the traditional tonic practices, goatmeat in this regard is tried to be cooked as other meats to offer more menu choices for customers. Hence come various new kinds of strong flavored dishes among goatmeat eateries, and almost every eatery like to boast and brand its unique specialty goatmeat dish. Due to business competitiveness, it is common to find local eateries tend to keep creating new dishes to hold the business edge over others, and this phenomenon could be attributed to cooking competition arranged in every year's goatmeat festival (interview with festival-in-charge person of township hall, 2009).

Judging from the practices of Gang-shan goatmeat eateries, it suggests the palatabilities of tonics and creativities are local eateries' fetishizing strategies for promoting food tourism, happening to conceal the innate sweetness from its imported frozen goatmeat, of which Xi-hu goatmeat is proudest, instead. Therefore, these two palatable features of fresh sweetness and tonics/creativity become the keys to Xi-hu and Gang-shan respective touristification for goatmeat food tourism.

2.4 Economic perspective: valorization of places

As Eastham (2003) argues that food tourism is a critical strategy to valorize a place. On one hand, the role food tourism is playing shows a re-constructed chain from the broken "from farm to fork" links (due to industrialization). On the other hand, food tourism also plays the intermediary role of "re-coupling" to strengthen active participations from tourists and tourism resources providers.

In general, what re-coupling functions performed at Xi-hu and Gang-shan can be understood from external and internal levels. For external level, first of all, budget subsidies and direct/indirect industry counseling from the central government (the primary provider of local tourism resources) are important foundations of "sweeping geographical images" in geographical knowledge, provided to general tourists at the two towns. Secondly, governmental tourism promotion by internet (goatmeat food tourism is included in

Bureau of Tourism's web of "Taiwan: the Heart of Asia", for instance) do also help develop connections to regional tourism. In addition, the two goatmeat towns are also included in TraNews, the most popular domestic travel information provider, which is famed to even schedule the so-called "the tour of recipe Bible" to cover any attractive local specialty food destinations.

In terms of internal level, it shows in Xi-hu the re-constructed chain, a localized from-farm-to-fork chain, is established upon all actors' consensus. Of which, the professional goatmeat-only electric slaughter facility and certificate of Local Goatmeat are definitely the keys to re-construct local goatmeat supplying chain, which further facilitate authentic locality of Xi-hu by insisting on adopting local goatmeat. In Gang-shan, however, it is evidenced that a transnational spatialized commodity chain is re-constructed, which is obviously dominated by goatmeat importers, and this may be considered a loophole while re-coupling with local goatmeat food tourism. But the good news is, due mainly to "touristic quality" (Cook and Crang's [1996] 2nd fetishism) of tonics and creativity, Gang-shan has developed an alternative valorization model by promoting its nostalgia/novel taste-oriented goatmeat food tourism.

3 CONCLUSION

By the investigative lens of displaced food identity with dialectical geographical knowledge, the study is able to verify the strategies of locality and sustainability from Xi-hu and Gang-shan's goatmeat food tourism. This approach helps examine the endogenous development of local food identity and its touristic development for food tourists, which is different from current exogenous othering-oriented studies. It is also implied from the study that "world of production" is not necessarily considered a barrier for developing sustainable food tourism; instead, the issue of the "real-world hybridity" with "humanized socio-ecological relations" (Johnston et al., 2009, p. 527) between food and tourists is worth further studying.

REFERENCES

- Appadurai, A. ed. 1986. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspectives*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bessière, J. 1998. Local Development and Heritage: Traditional Food and Cuisine as Tourist Attractions in Rural Areas, *Sociologia Ruralis* 38 (1): 21–34.
- Cohen, E & Avieli, N. 2004. Food in Tourism: Attraction and Impediment, *Annals of Tourism Research* 31 (4):755–78.
- Cook, I. and Crang, P. 1996 *The World on a Plate: Culinary Culture, Displacement and Geographical Knowledge*, *Journal of Material Culture* 1 (2):131–53.
- Crang, P. 1996. Displacement, Consumption, and Identity, *Environment and Planning A*, 28:47–67.
- Eastham, J.F. 2003. Valorizing through Tourism in Rural Areas: Moving towards Regional Partnerships, In *Food Tourism: around the World*, Hall C.M. et al. eds., Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.
- Hall, C.M. & Mitchell, R. 2001. Wine and Food Tourism, In *Special Interest Tourism: Context and Cases*,
- Hall, C.M. & Mitchell, R. 2002. Tourism as a Force for Gastronomic Globalization and Localization, In *Tourism and Gastronomy*, Hjalager A-M and Richards, G. eds., Oxon: Routledge.
- Hughes, A. & Reimer, S. 2004 Introduction, In *Geographies of Commodity Chains*, Hughes, A. & Reimer, S. eds., London: Routledge.
- Johnston, J., Biro, A. and MacKendrick N. 2009. Lost in the Supermarket: The Corporate-Organic Foodscape and the Struggle for Food Democracy, *Antipode* 41 (3):509–32.
- Long, L. ed. 2004. *Culinary Tourism*, Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Mak, A., Lumbers, M. & Eves, A. 2012. Globalisation and Food Consumption in Tourism, *Annals Of Tourism Research* 39 (1):171–96.
- Molz, J.G. Tasting an Imagined Thailand: Authenticity and Culinary Tourism in Thai Restaurants, In *Culinary Tourism*, Long, L. ed., Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Murdoch, J. and Miele, M. 2004 Culinary Networks and Cultural Connections: A Conventions Perspective, In *Geographies of Commodity Chains*, Hughes, A. and Reimer, S. eds., London: Routledge.
- Picard, M. 2005. From Turkey to Bali: Cultural Identity as Tourist Attraction, In *The Study of Tourism: Anthropological and Sociological Beginnings*, Nash, D. ed., Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.

This page intentionally left blank

Routine of cooking practices among Malaysian working women

M.S.Y. Kamaruddin, S.K.A. Bakar, M.S. Mohd Zahari & M.F.S. Bakhtiar
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Working is becoming a necessity and one of the most vital elements in this modern era for bachelor and family couples in combating with the economic needs. Despite working, women need to sacrifice in many things together with one of the crucial household responsibility besides others and that is cooking. Due to the increasing number of working women, this study is therefore empirically investigating the issue related to routine of cooking among the working women particularly in Malaysia. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed among the working women. Through the descriptive analysis, some meaningful insights on the issues of interest were obtained and the findings overtly revealed that working time, economy and dietary pattern are factors that lead them with no other options and therefore opt for convenience cooking practices for their family dinner during weekdays. Despite this, in maintaining the pleasant family relationship, love and nurturing the family members particularly among the growing ones, home meal cooking is performed during weekends.

Keywords: routine, cooking, working women, homemade cooking, convenient food

1 INTRODUCTION

In today's era, family life is ever completely busy, complex and more demanding than before especially when family expenditure and cost of living both in the rural or urban area has increased substantially and similarly with other provisions related to family requirements, (Hughes and Stone, 2006). Owing to that complexity, every family is struggling hard in achieving their needs and for betterment of their life. Oswald, (2003) argued that this complexity is unavoidable as contemporary environment through the advancement of economy, education and technologies have altered every facets of the world including the lifestyles. As reported by Morris and Madsen, (2007), modernization and technology advancement have given significant impact towards the family life as everything like commodities, utilities, apparel and anything related continuously increased.

The abovementioned phenomena have directly led to the changes in structures and compositions of the household for instance men are found no longer act as sole breadwinner for the family. According to Carrigan and Szmigin (2006) there is an increased in the number of women in the workforce as a quest for solution for family economy demand as reported by Gordon and Whelan-Berry (2004) that around 60 percent of American women with children under the age of six were in the work force in the year of 2002 and similar percentage of employed women occurred in the New Zealand (Lee and Beatty, 2002) as well as most countries in the globe. Rosin (1990) argued that the involvement of women in the work force not only contributes to the

family economy but also increase the country incomes and productivity.

In Malaysia, the increase number of women's participation in the labor force can be seen over the last three decades in line with the development of the world economies and export-oriented industrialization which according to Kaur (2000), the increase of women in the workforce cause by three main factors. First, the expanding of economy through the implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) since 1970 has created a range of jobs and provides more opportunities for women. The NEP was designed to eliminate the identification of race with occupation and state's diversification or industrialization strategies subsequent facilitate the flow of women into the modern sectors of the economy. Second, the equal access to education for both genders especially in the rural areas through educational reform resulted in a rising level of educational attainment among the women. The third reason due to the economic demand particularly related to the increase in families expenditure and the cost of living expenses. Based on Ninth Malaysia Plan (EMP, 2006), one third of Malaysian labor force is women.

Many researchers argued that the increase of women in the workforce have not result to a huge shift on their household responsibilities (Beck, 1998; Bonney et al., 1999; Autor, 1998). Women are believed of carrying the majority of responsibility for food in shaping their family. Thompson (1994) contended that women even those employed full time remains a central figure for care and food preparation. However, many working women with children have shown to feel frustrated and

defeated when they could not organized regular proper family meal or homemade cooking due to their engagement with the office work especially during working days (Moisio et al., 2004). Thompson (1994) identified the regret expressed by American working women who resort to fast food option or convenience food for their family dinner. Family meals especially dinner in fact were problematic and complex in the present days than in the past for most of the working women (Romani, 2005). Bearing this point in mind, it raises critical questions whether the same phenomena happen among the working women in Malaysia. Therefore, this paper aims to examine the working women knowledge on the meaning of homemade cooking, convenient cooking, ready cooked food and eating out.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Food and cooking*

Everyone would agree that food is a universal necessity for living things to survive and to gain and maintain energy as it contains nutrients like vitamins, minerals, fiber and many others. Although some foods can be eaten raw but most of them cannot be consumed without applying heat into it or through the process which universally known as cooking. Drummond and Brefere (2001) argued that human beings make a tremendous effort to transform the raw food into something that is more digestible. Brownlie et al. (2005) looking from different lens contended there is a strong relationship between food and cooking and they are very much related to our daily life and the availability on type of food, style of preparation and cooking. Steele (1992) posited that as early as three thousand years ago in food cultural history, food and cooking has been integrated to form an acceptable system such as selecting the right kinds of ingredients, preparation, method of cooking and eating manners or decorum. In term of preparation, different groups have different style of food preparation (Senauer et al., 1991) and it is depending on the availability of the ingredients and resources (Wyke & Landman, 1997).

Despite the above notion, Martinez (1998) argues that food is just like living things which are sensitive as well as it involves changes and modernization through industrialization and urbanization are initiated to have a major impact on food (Cwierka, 2000). According to Gillette (1997) some behavioral shifts are occurring in the preparation and consumption of food which largely associated with modernization. Modernization in fact not only affects on daily food practices but also in traditional events, celebration as well as ceremony. This phenomenon extensively shapes the food even the production, processing, distribution (Sobal et al., 1998; Sobal, 1999). Jussaume (2001) articulated that the modernization of food production, distribution as well as consumption is encouraged by business and policy makers.

In different vein, Sheely (2008) identified the lifestyles issues which drive the demand for

convenience foods and the changing of household structures, higher females' participation in labor force and longer working hours, consumer prosperity and technology ownership has created issues pertaining to food preparation and cooking between the homemade and convenient.

2.2 *Home cooking versus convenience food*

Home cooking could be also symptomatic of a high involvement with cooking and eating meal at home (Murcott, 1995). Mintz (1996) stated since the last twenty years there were still an argumentation concerning to traditional cooking skills however home cooking is still believed to turned the raw ingredients into complete suitable dishes for the family. This term further evolved when Short (2006) looked domestic cooking or homemade cooking as real, traditional and using self culinary skilled. Costa (2007) retrospect homemade food as the types of food which are prepared from scratch with raw ingredients and a chosen cooking methods and seasoning. Short (2006) on the other hand posited that in depth investigation need to be done to understand the complexity of knowledge and skill involved in homemade food preparation as it includes fresh basic ingredients, preparation and cooking method (Caraher, Dixon, Lang, & Carr-Hill, 1999; Lang, Caraher, Dixon, & Carr-Hill, 1999; Short, 2003).

Convenience food refers to any food products that come out of packet or a tin or food products convenience to obtain (Carrigan et al., 2006). Ritzer (1996) and Fieldhouse (1995) argued that the rise in women in the waged labor force has created markets for convenience foods and the social trends has moved cooking at home which is from scratch or basic ingredients to a post modern or consumer society that relies on the labor of others with ready prepared foods. Dual income households and busy families or couples with somewhat larger disposable income have increased the use of convenience foods (De Boer, McCarthy, Cowen & Ryan, 2004).

2.3 *Working women and cooking*

According to Potuchek (1997) the role of women were gradually changed when more and more of them are venturing into workforce and making money for the family unlike before postmodern era, in line with technology and other circumstances changes (Bonke, 1996). Many argued that although working women are still obliged with the household obligation (Levenstein, 1993; Burud and Tumolo, 2004), Ekström (1990); Menell, Murcott and van Otterloo (1992) argued that working women are also involved in providing food for family. According to Moisio et al., (2004), food plays an important part in the production of family identities and women's characteristics are still connected to household food preparation and their duties of concern (Bugge, 2003).

Devine et. al., (2003) articulated people eating pattern are altered to a great extent due to time restrictions and most people do not have a lot of free time to cook meals and to prepare foods. Verlegh and Candel, (1999) believed that time pressure the working women with regards to meal preparation and convenience food reflects a tendency to minimize the time and effort that is put into the preparation of meals. Thompson (1996; 1999) examined working women's experiences of time scarcity and the task oriented on the nature of mother's due working outside home. Duxbury et al., (2007) highlight the unique challenges faced by families who are simultaneously balancing the demands of two working partners with children at home. The debate around mothers and food inevitably involves consideration of the morality that pervades any discussion of "homemade versus convenience" (Warde, 1999; Moisio et al., 2004). Carrigan and Szmigin (2006) revealed that in spite of their kitchen emancipation and legitimately busy lives, many women still harbored "guilt trips" by preparing meals from scratch for their families. Qualls, (1987) noted the prevalence of working women outside the home is not only because of the necessity to supplement the family's income but it is also due to the changes of cultural norms and societal standards. Warde (1999) highlights the conceptual opposition between convenience and care in the context of food preparation. He noted that those who use convenience food are somehow fail in their household duties.

3 METHODOLOGY

Based on the literatures, a few qualitative studies related to women and cooking were found however, since this research aims to reach large number of respondents and is looking at the routine of cooking among the working women, quantitative approach is found to be the most appropriate method to be implemented. In addition, this approach enables the researcher to collect a significant amount of data within a restricted time frame (Ticehurst & Veal, 2005) and also allows the assessment of attitudes, opinions, experience, demographic information, conditions and the characteristics of variables in a situation. Taking into consideration that the working women is busy, therefore self-administered questionnaire would be the best in gathering information from them. Full time working women either those in the government or private sector, age between 25 to 50 years old, had servant and at least having one or more child living in the household are chosen as a sample. Samples were informed that the involvement for this research is voluntary and further explained that data are treated as confidential. Without any obvious problem with regard to either instrument or data collection process, 334 questionnaires were successfully collected. All data were then coded and keyed in for analysis.

Table 1. The number and percentage (%) of the overall respondents' knowledge

Item No.	Variables	All	
		n	%
<i>Q1. What is freshly cooked food (homemade) mean to you?</i>			
i.	Food prepare from scratch with raw ingredients with a chosen cooking methods	307	91.9
ii.	Food prepare from products either cooked, canned, chilled or frozen.	17	5.1
iii.	Ready cooked food (<i>bungkus/tapau</i>) buying from restaurants or stall	10	3.0
<i>Q2. What is ready to cook food (convenience) mean to you?</i>			
i.	Food prepare from scratch with raw ingredients with a chosen cooking methods	11	3.4
ii.	Food prepare from products either cooked, canned, chilled or frozen.	294	88.0
iii.	Ready cooked food (<i>bungkus/tapau</i>) buying from restaurants or stall	29	8.7
<i>Q3. What is ready cooked food (bungkus/tapau) mean to you?</i>			
i.	Food prepare from scratch with raw ingredients with a chosen cooking methods	11	3.3
ii.	Ready cooked food (<i>bungkus/tapau</i>) buying from restaurants or stall	313	93.7
iii.	Eating out at a restaurant	10	3.0
<i>Q4. What does eating out mean to you?</i>			
i.	Ready cooked food (<i>bungkus/tapau</i>) buying from restaurants or stall	16	4.8
ii.	Eating out at a restaurant	318	95.2

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Respondents' knowledge

In addressing one of the objectives of this paper, four items were used to identify the respondents' knowledge on the meaning of home cooking, convenience cooking, ready cooked food and eating out. The results are shown in Table 1.

From the frequency test, 91.9 percent (n = 307). Of the working women in this sample understand home cooking. On convenience food, 88 percent (n = 294) understand that this term refer to food prepare from products either cooked, canned, chilled or frozen. With regards to ready cooked food or *bungkus/tapau*, 93.7 percent (n = 313) of the respondents understand that ready cooked food is food buying from restaurant or stall. Finally, 95.2 percent, (n = 318) recognize the concept of eating out. This result clearly indicates all working women in this sample understood the meaning of home cooking, convenience cooking, ready cooked food and eating out.

5 CONCLUSION

It was apparent and obvious that the working women in the sample comprehend or understood the meaning of home cooking, ready cooked food (*bungkus/tapau*)

and eating out. This result indicated that the working women in the sample are knowledgeable and familiar with all the terms and also well fit with the majority respondents' level of education. It is no exaggeration to say that paid working is becoming a necessity and one of the most important elements in this modern era for bachelor and family couples in combating with the economic needs especially working need to scarifies themselves many things including one of the crucial household responsibility that is cooking.

REFERENCES

- Autor, D. H., Katz, L. F., & Krueger, A. B. 1998. Computing inequality: Have computers changed the labor market?. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 1169–1214.
- Beck, B. 1998. Women and work: At the double. *The Economist*, 348 (8077).
- Bonke, J. 1996. Economics influences on food choice-non-convenience versus convenience food consumption. In H. L. Meiselmann & H. J. H. MacFie (Eds.), *Food choice, acceptance and consumption*, 293–318. London: Chapman & Hall.
- Bonney, J. F., Kelley, M. L., & Levant, R. F. 1999. A model of fathers' behavioral involvement in child care in dual-earner families. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 13(3), 401–415.
- Brownlie, D., Hewer, P., & Horne, S. 2005. Culinary tourism: An exploratory reading of contemporary representations of cooking. *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, 8(1), 7–26.
- Bugge, A. B. 2003. *Cooking as identity work*. Paper presented at the 6th Conference of the European Sociological Association, Murcia, Spain.
- Burud, S., & Tumolo, M. 2004. *Leveraging the new human capital: Adaptive strategies, results achieved, and stories of transformation*. Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Publishing.
- Caraher, M., Dixon, P., Lang, T., & Carr-Hill, R. 1999. The state of cooking in England: The relationship of cooking skills to food choice. *British Food Journal*, 101(8), 590–609.
- Carrigan, M., & Szmigin, I. 2006. Mothers of invention: Maternal empowerment and convenience consumption. *European Journal of Marketing*, 40(9/10), 1122–1142.
- Carrigan, M., Szmigin, I., & Leek, S. 2006. Managing routine food choices in UK families: The role of convenience consumption. *Appetite*, 47, 372–383.
- Costa, A.I.A., Schoolmeester, D., Dekker, M., & Jongen, W. M. F. 2007. To cook or not to cook: A means-end study of the motivations behind meal choice. *Food Quality and Preference*, 18, 77–88.
- Cwiertka, K. J. 2000. Encounters and traditions in foodways: Japan and the west. *Food Culture*, 8–11.
- De Boer, M., McCarthy, M., Cowan, C.A., & Ryan, I. 2004. The influence of lifestyle characteristics and beliefs about convenience foods on the demand for convenience foods in the Irish market. *Food Quality and Preference*, 15(2), 155–165.
- Devine, C., Connors, M., Sobal, J., & Bisogni, C. 2003. Sandwiching it in: Spillover of work onto food choices and family roles in low and moderate-income urban households. *Social Science and Medicine*, 56, 617–630.
- Drummond, K. E. & Brefere, L. M. 2001. *Nutrition for food-service and culinary professionals*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc..
- Duxbury, L., Lyons, S., & Higgins, C. 2007. Dual income families in the New Millennium: Reconceptualizing family type. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 9(4), 472–486.
- Ekström, M. 1990. *Food Preparation, class and gender*. Umeå Studies in Sociology no. 98. Umeå: Umeå University.
- Fieldhouse, P. 1995. *Food and nutrition, customs and culture* (2nd ed.). London, UK: Chapman and Hall.
- Gillette, B. M. 1997. *Contemporary Chinese Muslims (Hui) remember ethnic conflict: Stories of the late 19th century "Hui Uprising" from Xian*. Paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies meeting, Chicago, United State of America.
- Gordon, J. R., & Whelan-Berry, K. S. 2004. It takes two to tango: An empirical study of perceived spousal/partner support for working women. *Women in Management Review*, 19(5), 260–273.
- Hughes, J. & Stone, W. 2006. Family change and community life – An empirical investigation of the decline thesis in Australia. *Journal of Sociology*, 42, 242–268.
- Jussaume Jr., R. A. 2001. Factors associated with modern urban Chinese food consumption patterns. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 10(27), 219–232.
- Kaur, A. 2000. Working on the global conveyor belt: Women workers in industrializing Malaysia. *Asian Study Review*, 24(2), 213.
- Lang, T., Caraher, M., Dixon, P., & Carr-Hill, R. 1999. *Cooking skills and health*. London, UK: Health Education Authority.
- Lee, C. K. C., & Beatty, S. E. 2002. Family structure and influence in family decision making. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 19(1), 24–41.
- Levenstein, H. A. 1993. *Paradox of plenty: A social history of eating in modern America*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Martinez, R. O. 1998. Globalization and the social sciences. *The Social Science Journal*, 35, 601–613.
- Menell, S., Murcott, A., & van Otterloo, A. H. 1992. *The sociology of food: Eating, diet and culture*. London: Sage Publications.
- Mintz, S. 1996. *Tasting food, tasting freedom: Excursions into eating, culture and the past*. Boston, USA: Beacon.
- Moisio, R., Arnould, E. J., & Price, L. L. 2004. Between mothers and markets: Constructing family identity through homemade food. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 4(3), 361–384.
- Morris, M. L. & Madsen, S. R. 2007. Advancing work-life integration in individuals, organizations, and communities [Special edition]. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 9, 439–454.
- Murcott, A. 1995. Raw cooked and proper meals at home. In D. Marshall (Ed.), *Food Choice and the Consumer*, 219–234. Glasgow: Blackie Academic & Professional.
- Ninth Malaysian Plan Report 2006–2010. Retrieved on December 15th, 2010 from <http://www.epu.jpm.my/rm9>.
- Oswald, L. 2003. Branding the American family: A strategic study of the culture, composition and consumer behavior of families in the New Millennium. *Journal of Popular Culture*, 37(2), 309–335.
- Potuchek, J. L. 1997. *Who supports family? Gender and breadwinning in dual-earner marriages*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

- Qualls, W. J. 1987. Household decision behavior: The impact of husbands' and wives' sex role orientation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 14, 264–279.
- Ritzer, G. 1996. *The McDonaldization of society*. California, USA: Pine Forge Press.
- Rosini, S. 2005, June 15-18. *Feeding post-modern families: Food preparation and consumption practices in new family structures*. Paper presented at the European Association for Consumer Research Conference, EACR 2005, Goteborg.
- Rosin, H. M. 1990. The effects of dual career participation on men: some determinants of variation in career and personal satisfaction. *Human Relations*, 43(2), 169–183.
- Senauer, B., Asp, E., & Kinsley, J. 1991. *Food trends and the changing consumer*. Saint Paul: Eagle Press.
- Sheely, M. 2008. Global adoption of convenience food. *American Journal Agro Economic*, 90(5), 1356–1365.
- Short, F. 2003. Domestic cooking skills-what are they?. *Journal of the HEIA*, 10(3), 13–22.
- Short, F. 2006. *Kitchen secrets: The meaning of cooking in everyday life*. Oxford, UK: Berg Publishers.
- Sobal, J. 1999. Food system globalization, eating transformation and nutrition transitions. In Grew, R. (ed.) *Food in Global history*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Sobal, J., Khan, L. K., & Bisogni, C. A. 1998. A conceptual model of the food and nutrition system. *Journal of Social Science and Medicine*, 47, 853–863.
- Steele, C.M. 1992. Race and schooling of Black Americans. *Atlantic Monthly*, 68–78.
- Thompson, C. J. 1994. A phenomenological exploration on the experience of time scarcity. In G. Morello (Ed.), *Proceedings of ISIDA seminar, time perception in marketing and social research*, 79–96.
- Thompson, C. J. 1996. Caring consumers: Gendered consumption meanings and the juggling lifestyle. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22, 388–407.
- Thompson, C. J. 1999. Living the texts of everyday life: A hermeneutic perspective on the relationships between consumer stories and life-world structures. In Stern, B. (ed.), *Representing consumers: Voices, views and visions*. London: Routledge.
- Ticehurst, G. W. & Veal, A. J. 2005. *Business Research Methods: A Managerial Approach* (2nd ed.). Australia: Pearson Education Australia.
- Verlegh, P. W. J., & Candel, M. J. J. M. 1999. The consumption of convenience foods: Reference groups and eating situations. *Food Quality and Preference*, 10(6), 457–464.
- Warde, A. 1999. Convenience food: Space and timing. *British Food Journal*, 10(7), 518–527.
- Wyke, S. & Landman, J. 1997. Healthy eating? Diet and cuisine amongst Scottish South Asian People. *British Food Journal*, 99(1), 27–36.

This page intentionally left blank

Indigenous food and destination marketing

Debbie Ferdinand Moginon, Toh Poh See & Mazni Saad
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The emergence of food tourism has received immense good response leading to countries putting an emphasis on the development of food within their tourism product offering. The significance of the relationship between food and tourism cannot simply be ignored as food can be a draw or motivator towards a destination for many; where local, regional or indigenous foods play a role in terms of being a tool for tourism and marketing for a particular destination. Due to their link with local cultural experiences, tasting local food and beverages has been found to not only appease hunger but also serve as one of the unique and original attractions during a holiday. The promotion of local and regional food will not only elevate the tourism industry but also contributes towards tourism sustainability as it leads to preservation of culinary heritage as well as adding value to a destination's authenticity (du Rand and Heath, 2006). There is a need to use food unique to a destination as an effective marketing tool and at the same time take into account how to develop food as part of a cultural tourism product for a destination in a sustainable way. The use of this kind of food can be effectively incorporated in the tourism marketing of a destination by taking into account aspects such as: (1) factors that influence tourists or travellers to experience local food and beverages on trips and holidays, (2) satisfying tourists' palette without compromising its original state, (3) developing a clear and consistent 'food identity', and (4) the issue of preserving the local distinctiveness valued by tourists especially in the face of globalization pressures. More work appears to be in need with regard to the potentials of indigenous food in elevating the tourism industry. The purpose of this paper is to assess the viability and potentiality of indigenous food as an effective marketing or promotion tool for a destination's cultural tourism development.

Keywords: Indigenous/local/traditional food, food tourism, destination marketing

1 INTRODUCTION

The existence of relationships between food and tourism has become increasingly important in the academic research and debate in recent years (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Henderson, 2009; Karim, 2006; Kim, Eves and Scarles, 2009; Shenoy, 2005; Telfer and Wall, 1996). Despite the fact that food and tourism have long been closely interrelated, it is only recently that the roles by which food plays in attracting tourists to a destination have come to be clearly recognized by governments, researchers and by the food and tourism industries (Tikkanen, 2007). The emergence of food tourism has also received immense good response leading to countries putting an emphasis on the development of food within their tourism product offering.

Henderson (2009) indicated that food has assumed a prominent role in the decision-making of tourist, thus, it can be such a useful tool of destination and general development. What is more, there is an increasing number of travellers expressing that food is in fact a key aspect of the travel experience and have interest in local as well as regional foods as they believe that in order to understand the culture of a particular country,

it is important for them to experience a country's food (Conde Nast Publications, 2001 cited in O'Halloran and Deale, 2004, p. 2). Thus, the significance of the relationship between food and tourism cannot simply be ignored as food can be a draw or motivator towards a destination for many; where local, regional, traditional or indigenous foods play a role in terms of being a tool for tourism and marketing for a particular destination.

Food has such cultural and tourism development potential, in particular indigenous food as it symbolizes a particular ethnic group or destination which not only makes it unique but distinct. Moreover, du Rand and Heath (2006) put forward that the promotion of local and regional food will lead to preservation of culinary heritage as well as adding value to a destination's authenticity.

More work appears to be in need with regard to the potentials of indigenous food in elevating the tourism industry. This will also pave the way towards the preservation and sustainability of cultural tourism development for a destination. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to assess the viability and potentiality of indigenous food as an effective marketing or promotion tool for a destination's cultural tourism development.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Food and tourism*

Food plays such an important role in the lives of people regardless of different walks of life. It seems that the role of food is no longer on sustaining life alone, but has expanded beyond its functional role. "Indeed, in certain situations around the globe, the promise of an exciting food and drink, or experience, can be the driving force that motivates and enthralls people to visit certain holiday destinations" (Sharples, 2003). Thus, food and beverages consumption may be a key reason for travellers to visit a particular destination, hence, contributing to the economy of tourist destinations (Kim, Eves and Scarles, 2009). Food tourism shapes gastro destinations such as France, Italy and California whereas in emerging destinations such as Croatia, Vietnam and Mexico, food plays an important part of the overall experience (Yeoman, 2008). Furthermore, the increase in culinary travel has led to more and more specialized operators offering food and wine holidays in various emerging food tourism markets such as Australia, Chile, Mexico, Turkey, Croatia, Austria and Switzerland (Travel guides, 2009). Additionally, in response to the increasing importance of food and beverages in holiday or travel experience as well as one of the main reasons for travel, tourism bodies or the countries around the world are now focusing on the idea of promoting and marketing food itself within the total tourism experience.

2.2 *Potential role of indigenous food in tourism destination marketing*

With reference to past studies, the term traditional food, local food, regional food and indigenous food have been used interchangeably (du Rand, Heath and Alberts, 2003; Kim, Eves and Scarles, 2009; Sims, 2009; Torres, 2002). According to Sims (2009) there is an apparent synergy around the themes of local food, sustainable tourism and authenticity. Thus, it can be concluded that local food can be perceived as being traditional and indigenous as well. Indigenous or traditional food may also be attributed to food of a particular ethnic group as such indigenous group or tribe in a particular destination or the destination itself. Indigenous food is enjoyed by tourists, particularly items of local or ethnic nature (Wagner, 2001). Kim, Eves and Scarles (2009) applied a grounded theory approach in order to obtain insight into the local food experiences and found that tasting local food and beverages not only appease hunger but also serve as one of the unique and original attractions during a holiday due to their link with local cultural experiences. As Hjalager and Richards (2002) put it; tasting local food can serve as both a cultural activity and entertainment, thus making it an essential part of the tourism experience. It was found from manifold empirical studies that desire to have a unique experience serves as a drive that make tourists become attracted to food such as regional and ethnic foods (Reynolds, 1993; Hall et al, 2003;

Cohen and Avieli, 2004). This is because local foods are considered as "iconic" products that capture the "typical" nature of a particular place (Bessière, 1998; Urry, 1990).

"Food is considered as a reflection of the culture of a country and its people. It is therefore the ideal products to offer as an attraction in a destination and has many possibilities to be used as a marketing tool" (du Rand and Heath, 2006, p. 207). Reynolds (1993) conducted a case study on Balinese food and found that many visitors are searching for the genuine and authentic, believed to be found in local foods. The importance of regional food in tourism was also highlighted by Torres (2002) who identified that some tourists were upset because of insufficient information concerning regional or local cuisine as well as few chances to sample those foods. It seems that food can become a draw to a destination because tourists can experience the culture in that particular destination via its food. This is in line with what has been indicated by Hu and Ritchie (1993) with regard to the significant relationship between food and culture, where food may serve as a mean of cultural motivators. This is because when experiencing new local cuisines, tourists are also experiencing a new culture (Fields, 2002). Karim (2006) also noted that it is well known that food plays a key role in drawing tourists to a particular destination due to its reflection of a region's culture and religion as travellers have always been in the lookout for something which is authentic and connoted that visitors can be attracted to a particular destination because of authentic and interesting food. The author further commented that some tourists travel to a destination just to enjoy the traditional or authentic cuisine that might not be available in other places or destinations as well as tourists who travel in order to look for special food ingredients. This is in line with Torres (2002) who stated that as tourists are more likely to be experimental and search out 'exotic' and 'indigenous' foods, hence fostering greater demand for local products. What is more, Yeoman (2008) noted that tourists are now searching for uniqueness within the encapsulation of individualism, which is searching out for local, fresh and good quality cuisine that reflects the authenticity of the destination.

2.3 *Food and sustainable tourism*

Other than contributing towards the sustainable competitiveness of a destination (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999), local and regional food can also directly or indirectly contribute to the various elements of sustainability in a particular area (du Rand, Heath and Alberts, 2003). These areas include agricultural activity, authentic exploitation, attraction enhancement, community empowerment, pride generation and branding identity (Telfer and Wall, 1996). Sims (2009) conducted qualitative interviews with tourists and food producers of both two UK regions, the Lake District and Exmoor and conceptualized local foods as "authentic" products that symbolize a destination's

place and culture. It is also argued in that local food can play an important role in the sustainable tourism experience as it appeals to the desire of the visitors for authenticity during the holiday (Sims, 2009). What is more, culminating from past literature Sims (2009) further posited that “local” food plays an essential role within sustainable tourism as it encompasses everything from food safety concerns, agriculture impacts on the rural environment to the demands of visitors for a more “authentic” tourist experiences. As Lockie (2001) put it, food itself carries a large number of symbolic meanings as it is often intertwined with the social, cultural and natural characteristics of a specific region. Food plays a role in sustainable tourism agenda as it aids in the increased of local food consumption among tourists which ultimately be of benefit to the local economy by means of multiplier effect (Torres, 2002). On the other hand, with regard to environmental issues, “buying local” or purchasing a specialty food like indigenous food only within the destination would be beneficial to the tourism industry as this reduce carbon footprint (Boniface, 2003; Mitchell and Hall, 2003).

3 DISCUSSION

Food tourism is highly viable and has good prospects to be developed further due to the fact that everyone eats no matter where they go to. Local or food of ethnic nature which can be coined as indigenous food may serve as an attraction for tourists to patronize a particular destination. However, it is imperative to consider and plan how the use of this kind of food can be effectively incorporated in the tourism marketing of a destination so that it also contribute towards the destination’s cultural tourism development. A myriad of criteria need to be considered heavily when planning and devising strategy for the use and development of indigenous food as an effective tourism marketing tool, one of them is the degree of its appeal to attract visitors. This is because during a trip or vacation, some travellers might have the passion to try foods of other cultures or those who have the curiosity on different foods while some may look for kinds of food similar to those eaten at home (Karim, 2006). For instance, Cohen and Avieli (2004) conducted a study on food in tourism with regard to its role as both an attraction and impediment and found that modern westerners have been exposed to an increasing variety of foreign cuisines, hence, feeling acquainted with them, despite have not yet visited the places in which these cuisines originated. Attempts have also been undertaken to examine the factors that influence tourists or travellers to experience local food and beverages on trips and holidays (Fields, 2002; Kim, Eves and Scarles, 2009; Ryu and Jang, 2006; Sparks, 2007).

It is crucial that the food is not changed or altered with the sole aim of matching and suiting the taste of foreign tourists as this would exert further implications with respect to the sustainability of the community

(Chappel, 2001, cited in du Rand, Heath and Alberts, 2003). There is definitely a need for proper planning and coordination to ensure that indigenous food can serve as both an income generating activity and cultural enhancement activity (du Rand, Heath and Alberts, 2003).

Despite of its potential in the tourism realm, particularly cultural tourism, there can be an issue of developing a clear and consistent ‘food identity’ which was evident in the marketing and branding of Taiwan as a culinary tourism destination (Lin, Pearson and Cai, 2011). This is especially true if a particular destination is made up of various regions populated by various ethnic groups. The Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) also experienced the challenges of defining Canadian cuisine as its culinary traditions have been influenced by a long history of immigration, together with regional product availability (Hashimoto and Telfer, 2006).

There is also an issue of preserving the local distinctiveness valued by tourists especially in the face of globalization pressures (Henderson, 2009). There is a trend towards universal standardization and homogenization, reflected by the spread of fast food chains (Alfino and Wynyard, 1998, as cited in Henderson, 2009). People’s eating behavior for example has been affected by food globalization for instance “McDonalds” has been a common trend in most countries all over the world (Hall and Mitchell, 2000).

4 CONCLUSION

It is apparent that there is a significant relationship between food and tourism, where local, traditional or indigenous foods also play such important role in terms of being a tool for tourism and destination marketing for a particular destination. What is more, the promotion of local and regional food will not only elevate the tourism industry but also leads to preservation of culinary heritage as well as adding value to a destination’s authenticity (du Rand and Heath, 2006). It can be concluded that there is a need to use food unique to a destination as an effective marketing tool and at the same time take into account how to develop food as part of a cultural tourism product for a destination in a sustainable way. All these are made possible due to its viability and potentiality to be incorporated as part of cultural tourism development for a particular destination. With this, the potentiality of indigenous food for instance is geared towards an optimized destination’s cultural tourism development, creating a win-win situation to all stakeholders as well as the sustainability of the food heritage itself.

REFERENCES

- Bessière, J. 1998. Local development and heritage: Traditional food and cuisine as tourist attractions in rural areas. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 38, 21–34.
- Boniface, P. 2003. Tasting tourism: Travelling for food and drink. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

- Cohen, E., and Avieli, N. 2004. Food in tourism: Attractions and impediment. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(4), 755–778.
- Crouch, G. I., and Ritchie, J. R. B. 1999. Tourism, competitiveness and social prosperity. *Journal of Business Research*, 44, 137–152.
- du Rand, G. E., and Heath, E. 2006. Towards a framework for food tourism as an element of destination marketing. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 9(3), 206–234.
- du Rand, G. E., Heath, E., and Alberts, N. 2003. The role of local and regional food in destination marketing: A South African situation analysis. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 14(3/4), 37–52.
- Hall, C. M., and Mitchell, R. 2000. “We are what we eat”. Food, tourism and globalization. *Tourism, Culture and Communications*, 2(1), 29–37.
- Hall, C. M., Sharples, L., Mitchell, R., Macions, N., and Cambourne, B. (eds.) 2003. *Food Tourism around the World: Development, Management and Markets*. Boston, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Hashimoto, A., and Telfer, D. J. 2006. Selling Canadian culinary tourism: Branding the global and the regional product. *Tourism Geographies*, 8(1), 31–55.
- Henderson, J. C. 2009. Food tourism reviewed. *British Food Journal*, 111(4), 317–326.
- Hjalager, A., Richards, G. 2002. *Tourism and Gastronomy*. London: Routledge.
- Hu, Y., and Ritchie, J. 1993. Measuring destination attractiveness: A contextual approach. *Journal of Travel Research*, 32, 25–34.
- Karim, S. A. 2006. Culinary tourism as a destination attraction: An empirical examination of the destination’s food image and information sources. Published doctor of philosophy thesis, Oklahoma State University.
- Kim, Y. G., Eves, A. and Scarles, C. 2009. Building a model of local food consumption on trips and holidays: A grounded theory approach. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28, 423–431.
- Lin, Y.-C., Pearson, T. E., and Cai, L. A. 2011. Food as a form of destination identity: A tourism destination brand perspective. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 11(1), 30–48.
- Lockie, S. 2001. Food, place and identity: Consuming Australia’s ‘beef capital’. *Journal of Sociology*, 37(3), 239–255.
- Mitchell, R., & Hall, C. 2003. Consuming tourists: Food tourism consumer behaviour. In C. Hall (Ed.), *Food tourism around the world: Development, management and markets*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- O’Halloran, R.M., and Deale, C.S. 2004. Food tourism: creating and positioning a supply chain. Paper and Proceedings for Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC), Laval City, Quebec Canada, June 2004.
- Reynolds, P. 1993. Food and Tourism: Towards an understanding of sustainable culture. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1(1), 48–54.
- Ryu, K., J fs fcang, S., 2006. Intention to experience local cuisine in a travel destination: The modified theory of reasonable action. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 30(4), 507–516.
- Sharples, L. 2003. Food tourism in the Peak District National Park, England. In Hall, C. M., Sharples, L., Mitchell, R., Macionis, R. and Cambourne, B. (Eds), *Food Tourism Around the World: Development, Management and Markets*. Elsevier Ltd.
- Shenoy, S. S. 2005. *Food Tourism and the Culinary Tourist*. Published doctor of philosophy thesis, Clemson University.
- Sims, R. 2009. Food, place and authenticity: Local food and the sustainable tourism experience. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 17(3), 321–336.
- Sparks, B. 2007. Planning a wine tourism vacation? Factors that help to predict tourist behavioral intentions. *Tourism Management*, 28, 1180–1192.
- Telfer, D., and Wall, G. 1996. Linkages between tourism and food production. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 23(3), 635–653.
- Tikkanen, I. 2007. Maslow’s hierarchy and food tourism in Finland: Five cases. *British Food Journal*, 109(9), 721–734.
- Torres, R. 2002. Toward a better understanding of the tourist and agricultural linkages in the Yucatan: Tourist food consumption and preferences. *Tourism Geographies*, 4(3), 282–306.
- Travel eguides. 2009. Food Tourism. Retrieved May 05, 2010 from <http://www.traveleguides.com/food-tourism.php>
- Urry, J. 1990. *The tourist gaze: Leisure and travel in contemporary societies*. London: Sage.
- Wagner, H. A. 2001. *Marrying food and travel ... culinary tourism*. Canada’s Food News, Foodservice Insights.
- Yeoman, I. 2008. Why food tourism is becoming more important? *Hospitality Net*. Retrieved May 05, 2010 from www.hospitalitynet.org/news/4037197.print

Acculturation, foodways and Malaysian food identity

I. Noriza, M.S. Mohd Zahari, M.S. Shazali & M. Rosmaliza
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

S. Hannita
Kementerian Belia dan Sukan, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The consumption and preparation of food popularly known as foodways give valuable insights into the community that performs the acts. Foodways through their preparation and consumption are work like a sign system that transcend time and space. They bring meaning from one reality (the past) into another and signal an individual's ethnic connections and competence. Foodways act as the connection between membership in a cultural community, group and significant for identity formation not only for the society but also for the nation. Many scholars claim that foodways of the various ethnic groups in multiracial countries play the biggest role in the country's food identity formation. Scholars also believed that acculturation through food knowledge/language, media and social interaction not only contributes to food culture adaptation among different ethnic groups but gradually creates a food identity. Through acculturation (food knowledge/language, media and social interaction), some of the Malaysian major ethnic foods like Chinese and Indian are believed to be adjusted and adapted by Malay ethnic through the foodways (preparation and consumption) and in turn moderates the Malaysian food identity. Thus, this paper conceptually discusses the links between acculturation, foodways and Malaysian food identity.

Keywords: Foodways, acculturation, Malaysian food identity

1 INTRODUCTION

Many scholars unanimously agree that identity formation is one the important subject facing by the individual, groups, organizations, societies, politics and countries (Erikson, (1994). Many countries, even culturally homogeneous nations, are still concerned with the formation of identity and social integration among the ethnic groups (Phinney and Rosenthal, 1992). This issue is more critical for the multicultural nations (Alba, 1990) and some are reported to be struggling to develop their identity formation and social integration. America, for instance, as a multicultural super power and a well established nation is continually searching for the best mechanism to achieve a well accepted identity and social integration (Shane, 1994). Scholars (Berg, 1997 and Schierup, 1988) contend that identity formation through integration among the different groups is important as it is endorsed by the power structure of society. As society becomes more complex, common perceptions of identity are considered to be an important issue (Frale, 1997; and Demo, 1992). Education, the economy and other methods are used for identity formation and social integration in multicultural nations (Sizuki, 1984; Takaki, 1989). The equal division of wealth and educational opportunities among the different races is the mechanism applied in

creating and strengthening identity formation. Social theories Tajfel & Turner, 1986; and Lipiansky, 1998) seek to explain identity formation, how it develops, what factors facilitate and inhibit it, and what results from it (Schollier, 2001).

Principally, identity formation is a continual process and serves as the psychological locus of cultural effects and functions as a mediating, orienting and interpretive framework that will form a domain which socio cultural groups feel, act and accept (De Mouji, 2004). In other words, if personal identity consists of value sets, beliefs and other similar aspects that distinguish us from other social groups, national identity is the internalization of elements that have been gathered from the group or groups to which a nation belongs (Erikson, 1980). In this sense, the culture and identity of a nation comprise of many aspects. They are shaped and molded by the background of the people, their languages and beliefs. If it does not have these factors, a nation cannot learn how to shape itself, and how to establish its identity. A nation also cannot define its people from others. This is because each nation has a unique culture that the people or society can share with the rest of the world through their identity. When a nation is very sure of its identity, it tends to have a clear focus on what it wants in a positive manner (Turner and Oakes, 1997; Ratnasingam, 2010). As reported,

countless efforts have been made by many countries in achieving the goal through social integration, education, economics, politics and excetera, of the country's identity formation.

Foodways, through their preparation and consumption work like a sign system, that can transcend time and space. They bring meaning from one reality (the past) into another and signal an individual's ethnic connections and competence (Kaplan, 1984). In this sense, foodways of the various ethnic groups in a multiracial country play the biggest role in the country's food identity formation.

Scholars claimed that acculturation through food knowledge/language, media and social interaction significantly contributes to food cultural adaptation among different ethnic groups (Cleveland, 2009; Shalom and Horenyk, 2004, Acculturation is the exchange of cultural features that results when groups of individuals with different cultures come into continuous contact; the original cultural patterns of either or both groups may be altered, but the groups remain distinct (Kottak, 2007). Rudmin (2003) refer to it as a process of learning the practices and customs of a new culture, acquiring the capability to function within the dominant culture while retaining one's original culture. In the context of this paper, some of the country major ethnic foods are believed to be adjusted and adapted by all the dominant ethnic groups through the foodways (preparation and consumption) and are gradually becoming what could be called Malaysian food. Based on this notion, it raises a critical question to what extent acculturation through food knowledge, media and social interaction influences the preparation, consumption and adaptation of other ethnics' food by the dominant group in the formation of a country food identity. This paper therefore conceptually discusses the matter.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Acculturation*

In general, acculturation is different in subtle ways from assimilation. It is a process of learning the practices and customs of a new culture, acquiring the capability to function within the dominant culture while retaining one's original culture. Rudmin, (2003) elucidated it as the interaction of at least two cultures, describing the process by which a person learns and adopts the norms and values of a different culture.

Marin, (1993) initially suggested that, as the contact continues; acculturation may also continue, become rapid or reach a stage of reaffirmation of traditional values. Berry (1980) proposed that upon contact, individuals undergo a process of slight changes in at least six areas of psychological functioning (language, cognitive styles, personality, identity, attitude and acculturative stress). The final outcome of the process may depend on factors such as the initial centrality to the individual of the particular values and

attitudes, the significance of the family as a reinforce of traditional values and as a change agent, and the importance and strength of societal change agents such as media, language, knowledge, friendships and laws (Marin, 1993).

While acculturation is a process of learning the practices and customs of a new culture, assimilation is the merging of cultural traits from previously distinct cultural groups which does not involve a biological incorporation (Berry, 1980). The transfer of customs is not simply a one-way process. Each group of immigrants contributes some of its own cultural traits to its new society. Assimilation usually involves a gradual change and takes place in varying degrees; full assimilation occurs when new members of a society become indistinguishable from older members. Immigrant assimilation is a complex process in which an immigrant fully integrates themselves into a new country. Social scientists rely on four primary benchmarks to assess immigrant assimilation: socioeconomic status, geographic distribution, second language attainment, and intermarriage (Waters and Jimenez 2005). Clark (2003) terms immigrant assimilation "as a way of understanding the social dynamics of society and that it is the process that occurs spontaneously and often unintended in the course of interaction between majority and minority groups".

Social scientists argue that assimilation sometimes allows one's original culture to be overridden by the dominant culture (Hirschman et al., 2004; Mintz & DuBois, 2002). Pluralists asserted that the various elements of culture in ethnic groups are slightly lessened while participating in the larger identity through acculturation and assimilation.

2.2 *Foodways*

Principally, foodways is a combination of two words which are 'food' and 'ways' and refers to the way food is prepared, served and consumed by human beings. Vast definitions of foodways have been given by theorists and scholars and indeed the precision of the term is not yet near to consensus. Many refer to this term as an act or behaviour which involves the preparation, presentation and consumption of food characterized by individuals and society (Gold, 2007 and Williams-Forson, 2007).

Camp (2009) posits foodways as a means to identify the identity of a community, age, ethnicity, gender, locale, occupation and religion. Some argue that foodways are closely related to the culture of foods, the tools, techniques and ingredients with which food is prepared and its customs (Verbeke & Lopez, 2005; Vu, 2009) and one of the best ways to understand a culture and ethnic identity (Scholliers, 2001). In fact, the relationship between food and people has been discussed by many scholars (Almli, Verbeke, Vanhonacker, Næs, & Hersleth, 2011; Cairns, Johnston, & Baumann, 2010; Flannery & Mincyte, 2010).

Counihan and Van Esterik (2008) in their book *Food and Culture: a Reader* state "food touches everything"

and some of the roles are aided by foodways. DiPiazza (2004) explain that foodways are a juncture of food and culture where the social members not only gather to eat, but are engaging in a ritual by which they strengthen and celebrate their social ties. The duality of the food practices makes them unique in that nature (biology and environment) and culture (beliefs and practices) affect the way people express and perform foodways. Foodways are also a key component of culture and sense of identity (Koc & Welsh, 2002). Rearick (2009) argued that when discussing the foodways one cannot make hard and fast differentiations between nature and culture, and in fact foodways and culture are inseparable.

2.3 Adaptation

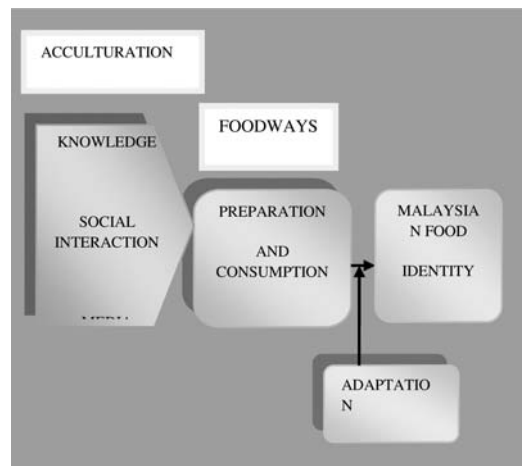
The term adaptation broadly refers to the process that people go through when trying to adjust to the differences they encounter in new cultural environments, thus becoming better suited for dealing with the extent challenges encountered in unfamiliar environments (Kim, Laroche and Tomiouk, 2001). Scholars have also explored the influence of cultural identity on individual's cross-cultural adaptation experiences (Berry, 1994; Sussman, 2002), and those studies stand out as ones that offer a unified perspective on the way individuals adjust to their environments. Several emergent theoretical frameworks have shown the interplay of cross-cultural transitions and cultural identity, which refers to an individual's identification with and a sense of belonging to groups that share similar values, meanings, and rules of conduct (Collier & Thomas, 1988). On a general level, adaptation refers to changes and modification of cultural manifestations that people undergo in order to fit themselves into a new environmental background (Kamal, 2005). Thus, humans adapt to their environment by either actively modifying their environment or passively accommodating to the environment (Ponterotto, 2010). Dévieux et al (2005) contends that the adaptation process involve an interwine of the components of the intervention with important principles, values, and realities of the new culture. In the context of this paper, adaptation denotes of how the preparation and consumption of certain acceptable Chinese and Indian foods by the Malays as a dominants ethnic form what could be called Malaysian food identity.

2.4 Malaysian food formation

During pre-independent era, each ethnic group in Malaysia particularly Malays, Chinese, Indians and others had distinctive and diverse types of food or culinary treasures. Each group was individualistic in cultural practices and food in particular (Othman et al, 2005). Cuisines and food cultures were largely confined to the respective communities and ethnocentric attitudes towards other races' food. In fact, each ethnic restaurant only accommodated to its own ethnic community. However, the progression of acculturation

and assimilation through the government's initiatives plus others since 1970s, or to be exact after the racial tension gradually united those ethnic groups. The integration processes undertaken are also believed to have created a dynamic growth of cross acculturation of food through its foodways (preparation and consumption) among the major ethnic groups. This is evident when many restaurants incorporated cuisines from one another in their menus and not to exaggerate that some of the popular foods from each ethnic group are accepted and prepared by one another. Some of the popular Chinese and Indian foods are adapted or altered by the Malays as a dominant ethnic group as long as they are halal. For instance, chicken rice, sweet and sour soup, idlee, prata, nasi kandar and many others are adjusted by the Malays by combining flavours and tastes to suit their palate and this similar is to Chinese and Indian.

Rudmin (2003) refer to it as a process of learning the practices and customs of a new culture, acquiring the capability to function within the dominant culture while retaining one's original culture. In this context, some of the Malaysian major ethnic foods are believed to be adjusted and adapted by Malay ethnic through the foodways (preparation and consumption). Cleveland (2009) noted that acculturation through food knowledge (reading, language, education) media (television, newspaper columns, and magazines) and social interaction (social gatherings, events, parties) is believed not only contribute to food cultural adaptation but gradually creates a food identity. The scenarios on the parameters or variables that might moderates Malaysian food identity are illustrated in the following conceptual framework. (Reading, language, education) media (television, newspaper columns, and magazines) and social interaction (social gatherings, events, parties) is believed not only contribute to food cultural adaptation but gradually creates a food identity. The scenarios on the parameters or variables that might moderates Malaysian food identity are illustrated in the following conceptual framework.



3 CONCLUSION

From the overall preceding argument, it is assumed that food identity in the multiracial countries like Malaysia is gradually being formed through acculturation (food knowledge, social interaction and media) of the foodways. Despite this, issues on food identity formation still received less attention among the researchers with no attempt to date made in the Malaysia context. Therefore, few questions arises related to these issues. Does acculturation through knowledge influence the Malay to prepare and consume food of other major Malaysian ethnic groups? Does acculturation through social interaction influence the Malay to prepare and consume food of other major Malaysian ethnic groups? Does acculturation through the media influence the Malay to prepare and consume food of other major Malaysian ethnic groups? To answer such questions besides creating literature and lay the groundwork, there is a necessity for the empirical studies specifically looking at the Malaysian perspective.

REFERENCES

- Alba, R. 1990. *Ethnic identity: transformation of white America*. New haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Almlí, V. L., Verbeke, W., Vanhonacker, F., Næs, T., & Hersleth, M. 2011. General image and attribute perceptions of traditional food in six European countries. [doi: DOI:10.1016/j.foodqual.2010.08.008]. *Food Quality and Preference*, 22(1), 129–138.
- Berg, M. 1997. Of forms, containers, and the electronic medical record: some tools for a sociology of the formal. *Journal of Science, Technology & Human Values*, 22, 403–433.
- Berry, J. W. 1980. Acculturation as varieties of adaptation. In A. M. Padilla (Ed.), *Acculturation: theory, models, and some new findings* (pp. 9–26) Boulder: Westview Press.
- Cairns, K., J. Johnston, et al. 2010. “Caring About Food.” *Gender & Society* 24(5): 591–615.
- Camp, C. 2009. Foodways. In Brunvard (Ed). *American Folklore: An Encyclopedia*. Taylor Francis.
- Clark, E. V. 2003 *First Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cleveland, M., Laroche, M., Pons, F., & Kastoun, R. 2009. Acculturation and consumption: textures of cultural adaptation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 33, 196–212.
- Collier, M. J., & Thomas, M. 1988. Identity in intercultural communication: An interpretive communication (pp. 99–120). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Counihan, C., & Van Esterik, P. 2008. *Food and Culture*, 2nd (Ed). New York: Routledge. p. 354–368.
- Cusak, I. 2003. Pots, pans and ‘eating out the body. *Cuisine and the gendering of African American nation. Nation and Nationalism*. 9, 277–296.
- De Mouji, M. 2004. *Consumer behavior and culture: Consequence for global marketing and advertising*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Demo, D. 1992. The self concept over time: research issues and direction. *Ann. Rev. Sociol.* 18, 303–326.
- Dévieux, J. G., Malow, R. M., Rosenberg, R., Jean-Gilles, M., Samuels, D., Ergon-Pérez, E., & Jacobs, R. 2005. *Cultural Adaptation in Translational Research: Field Experiences*. *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 82(2).
- DiPiazza, J. 2004. *Italian–American foodways: A personal and academic look into Sunday Dinner*. Retrieved on March 18, 2010 from website dialogues.rutgers.edu/vol_03/pdf_files/j_dipiazza.pdf.
- Erikson, E. 1980. *Identity and Life Cycle: Are issue*. New York: Norton.
- Erikson, E. 1994. *Identity and the Life Cycle* (3rd ed.), New York: Norton.
- Flannery, E., & Mincyte, D. 2010. Food as Power. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies*, 10(6), 423–427. doi: 10.1177/1532708610372763
- Frable, D. 1997. Gender, racial, ethnic, sexual, and class identities. *Ann. Rev. Psycho.* 48, 139–162.
- Gold, A. L. 2007. *Changing Foodways: Generational communication in a new American Refugee population*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. North Dakota: State University.
- Hirschman, E. C., Carscadden, N., Fleischauer, L., Hasak, M., & Mitchell, M. 2004, “Exploring the architecture of contemporary American foodways”, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 31, Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research, 548–553.
- Kamal A. M. 2005. *Folk Culture and Urban Adaptation. A Case Study of the Paharia in Rajshahi. Asian Folklore Studies*, Volume 64: 39–52.
- Kaplan, N. 1984. Security in infancy, childhood and adulthood: A move to the level of representation. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*. Vol. 50, 203–236.
- Kim, C., Laroche, M., & Tomiok, M. A. 2001. A measure of acculturation for Italian Canadians: scale development and construct validation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 25, 607–637.
- Koc, M., & Welsh, J. 2002. *Food, foodways and immigrant experience*. Canada: Centre of Studies in Food Security, Ryerson University.
- Kottak, C. 2007. *Windows on Humanity*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Lipiansky, E. M. 1998. How to shape the identity of groups, in Borbolan-Ruano, J. C. (ed). *The identity, individual. Group. Society. Human Sciences*, 143–150.
- Marin, G. 1993. In Bernal and Knight (Ed). *Ethnic Identity, Formation and Transmission among Hispanics and other Minorities*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Mintz, S., & DuBois, C. 2002. The anthropology of food and eating. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 31, 99–119.
- Othman, Z., and Zahari, M.S. 2005. *Customer Evaluation of Malay Restaurants in Shah Alam. Proceeding of the 2005 Tourism Educators of Malaysia Conference*.
- Phinney, J., & Rosenthal, D. 1992. Ethnic identity in adolescence: process, context, and outcome. In G. Adam, T. T. Gulotta, and R. Montemayor (Ed.), *Adolescent Identity Formation*, 145–172. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Ponterotto, J. G., Baluch, S., & Carielli, D. 1998. The Sunn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL ASIA): Critique and research recommendations. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 32, 109–134.
- Ratnasingam, M. 2010. National Identity: A subset of social identity? In *Ethnic relations and nation Building. The Way Forward*, (Ed.). Petaling Jaya: Sird.
- Rearick, A. N. 2009. “Food is something what we gather around”: Foodways practices among Arabs Americans in Columbus. Ohio: State University.

- Rudmin, F.W. 2003. Critical history of psychology of assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. *Review of General Psychology*, 7(1), 3–37.
- Schierup, C. U. 1988. *Integration/Immigrants, Culture and Society*. Copenhagen: Billies and Baltzer.
- Scholliers, P. 2001. *Food, Drink and Identity: Cooking, Eating and Drinking in Europe since the middle Ages* (Ed.). New York: Berg.
- Shalom, U. B., and Horenczyk, G. 2004. Cultural identity and adaptation in an assimilative setting. Immigrant soldiers from the former Soviet Union in Israel. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 28, 461–479.
- Shane, S. 1994. The effect of national culture on the choice between licensing and direct foreign investment. *Strategic Management Journal*, 15, 627–642.
- Sizuki, M. 1984. The Price of Affluence: Dilemmas of Contemporary Japan: Rokurô Hidaka. *Journal of Sociology*, 22: 309–310.
- Sussman, N. M. 2002. Testing the cultural identity model of the cultural transition cycle Sojourners return home. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 26, 391–408.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. 1986. The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel. And W.G. Austin (Eds.). *The Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.
- Takaki, R. 1989. *Strangers from a different shore: a history of Asian American*. Boston: Little Brown.
- Turner, J. C., & Oakes, P. J. 1997. The socially structured mind. In C. A. McGarty & S. A. Haslam (Eds.), *The message of social psychology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Verbeke, W., & Lopez, G. 2005. Ethnic food attitudes and behavior among Belgian and Hispanic living in Belgium. *British Food Journal*, 107, pp. 823–840.
- Vu, V. 2009. *The changing foodways of Vietnamese American in Orange County, California*. Unpublished Master Dissertation. California: California State University.
- Waters, M. C., & Jiménez, T. R. 2005. "Assessing Immigrant Assimilation: New Empirical and Theoretical Challenges". *Annual Review of sociology* 31, 105–126.
- Williams, F. 2007. More than just the big piece of Chicken. In Counihan, C. & Van Esterik, P. 2008. *Food and Culture*, 2nd (Ed.). New York: Routledge. pp. 354–368.

This page intentionally left blank

Traditional Food Knowledge (TFK) of Malay festive foods

Mohd. Shazali Md. Sharif, Mohd. Salehuddin Mohd Zahari, Noriza Ishak & Rosmaliza Muhammad
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

Azmir Md. Noor
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam, Malaysia

Hannita Mohd. Salleh
Kementerian Belia dan Sukan, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: There are awakening concerns among nations on the potential loss of both food and knowledge of traditional food among the younger generation. Some growing losses on ethnic traditional food are witnessed among later generation of immigrants owing to the lack of passing the skills and knowledge by the older generations or experienced practitioners to the young generation and this issue starts to receive significant attention among the academic scholars. Understanding the process of sharing and transferring the food provisioning skills, techniques, eating decorum and cultural beliefs from generation to generations or known as Traditional Food Knowledge (TFK) are therefore critically important in ensuring the survival, cohesion and preserving some of traditional food practices. Thus, this paper conceptually discusses the traditional food knowledge or food knowledge transmission and relates it into Malays festive foods scenario.

Keywords: Traditional Food Knowledge (TFK), Malay, festival, food

1 INTRODUCTION

Fundamentally, food is a substance either in solid or liquid form. It is important for satisfying hunger, as well as being a source of energy and health for human life. It creates happiness for individuals, families, societies and many others. Bonanno (2011) contended that businesses started evolving in the early world because of food, while others claimed food plays a significant role in society. The relationship between food and people has been discussed by many scholars (Almli, Verbeke, Vanhonacker, Næs, & Hersleth, 2011; Flannery & Mincyte, 2010). Food for instance is observed as a medium for interaction (Mine Sylow, 2009), performs as a focal point of, and for social contact, as a symbol of and for social bonding (Hess, 2007; Kierans & Haeney, 2010), bringing meaning, beliefs and identities (Bugge, 2003b). Further, foods are an expression of culture, history and lifestyle (Trichopoulou, Soukara, & Vasilopoulou, 2007) and memory and nostalgia (Kierans & Haeney, 2010). Therefore foods are important in connecting peoples and are a cultural showcase.

The above statement clearly indicates that each culture, ethnic group or community has its own specific traditional food. In this sense, traditional foods refer to foods, particularly well known, originating in an

area with respect to the district or sub district, region or country and practice from generation to generation (European Union, 2007). Kwik (2008) posited that traditional food may be interpreted as describing a process that does not change. It represents the collected wisdom of many generations of people who have learned how to produce and prepare food practiced by early generations in order to retain the tradition of the respective culture.

In line with the above notion, there are great concerns among nations about the potential loss of both food and knowledge of traditional foods, in particular among the younger generation (Almli et al., 2011; Bonanno, 2011; Kamaruddin, Zahari, Radzi & Ahmat, 2010). Many commentators argued that countries might lose some of their traditional food if the traditional preparation of it is not passed to the young generations (Albayrak & Gunes, 2010; Chenhall, 2011).

Therefore, sharing and transferring the food provisioning skills, techniques, eating decorum and cultural beliefs from generation to generations or known as traditional food knowledge (TFK) are critically important in ensuring the survival, cohesion and preserving of those mentioned elements (Mohd. Salehuddin, Mohd. Syaquif, Mohd. Zain, & Langgat, 2011; Nicolaou et al., 2009). Thus, this paper conceptually discusses

the traditional food knowledge or food knowledge transmission and relates it into Malays festive foods scenario.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Traditional food*

Traditional food referred as foods that have been consumed for many generations which includes all indigenous food plants found in that region or locality (European Union, 2007) while in other words, traditional foods are those foods originating locally in an area with respect to the country, region, district or sub district (Ohiokpehai, 2003). Jordana (2000) on the other hand stated that traditional food is a food that is differentiated through particular qualitative aspects and has a specific cultural identity, while Kwik (2008) contended that traditional food may be interpreted as describing a process that does not change. It represents the collected knowledge of many generations of people who have learned how to produce and prepare food practiced by early generations in order to retain the tradition of the respective culture.

Many scholars deduced that traditional food through its preparation and consumption is one of the best ways to understand a culture and ethnic identity (Vu, 2009) and all traditional food-related activities, concepts and beliefs shared by a particular group of people give meaning to their identity (Gold, 2007) and this identity has been carried from one generation to another (Weichselbaum, Benelam, & Costa, 2009). Others asserted although daily and traditional foods have experienced slight modification and alteration, they still play an important role in cultural identity and reflect the history of a country or a region (Kamaruddin et al., 2010; Langgat, Zahari, Yasin, & Mansur, 2011; Muhammad, Zahari, Othman, Jamaluddin, & Rashdi, 2009; Weichselbaum et al., 2009).

2.2 *Traditional food knowledge/food knowledge transmission*

The concept of traditional food knowledge integrates a number of academic disciplines such as social, cultural, and nutritional anthropology; human ecology, agriculture, population health, family studies, community development, and education, among others (Warren, 2001). In human ecology, traditional food knowledge is systems that are being acknowledged as valuable in protecting the integrity of natural resources with regard to food (Kuhnlein, Erasmus, & Spigelski, 2009). In this context, food knowledge is honed by generations of people in particular environments.

Traditional food knowledge in ecology was used in Western communication since late 1970s and early 1980s (V. Kuhnlein, Donald, Spigelski, Vittrekwa, & Erasmus, 2009). In sum, ecology traditional food knowledge according to Warren (2001) is generally referred to knowledge generated by communities and

ethnic groups that usually pass the knowledge from one generation to the next through oral transmission that focused on the microenvironment in which food is generated

In social, cultural, and nutritional anthropology perspective, traditional food knowledge (TFK) or also known as food knowledge transmission refers to a cultural tradition of sharing food, recipes and cooking skills and techniques and passing down the collective understanding through generations (Kwik, 2008a). It is a product of generations which usually involved women through learning from each other and their environment on how to nourish themselves.

Despite these, limited literatures have specifically uncover the medium or elements that work along with food knowledge transmission like food preparation, cooking method, cooking skill and food decorum (Bugge, 2003a; Chenhall, 2011). The medium of food knowledge transmissions such as observing, hands on learning (helper/assistance), recipe reading and practices are believed to be crucial elements in food transmission processes (Bugge, 2010; Kamaruddin et al., 2010; Langgat et al., 2011; Short, 2003).

2.3 *Adaptation and practices*

Many scholars argued, in any transmission processes or before practices can be done, adaption must first occurred (Warde, Cheng, Olsen, & Southerton, 2007). Adaptation in fact is a key that enable humans to understand other individual's skills, knowledge and experience. This approach opened the way for individual to familiarize and adjust the new knowledge gain which will lead or influence them to practice or utilize it (Cordes, 2004). In this context, food knowledge adaptation is the evolutionary process by which an individual either remain, modifies or altered his cooking abilities and customs to fit in to a current trend, and demand and adaptation is closely associated with practices (Boyd & Richerson, 2006).

Chenhall (2011) noted that transition of traditional food practices are less taking among the young generation primarily owing to the increased availability of processed, pre-prepared and convenience foods within the retail and foodservice environments. Consequently, the fundamental shifts occurs within entire cultures (developing and developed countries), resulting in negative implications for traditional food practices. In line with this notion, there is some concern that traditional practices may be forgotten by modern practitioners and young generations (Almli et al., 2011) and a decline in cooking and food preparation skills start to appear in the popular and published literatures (Chenhall, 2011).

2.4 *Malay food*

Malays are an *ethnic group* of *Austronesia* predominantly inhabiting the *Malay Peninsula* including the southernmost parts of Thailand, the east coast of *Sumatra*, the coast of *Borneo*, and the smaller

islands which lie between these locations (Mohamed, Mohamad & Hussain, (2010). The Malays ethnic group is distinct from the concept of a *Malay race*, which encompasses a wider group of people including the descendants of *Indonesians*, Philippines and people of Oceania (Hutton, 2000). Malays traditionally had a close identification with Islam and this religion remained ever since.

In regard to food, the Malay cuisine varies from region to region (Hutton, 2000). In the northern states of Perlis, Kedah and Perak, the dishes normally consist of herbs with the tartness of tamarind and fiery spice blends (Jalis, Zahari, Zulkifly & Othman, 2009). The food is always spiked with copious amounts of tongue-scorching Sambals. The cuisine of the two east coast states of Kelantan and Terengganu is heavily influenced by Thai cuisine. The types of food are similar; however, sugar is always a vital ingredient in Kelantan cuisine compared to Terengganu (Jalis et al., 2009).

The cooking of Negeri Sembilan which has a strong affinity with the land of the Minangkabau in West Sumatra features richly spiced dishes cooked in lashings of thick coconut milk. Rendang and masak lemak cili padi are the perfect examples of this heritage (Jalis et al., 2009). Malacca or Bandaraya Bersejarah which was famous among the traders during the 13th to the 14th centuries is well known for its hot and sour cuisine heritage especially Baba Nyonya (Peranakan). In fact, the descendants of the Portuguese who settled in Melaka during their colonization era also influenced some of the Malay tradition of cooking. As a result, an assortment of the Malay cuisines in this state is available and the most popular dishes among the local people that symbolize Malacca are Asam Pedas, Dodol and Ikan Bakar (grilled seafood).

The Malay cuisine of Johor and Selangor includes a number of Javanese influences, as these were among the first locations where the early Javanese immigrants chose to settle (Hutton, 2000). Noodle based dishes like mee rebus jawa, mee bandung as well as satay and lontong are very popular in areas where this Javanese influence can be detected. In addition, Beryani Gam Rice and Telur Pindang are popularly known in Johor due to the influence from Arab traders during the trading era and which are normally served during special traditional occasions such as kenduri (Malay wedding ceremony) and many more (Jalis et al., 2009). Fiery hot chillies and fresh herbs are popular ingredients in most Malay dishes.

2.5 Malay festive food

Kroll (1994) defines the festive (ethnic festival) food as the foods closely associated with various ethnic populations and sometimes confined to specific regions of a nation with little exposure to non-ethnics, and which are prepared specially for special festivals or occasion. Carol (1990) stated that festive food is related to the activities that lie at the core of all ethnic cultures and further noted one cultural manifestation is the important role of ethnic food in many special events

and it possesses specifically associated meanings and expression. Mora (1998) asserted that ethnic festive food refers to the expression of food in terms of attitudes, values, behaviors and beliefs of a culture that is an expression of its cultural traditions or heritage, religion or national origin.

In line with the above notion, Hari Raya (Aidil Fitri and Aidil Adha) mean festivals or celebration days throughout the world for Muslims. Of the two, Aidil Fitri is the most important festival in the Islamic calendar which marks the end of Ramadan (which is the fasting month) and the arrival of Shawal and it is a grand celebration in Malaysia (Munan, 1990). The main practice, besides others, during this celebration is the appearance of traditional food, as on the festival the whole day is spent visiting relatives and friends and food is part of the integral elements in connecting relatives and friends (Anon, 1995).

According to Anon (1995), on the eve of Hari Raya, there is much cheer and merry making at home. Besides other preparations, such as clothes, decorations and so on, the popular foods as previously mentioned, are prepared with family members working together to get them ready. In sum, on top of the religious obligation, the preparation and consumption of traditional foods are apparent during Hari Raya (Anon, 1995).

3 CONCLUSION

Preserving traditional food has also received greater concern among the older generation and government of Malaysia. This is evident when the former Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage, Dato' Seri Utama Dr. Rais bin Yatim urged the Malaysian to preserve their food heritage delicacies by passing down the knowledge and skill and practices to next generation. He said that:

"Being a multi-cultural society, Malaysia is a land of many colorful festivals and celebrations. During the festivals, every ethnic group prepares their own traditional food to serve to the guest. Foods, including various cooking methods, equipment and eating decorum, have long been an important element for our culture. As we can see, a lot of changes have occurred in our food culture and it is important for everybody to sustain our festival food especially for the young people. There is a need for the older generation to pass the knowledge of preparation to the younger generation. If not, we will lose our food culture. Our government through my ministry has a great concern for this issue." (KEKKWA, 2008)

This minister notion indicates there is a need to understand the traditional food knowledge or transmission processes of traditional food and its impact to generation practices. In line with this, do cultural traditions of sharing food provisioning skills, techniques

and cultural imposed among the Malay ethnic group (Muhammad et al., 2009) still taking place? In other words, are the traditions of both young and senior generations work hand in hand from food preparation to food decorum, especially during festive celebrations and cultural festivals still occurring?

To date, how the skills, food provision, cooking techniques and eating decorum of the traditional Malay food are transmitted, adopted or adapted and the impact on it practices with the influence of modernization through commercialization by the young generations have not been widely researched. In fact, there have been limited comprehensive studies on the traditional food knowledge or transmission processes of the traditional food. To answer such questions besides creating literature and lay the groundwork, some empirical evidences on the highlighted issues needs to be explored.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research was supported financially by Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia through Universiti Teknologi MARA under FRGS grant: 600-RMI/SSP/FRGS 5/3/Fsp (20/2011).

REFERENCES

- Albayrak, M., & Gunes, E. 2010. Traditional foods: Interaction between local and global foods in Turkey. [Journal]. *African Journal of Business Management*, 4(4), 555–561.
- Almli, V. L., Verbeke, W., Vanhonacker, F., Næs, T., & Hersleth, M. 2011. General image and attribute perceptions of traditional food in six European countries. [doi: DOI: 10.1016/j.foodqual.2010.08.008]. *Food Quality and Preference*, 22(1), 129–138.
- Anon, E. 1995. *Malaysia Festive Cuisine*. Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing Sdn. Bhd.
- Bonanno, A. 2011. The Globalization of Food. *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews*, 40(1), 50–51. doi: 10.1177/0094306110391764x
- Boyd, R., & Richerson, P. J. 2006. *Culture, Adaptation, and Innateness*. In: *The Innate Mind: Culture and Cognition*: eds.
- Bugge, A. B. 2003a. *Cooking – As Identity Work*. Paper presented at the The 6th Conference of the European Sociological Association, Murcia, Spain.
- Bugge, A. B. 2003b, 23 - 26 September. *Cooking – As Identity Work*. Paper presented at the 6th Conference of the European Sociological Association, Murcia, Spain.
- Bugge, A. B. 2010. Young people's school food styles. *Young*, 18(2), 223-243. doi: 10.1177/110330881001800206
- Carol, F. 1990. *Celebrating Italy*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Chenhall, C. 2011. Improving Cooking and Food Preparation Skills: A Synthesis of the Evidence to Inform Program and Policy Development (P-C. P. H. Network, Trans.). Vancouver Canada: Public Health Agency of Canada.
- Cordes, C. 2004. The Human Adaptation for Culture and its Behavioral Implications. *Journal of Bioeconomics*, 6(2), 143-163. doi: 10.1023/B:JBIO.0000040408.87815.a9
- European Union. 2007. *European Research on Traditional Foods*. Belgium: Publications.europa.eu.
- Flannery, E., & Mincyte, D. 2010. Food as Power. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies*, 10(6), 423–427. doi: 10.1177/1532708610372763
- Gold, A. L. 2007. *Changing Foodways: Generational Communication in a New American Refugee Population*. North Dakota State University. North Dakota.
- Hess, A. 2007. The Social Bonds of Cooking. *Cultural Sociology*, 1(3), 383–407. doi: 10.1177/1749975507082056
- Hutton, W. 2000. *The food of Malaysia: Authentic recipes from the crossroads of Asia*. Singapore. Singapore: Periplus edition (HK) ltd.
- Jalis, M. H., Zahari, M. S., Zulkifly, M. I., & Othman, Z. 2009. Malaysian gastronomic tourism products: Assessing the level of their acceptance among the western tourists. *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, 2, 31–44.
- Jordana, J. 2000. Traditional foods: challenges facing the European food industry. [doi: DOI: 10.1016/S0963-9969(00)0028-4]. *Food Research International*, 33(3–4), 147–152.
- Kamaruddin, M. S. Y., Zahari, M. S. M., Radzi, S. M., & Ahmat, N. H. C. 2010. *Modernization and Malay Matrimonial Foodways in the Rural Area*. Paper presented at the TEAM Conference, Taylor's University.
- KEKKWA. 2008. *Anjung Warisan*. Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage (KEKKWA).
- Kierans, C., & Haeney, J. 2010. The 'Social Life' of Scouse: Understanding Contemporary Liverpool through Changing Food Practices. *Cultural Sociology*, 4(1), 101–122. doi: 10.1177/1749975509356864
- Kroll, D. 1994. Prepared ethnic foods: trends and developments. *Business Communications*, 9–14.
- Kuhnlein, H. V., Erasmus, B., & Spigelski, D. 2009. *Indigenous Peoples' food systems: the many dimensions of culture, diversity and environment for nutrition and health*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
- Kwik, J. C. (2008). Traditional food knowledge: A case study of an Immigrant Canadian "foodscape". *Environments*, 36(1), 59–74.
- Langgat, J., Zahari, M. S. M., Yasin, M. S., & Mansur, N. A. 2011. *The Alteration of Sarawak Ethnic Natives' Food: It's Impact to Sarawak State Tourism*. Paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Business and Economic Research.
- Mine Sylow, L. H. 2009. Building Groups and Independence: The role of food in the lives of young people in Danish sports centre. *Childhood*, 16(2), 213–228. doi: 10.1177/0907568209104402
- Mohamed, A. E., Mohamad, S., & Hussain, H. 2010. Food gifts in Kelantanese Malay Weddings: Custom and Interpretation. *Jurnal e-Bangi*, 5(1), 103–115.
- Mohd. Salehuddin, M. Z., Mohd. Syaquif, Y., Mohd. Zain, K., & Langgat, J. 2011. The level of alteration of ethnic native food: A case of Sarawak, Malaysia. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(6), 137–145.
- Mora, J. K. 1998. *Understanding Multi Culturalism: Cultures and Values*. San Diego: San Diego State University.
- Muhammad, R., Zahari, M. S. M., Othman, Z., Jamaluddin, M. R., & Rashdi, M. O. 2009. *Modernization and Ethnic Festival Food* Paper presented at the International Conference of Business and Economic, Kuching, Sarawak.
- Munan, H. 1990. *Cultures of the World Malaysia*. Singapore: Times Books International.
- Nicolaou, M., Doak, C. M., van Dam, R. M., Brug, J., Stronks, K., & Seidell, J. C. 2009. Cultural and Social Influences on Food Consumption in Dutch Residents of Turkish and Moroccan Origin: A Qualitative Study.

- [doi: DOI: 10.1016/j.jneb.2008.05.011]. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 41(4), 232–241.
- Ohiokpehai, O. 2003. Promoting the Nutritional Goodness of Traditional Food Products. *Pakistan Journal of Nutrition*, 2(4), 267–270.
- Short, F. 2003. Domestic cooking practices and cooking skills: findings from an English study. *Food Service Technology* 3(4), 177–185.
- Trichopoulou, A., Soukara, S., & Vasilopoulou, E. 2007. Traditional foods: a science and society perspective. [doi: DOI: 10.1016/j.tifs.2007.03.007]. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, 18(8), 420–427.
- V.Kuhnlein, H., Donald, M. M., Spigelski, D., Vittrekwa, E., & Erasmus, B. 2009. Gwich'in traditional food for health: Phase 1 *Indigenous Peoples' food systems: the many dimensions of culture, diversity and environment for nutrition and health*. Rome: Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
- Vu, V. 2009. *The Changing Foodways of Vietnamese Americans in Orange County, California*. . Carlifornia.
- Warde, A., Cheng, S.-L., Olsen, W., & Southerton, D. 2007. Changes in the Practice of Eating. *Acta Sociologica*, 50(4), 363–385. doi: 10.1177/0001699307083978
- Warren, M. 2001. The role of the global network of indigenous knowledge resource centers in the conservation of cultural and biological diversity. In L. Maffi. (Ed.), *On biocultural diversity* (pp. 446–461). Washington: Smithsonian Institute Press.
- Weichselbaum, E., Benelam, B., & Costa, H. S. 2009. *Traditional Foods in Europe*. Norwich: EuroFIR Project.

This page intentionally left blank

Homestay destination: Assessing destination's food image, tourists' satisfaction and tourists' revisit intention

Hasiful Fata Talhah

Fakulti Pengurusan Hotel & Pelancongan, UiTM Pulau Pinang

Rahmat Hashim

Fakulti Pengurusan Hotel & Pelancongan, UiTM Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Community-based tourism is seen as an alternative to propel the socio-economic and cultural benefits to the local community. Tourists who visit homestay destinations are those who seek existential meaning and those who quest for pastoral lifestyle. Among many components of culture, food is one of the most elemental. Hence, the concern of food must not limit us within the nutritional requirement needs per se. To food anthropologist, food is more than just a biological need in human life. Food has a visceral connection with our culture. There were 600 questionnaires distributed to six homestay destinations throughout Sabak Bernam, Selangor. Results show that only two factors of destination's food image were significantly correlated, that is, Food Variety and Food Exoticness. Hence, unique local food culture of the locals is essential for homestay destinations to have a good image in the eyes of tourists.

Keywords: Homestay, food, destination image, destination loyalty

1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

It has been an accepted notion that tourism has helped nations in several aspects. Community-based tourism is seen as an alternative to propel the socio-economic and cultural benefits to the local community (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004). Its potential to provide additional income and employment to the community has been given special emphasis by the government. Apparently, this has resulted in a significant increase of the number of participants in the program from year to year (see Table 1). To stay competitive, attracting more tourists to visit is the utmost concern of homestay destinations. Tourists who visit homestay destinations are those who seek existential meaning and those who quest for countrified lifestyle (Hamzah, 2010). They place huge interest to learn culture and way of life of the host community. Thus, one of the best ways to learn culture is by experiencing and participating in the culture itself. Among many components of culture, food is one of the most elemental. The concern of food must not limit us within the nutritional requirement needs per se. Food has a visceral connection with our culture. As such, food is not only a basic need for tourists, but also an element that represent a culture of a region embedded with a great quantity of traditional knowledge and values (Jones & Jenkins, 2002). This makes food considered as a cultural identity and symbol of distinctiveness of a destination (Haukeland & Jacobsen, 2001; Santich,

Table 1. Village participating in homestay program 2011.

State	No. villages	State	No. Villages
Perlis	3	Kelantan	10
Kedah (incl Langkawi)	19	Terengganu	6
Pulau Pinang	11	Johor	18
Perak	30	Pahang	21
Selangor	18	Sabah	39
Negeri Sembilan	26	Sarawak	24
Melaka	5	Labuan	3
TOTAL			233

Source: Motour (2012).

(2004). This distinctiveness has been viewed as one of the most important attributes by tourists in creating destination image (Grbac & Milohanovic, 2008). Given that food has been proven to be an important means of selling the identity and culture of destination, food consumption is being regarded as one of the key factors in the development of destination marketing strategy. For these reasons, food has been recognized as an effective promotional and positioning tool of a destination (Hjalager & Richards, 2002).

The key component of positioning is through the creation and management of perception or image of the destination (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003). Destination with positive image is likely to draw more tourists

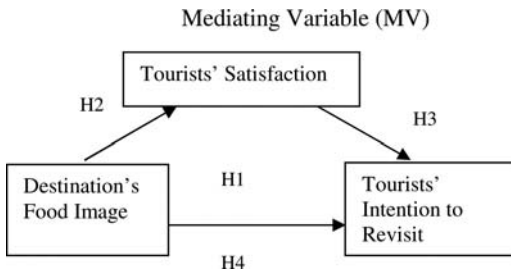


Figure 1. Theoretical framework of the study.

(Karim, 2006). However, the question of how tourists view local food and what are their behaviour and attitude towards it remains puzzling as the link between location and gastronomy in Malaysia is rather unclear as compared to its neighbouring countries (Karim, Chua & Salleh, 2009). As such, understanding tourists' perceived image on local food is essential specifically in determining tourists' behaviour and attitude towards it.

1.1 Objectives of the study

There were four objectives of the study:

- To assess the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit.
- To measure the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' satisfaction.
- To evaluate the relationship between tourists' satisfaction and tourists' intention to revisit.
- To identify the mediating role of tourists' satisfaction on the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit.

Figure 1 depicts the theoretical framework for this study that was used as the foundation for generating the research hypotheses for this study. Each construct of the framework were selected based on the review of the related literature. The framework showed the following: (a) a relationship between destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit, (b) a relationship between destination's food image and tourists' satisfaction, (c) a relationship between tourists' satisfaction and tourists' intention to revisit, and (d) the mediating effect of tourists' satisfaction on the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit. Items measuring destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit were adapted from Karim (2006), whilst a single item measuring overall satisfaction was adapted from Karim et al. (2009).

1.2 Research hypotheses

There were four research hypotheses that were tested in this study:

- H1: Destination's food image has a significant relationship with tourists' intention to revisit.
 H2: Destination's food image has a significant relationship with tourists' satisfaction.

H3: Tourists' satisfaction has a significant relationship with tourists' intention to revisit.

H4: Tourists' satisfaction mediates the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit.

1.3 Destination food image and tourist loyalty

There are quite a number of common definitions of destination image cited in most research (Jenkins, 1999; Pikkemaat, 2004). Crompton (1979) defined destination image as the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination. On the other hand, Lawson and Baud-Bovy (1977) defined destination image as the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations, and emotional thoughts an individual or group might have of a particular place. Hall and Mitchell (2000) also suggested that food is not only meant for the purpose of eating, but has other multifaceted meaning which includes identity as one of them. Understanding that destination image is shared in common by members of a particular group is vital in segmenting the market (Jenkins, 1999).

Henderson (2004) highlighted that marketers have been using food as a promotional tool in promoting destinations. He also argued that food and destination have been the prominent products that shape tourists' overall experience.

According to Corigliano (2002) culinary tourism can be categorized as cultural tourism because of its association with agricultural produce of a particular destination. Essentially, culinary tourism involved gourmet tours which include farms visit as well as tasting food products. Additionally, culinary tourism provides tourists with unique experience by which they could experience the culture of a particular destination and associate it with history.

Researchers have proposed image as an important prerequisite of loyalty in the search of customer loyalty determinants (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000). However, there is no consensus among researchers whether image directly or indirectly influences customer loyalty. Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000), Faullant et al. (2008) and Zins (2001) proposed the models in which image and customer satisfactions have impacts on customer loyalty.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

There were 600 questionnaires distributed to six homestay destinations throughout Sabak Bernam during the sampling period. 102 questionnaires were collected. This represented 17 percent of the total number of questionnaires distributed. All 102 questionnaires were usable for analysis. Gender of the respondents was almost equally distributed with 47.1% male and 52.9% female. Most of the respondents' age was between 20 to 29 years old (64.7%), followed by less than 20 years old (29.4%). Few respondents were between 30–39 years old (5.9%).

2.1 *Underlying dimensions of destination's food image*

The 16 attributes associated with destination's food image were explored by principal component analysis with varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.737. According to Field (2009), KMO value between 0.7 and 0.8 was considered good. Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at 0.00 suggesting that the data was suitable for factor analysis. An initial analysis was run to obtain eigen value for each component in the data. There were four components (Local food and Culture, Host friendliness, Food variety and Food exoticness) with eigen value over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained 71.2 (alpha .70 and above) percent of the variance. All the factors were named arbitrarily. Factor 1 compiled eight items while Factor 2 compiled four items. Factor 3 and 4 compiled an acceptable minimum of two items respectively (Costello & Osborne, 2005). Cronbach's alpha analysis (0.70 was the cut-off point) was used to determine the internal consistency of each factor.

2.2 *Destination's food image, satisfaction and tourists' intention to revisit*

The first objective of the study was to assess the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between food image and intention to revisit. The four factors of food image were regressed on the intention to revisit. The independent variables explained 21.6 percent of the variance in the dependent variable. There were only two factors that were significant; Food Variety and Food Exoticness ($p < 0.05$). In contrast, Local Food and Culture and Host Friendliness were not significant (and were removed from subsequent test). The standardized beta coefficients reflected the importance of each independent variable in influencing dependent variable. The most influential factors of destination's food image on the tourists' intention to revisit was Food Variety ($\beta = 0.231$), followed by Food Exoticness ($\beta = 0.225$). When all other factors were held constant, the beta coefficient explained that for every unit increase of food variety and food exoticness, intention to revisit increased by 0.23, and 0.22 units respectively. As described before, 21.6 percent (adjusted R², 18.3) of the variance in tourists' intention to revisit had been significantly explained by the factors of destination's food image ($r = 0.464$, $p < 0.05$). Hence, there was no statistical evidence to accept the null hypothesis.

The second objective of the study was to measure the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' satisfaction. Multiple regression analysis was performed to measure the relationship between four factors of food image and overall satisfaction. Food image was positively correlated at a medium level with overall satisfaction ($r = 0.397$, $p < 0.05$). There was 15.8 percent of the variance in overall

satisfaction explained by food image. The standardized coefficients indicated that Food Exoticness was the most prominent variable affecting overall satisfaction ($\beta = 0.250$) and this was followed by Food Variety ($\beta = 0.246$). On the contrary, Local Food and Culture and Host Friendliness were not significant. The beta coefficient explained that when all other factors were held constant, for every unit increase of Food Exoticness and Food Variety, overall satisfaction increased by 0.127 and 0.134 units respectively.

Hypothesis two of the study stated that destination's food image has a significant relationship with tourists' satisfaction. It was previously exposed that 15.8 percent of the variance in tourists' satisfaction had been significantly explained by the independent variables of destination's food image ($r = 0.397$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, there was no statistical evidence to support the null hypothesis. Therefore, hypothesis two (2) was accepted.

2.3 *Destination's food image, tourists' satisfaction and tourists' intention to revisit*

The fourth objective of the study was to identify the mediating effect of tourists' satisfaction on the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit. Hierarchical regression analysis was performed to identify the mediating role of satisfaction between food image and intention to revisit.

The 4 Steps approach established by Baron and Kenny (1986) were adopted in this analysis. In Step 1, food image was significantly correlated with intention to revisit where Food Variety ($\beta = 0.231$, $p < 0.05$), Food Exoticness ($\beta = 0.225$, $p < 0.05$). Step 2 indicated that food image was also significantly correlated with overall satisfaction as described by Food Exoticness ($\beta = 0.250$, $p < 0.05$) and Food Variety ($\beta = 0.246$, $p < 0.05$). In step 3, overall satisfaction was significantly correlated with intention to revisit ($\beta = 0.577$, $p < 0.00$). Finally, in Step 4, while controlling for tourists' satisfaction, destination's food image had no significant effect on tourists' intention to revisit as depicted by the variable coefficients.

Hypothesis four of this study stated that tourists' satisfaction mediates the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit. Since Step 1 (2 out of 4 factors) until Step 4 has been satisfied, it can be concluded that tourists' satisfaction fully mediated the relationship between destination's food image and tourists' intention to revisit. In consequence, there was no statistical evidence to accept the null hypothesis (Table 2). As a result, hypothesis four was accepted.

3 CONCLUSION

The development of homestay program in Malaysia is inevitable. More and more destinations are joining the bandwagon each year. Homestay destinations that can offer the most memorable and unique experience are

Table 2. Destination's food image with tourists' intention to revisit mediated by tourists' satisfaction.

Model Summary

Model R	Adj			Std. Error			R Square		
	R Sq	of R Sq the Est	Change	F	Change	df1	df2	Sig. F	Change
1	.464(a)	.216	.183	1.17	.216	06.664	4	97	.000
2	.634(a)	.403	.403	1.03	.187	30.034	1	96	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Factor 1, Factor 2, Factor 3, Factor 4.
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Factor 1, Factor 2, Factor 3, Factor 4, Satisfaction.

a. Dependent variable: revisit intention

Model		B	Unstandardized		Standardized		t	Sig.
			Coefficients	Std. Error	Coefficients	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.93	1.599			0.581	.562	
	Factor 3	0.146	0.067	0.231		2.167	0.033	
	Factor 4	0.132	0.057	0.225		2.302	.023	
2	(Constant)	−0.942	1.444			−0.652	.51	
	Factor 3	0.073	0.06	0.115		1.201	.233	
	Factor 4	0.063	0.052	0.107		1.214	0.230	
	Satisfaction	0.546	0.100	0.471		5.48	0.000	

a. Dependent variable: revisit intention.

deemed to attract more tourists thus ensuring them to stay ahead in the ever growing competition. It is therefore important for homestay coordinators to understand tourists' perceived image of the destinations. Tourists visiting homestay destinations are those who culturally motivated, by which experiencing food is the easiest way to learn culture. Hence, knowing what image related to food held by tourists is important to understand their behaviour and attitude towards homestay destinations.

The results of the study suggested that only two factors of destination's food image were significantly correlated, that is Food Variety and Food Exoticness. By understanding the factors of destination's food image and its influence on tourists' satisfaction and tourists' intention to revisit, homestay coordinators could use it to amplify not only the overall homestay destination's image but the specific food image as well. Subsequently, specific food image could be utilized in the marketing and promoting homestay destinations.

REFERENCES

Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. 1986. The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 1173–1182.
 Beardsworth, A., & Keil, T. 1997. *Sociology on the menu*. London: Routledge.
 Briedenhann, J., & Wickens, E. 2004. Tourism routes as a tool for the economic development of rural areas—vibrant hope or impossible dream? *Tourism Management*, 25, 71–79.

Costello, A. B., & Osborne, J. W. 2005. Best practices in exploratory analysis: four recommendations for getting the most from your analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 10(7), 1–9.
 Crompton, J. 1979. An assessment of the image of Mexico as a vacation destination and the influence of geographical location upon the image. *Journal of Travel Research*, 17(4), 18–23.
 Echtner, C. M., & Ritchie, J. R. B. 2003. The meaning and measurement of destination image. *The Journal of Tourism Studies*, 14(1), 37–48.
 Faullant, R., Matzler, K., & Fuller, J. 2008. The impact of satisfaction and image on loyalty: the case of Alpine ski resorts. *Managing Service Quality*, 18(2), 163–178.
 Field, A. 2009. Factor analysis. Retrieved March 15, 2011, from <http://www.statisticshell.com>
 Gunn, C. 1972. *Vacationscape: designing tourist regions*. Austin: Bureau of Business Research, University of Texas.
 Grbac, B., & Milohanovic, A. 2008, July 22–23. Contribution of food products in creating cultural identity of tourist destination. Paper presented at the WSEAS International Conference on Cultural Heritage and Tourism, Crete Island, Greece.
 Hall, M., & Mitchell, R. 2000. We are what we eat: food, tourism and globalization. *Tourism, Culture and Communication*, 2(1), 29–37.
 Hamzah, A. 2010. Malaysian homestays from the perspective of young Japanese tourists: The quest for Furusato. Centre for Innovative Planning and Development Monograph, 2.
 Haukeland, V. J., & Jacobsen, J. K. S. 2001, October 18–20. Gastronomy in the periphery. Food and cuisine as tourism attraction on the top of Europe. Paper presented at the 10th Nordic Tourism Research Conference, Vasa, Finland.
 Henderson, J. 2004. Food as a Tourism Resource: a view from Singapore. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 29(3), 69–74.

- Hjalager, A., & Richards, G. 2002. Research issues in tourism and gastronomy. In A. M. Hjalager & G. Richards (Ed.), *Tourism and Gastronomy* (pp. 36–50). London: Routledge.
- Hjalager, A. 2002. A typology of gastronomy tourism. In A. M. Hjalager and G. Richard (Eds.), *Tourism and Gastronomy* (pp.21–35). Routledge: London.
- Jenkins, O. H. 1999. Understanding and measuring tourist destination images. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 1, 1–15.
- Jones, A., & Jenkins, I. 2002. A taste of wales – Blas Ar Gymru. Institutional malaise in promoting Welsh food tourism products. In A. M. Hjalager, & G. Richards (Eds.), *Tourism and Gastronomy* (pp. 112–115). London: Routledge.
- Kandampully, J., & Suhartanto, D. 2000. Customer loyalty in the hotel industry: the role of customer satisfaction and image. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 12(6), 346–351.
- Karim, M.S.A. 2006. Culinary tourism as a destination attraction: An empirical examination of the destination's food image and information sources. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma.
- Karim, M.S.A, Chua, B., & Salleh, H. 2009. Malaysia as a culinary tourism destination: International tourists' perspective. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, 1(33), 63–78.
- Lawson, F., and Bond-Bovy, M., 1977. *Tourism and Recreational Development*. London: Architectural Press.
- Pikkemaat, B. 2004. The measurement of destination image: the case of Austria. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Research*, 4(1), 87–102.
- Santich, B. 2004. The study of gastronomy and its relevance to hospitality education and training. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 23(1), 15–24.
- Zins, A. H. 2001, Relative attitudes and commitment in customer loyalty models. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 12 (3), 269–94.

This page intentionally left blank

International tourist acceptance of Sabah's gastronomy product

Ali Mohamad Noor, Mohamamed Ruqaimi Bin Remeli & Mohd Hafiz Mohd Hanafiah
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Food and beverage expenditures amount to one-third of overall tourists expenditures of the global tourism turnover. Without food, tourism industry will be like missing pieces from a puzzle. Food and tourism have a close relationship and is a critical tourism resource besides accommodation and transportation. This study focused tourist's perception and experience on Sabah gastronomic product. Four phases includes in the study: preliminary data gathering; framework building; pilot testing; then ended with, data collection and analysis. Data were collected through administered questionnaires and distributed among the tourists who have consumed Sabah gastronomic products around Kota Kinabalu. Series of statistical analysis were conducted which focused on frequencies, means scores and standard deviation through descriptive statistics. Result indicated that Sabah gastronomic products are greatly accepted by most tourist and they agreed that these gastronomic products can be parts of tourist attraction.

Keywords: gastronomy, tourist, acceptance, perception

1 INTRODUCTION

It is almost agreeable that food is one of the factors that make people travel in today's world. As mentioned by Santich (2003) and Jalis et al. (2009), beverages and food related activities are considered as basic components of a travel experience. Other than that, food is an essential item when travelling and people tend to purchase and consume it when they are travelling. Food and beverage expenditures amount to one-third of overall tourists' expenditures of the global tourism turnover (Meler and Ceroviã, 2003). Without food, tourism industry will be like missing pieces from a puzzle. Quan and Wang (2004) stated that food and tourism have a close relationship and food is a critical tourism resource besides accommodation and transportation.

Reynolds (1993) noted that many people looking for genuine and authentic, who, it is believed, can be found in local foods and eating-places. Eating experience in one place can give some implication to people. This can be seen from explanation made by Remington and Yuksel (1998) and Neild, Kozak and LeGrys (2000) which specified that gastronomic experiences play a part in determining perceptions and satisfaction with the overall travel experience. As the result, food tourism exists. Food tourism is defined as "a visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel" (Hall and Mitchell, 2001).

Tourism and food have been an inseparable element, Santich (2004) stated that the demand in food and wine tourism is growing and becoming an important sector of the travel and tourism industry. It has been a major contributor to the industry in Australia and Canada as \$1 billion have been generated by culinary tourism annually (Pomero, 2005). Many countries around the globe start to acknowledge the potential of culinary tourism. In Singapore, the government introduced a 'New Asia-Singapore Cuisine' marketing efforts in order to attract visitors to savour its cuisine that attempted to combine the flavour of east and west cuisines (Scarpato, 2002). Malaysia too has introduced Malaysian International Gourmet Festivals (MIGF) for the eleventh successive years to attract more people to come and visit Malaysia (Day, 2011).

2 METHOD

The survey question were adopted from the previous research that have been done by Jalis *et al.* (2007) and had been slightly modified appropriately to suit with the area of the research study. In addition, the questionnaire are straight forward without using any jargon thus everyone can understand the questions and this is very suitable with the notion by Salkind (2003), the survey instrument must be as clear as possible to be completed in order to obtain a good level of response and useable data.

The sample size was determined by the formula that created by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Holmes, Dahan

and Ashari (2005), convenience sampling approach was adopted as it is less bias compared to the other sampling methods. The sample population consists of international tourists.

The researcher used two methods in distributing the questionnaires that are self-administered survey and also electronic distribution. The surveys were conducted in two month, from October 2011 to November 2011. The self-administered survey have taken place at Kota Kinabalu International Airport Terminal 1 (KKIA), Low Cost Carrier Terminal Kota Kinabalu (KKIA2), Handicraft Market which is formerly known as 'Pasar Philippine' and also around hotel areas which are flooded with tourists. Besides that, the researcher also conducts a survey at the areas that have potentially high number of tourists like in recreation area in Tanjung Aru and also in shopping complex.

SPSS software version 17.0 was used to analyze the data. With regard to the research objectives, descriptive statistics was used to explain in detail the socio-demographic background of the respondents. Quantitative data in terms of frequencies, or mean, and standard deviations, become necessary for descriptive studies (Sekaran, 2003). Besides descriptive statistics, the researcher uses regression analysis to investigate what are the most influential predictors for the acceptance level of Sabah's gastronomy products.

3 RESULT

Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to measure the reliability of the data as it has the most utility for multi-item scales at the interval level of measurement (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). Result of the three sections exhibits the score above the 0.60 is considered acceptable and display a good internal consistency (Pallant, 2004).

3.1 Demographic profiles

Demographic profile of the respondents are described in Table 1. The table reports on the gender, age group, marital status and education of the respondents.

As can be seen below, the number of male respondents in the sample exceeds the male respondents with fifty six percent (56%) against forty four percent (44%) in the analysis.

The age of respondents were distributed across the given age group choices with forty six percent (46%) within the range from eighteen (18) to twenty nine (29) years old, eleven point five percent (11.5%) within the range between thirty (30) to thirty nine (39) years old, twenty eight point five percent (28.5%) within the range of forty (40) to forty nine (49) years old, eleven percent (11%) within the range of fifty (50) to fifty nine (59) years old and three (3%) above sixty (60) years old.

Slightly over half of the respondents which are fifty three point five percent (53.5%) were single and this

Table 1. Demographic profiles.

Attributes	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	224	56
	Female	176	44
	Total	400	100
Age group	18–29	184	46
	30–39	46	11.5
	40–49	114	28.5
	50–59	44	11
	>60	12	3
	Total	400	100
Marital status	Single	214	53.5
	Married	186	46.5
	Total	400	100
Education Level	High School	104	26
	Certificate/Diploma	111	27.8
	Bachelor Degree	100	25
	Master Degree	76	19
	PhD	9	2.3
	Total	400	100
Country of origin	Malaysia	230	57.5
	Indonesia	59	14.8
	Korea	57	14.3
	Japan	27	6.8
	Spain	9	2.3
	Australia	18	4.5
	Total	400	100

is in line with the bigger proportions of young respondents, aged between eighteen (18) to twenty nine (29) years old. Forty six point five percent (46.5%) of the respondents were married.

The respondent's level of education was also asked in collecting the demographic data. Twenty six percent (26%) of the respondents have high school qualification, twenty seven point eight percent (27.8%) have certificate or diploma while twenty five (25%) owned a bachelor degree. Only twenty one point three percent (21.3%) which nineteen percent (19%) of them have master degree and two point three percent (2.3%) have Phd.

On the respondent's country of origin, the result shows that most of the respondents are from Malaysia (57.5%). The total number of respondents that come from Indonesia and Korea are quite similar that is 14.8% and 14.3% respectively. Japanese respondents covered only (6.8%) of the total respondents while Australian respondents are four point five percent (4.5%). The smallest percentage is two point three percent (2.3%) which represents Spain respondents.

3.2 Tourist perception

The tourists' perception of Sabah gastronomic products was examined using mean scores. Twenty three (23) items were analysed and the mean scores of the respondents' perception are presented in Table 2.

From Table 2, it shows that Sabah has great choices of food and beverages. This can be seen from the level of agreement that the respondents have answered

Table 2. The mean scores of respondents' perception of Sabah gastronomic products (n = 400).

No. of items	Items	n	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
1.	Great choices of F&B	400	3.65	.526
2.	Freshly prepared F&B	400	3.66	.530
3.	Well accepted	400	3.62	.531
4.	Experiencing Sabah's F&B and Food culture	400	3.69	.536
5.	Offers great kind of food	400	3.53	.534
6.	Acceptable taste of snacks in Sabah	400	3.62	.506
7.	Some of the Sabah's F&B are recognized internationally	400	3.43	.525
8.	Most of Sabah's snacks as good as imported one's	400	3.39	.523
9.	Reasonable price	400	3.58	.524
10.	Tasty beverages	400	3.62	.496
11.	Attractive looking beverages	400	3.60	.511
12.	Delicious food	400	3.82	.625
13.	Food been served are hot	400	3.74	.493
14.	Adorable aroma	400	3.76	.456
15.	Oily food	400	3.47	.514
16.	Sweet delicacies and beverages	400	3.43	.540
17.	Consistence taste, texture and appearance	400	3.72	.467
18.	Enjoyed the F&B	400	3.80	.459
19.	Just to try F&B	400	3.74	.472
20.	Spend a lot on Sabah's F&B (money)	400	3.71	.474
21.	Didn't mind taking Sabah's F&B at any time	400	3.74	.471
22.	F&B in Sabah stimulate appetite	400	3.74	.459
23.	Consumed a lot of hot and spicy food	400	3.59	.526

(M = 3.65, item 1). Besides of its wider choices, food and beverages in Sabah is freshly prepared (M = 3.66, item 2) and it is almost agreed by the respondents that Sabah gastronomic products are well accepted (M = 3.62, item 3). The respondents also approved that they experienced Sabah's food and beverages and also the food culture itself (M = 3.69, item 4). Besides that, respondent almost agreed that Sabah offers great kind of food (M = 3.53, item 5) and also the taste of snacks in Sabah is acceptable (M = 3.62, item 6). To some extent, the respondents are unsure whether some of Sabah's food and beverages are recognized internationally (M = 3.43, item 7). Also, they were quite unsure that most of Sabah's snacks are as good as imported ones (M = 3.39, item 8).

In terms of the characteristics of the food and beverages, the mean shows that the price is reasonable (M = 3.58, item 9), the beverages is tasty (M = 3.62, item 10) and have attractive looks (M = 3.60, item 11). From the table, we can also know that food in Sabah is

Table 3. The mean scores of respondents' overall acceptance level on Sabah's Gastronomic products.

No. of items	Items	n	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
1.	The overall price	400	3.65	.526
2.	The overall taste	400	3.66	.530
3.	The overall aroma	400	3.62	.531
4.	The overall texture	400	3.69	.536
5.	The overall food preparation	400	3.53	.534
6.	The overall cooking method	400	3.62	.506
7.	The overall eating manner	400	3.43	.525
8.	The overall activity/event related to Sabah's gastronomic products	400	3.39	.523
9.	The overall experiences related to Sabah's gastronomic products	400	3.58	.524

delicious (M = 3.82, item 12), served hot (M = 3.74, item 13) and it has adorable aroma (M = 3.76, item 14). On the other hand, the respondents were unsure that Sabah food is oily (M = 3.47, item 15) and disagreed that the delicacies and beverages is sweet (M = 3.43, item 16). However, the appearance, taste and texture of the food is consistence (M = 3.72, item 17) and the respondents enjoyed the food and beverages (M = 3.80, item 18).

Most of them agreed that they just wanted to try new things and that is why they consumed Sabah's food and beverages (M = 3.74, item 19). For the tourists, they were willing to spend their money on food (M = 3.71, item 20) and did not mind to consume local food at any time (M = 3.74, item 21). Most of them agreed that food and beverages in Sabah stimulate their appetite and make them hungry when they see it (M = 3.74, item 22). The last item in the table is about the spiciness of Sabah's food which they were not sure whether they ate a lot of hot and spicy food (M = 3.59, item 23) when they stay in Sabah and from it, we can conclude that the food in Sabah does not really hot and spicy.

Additionally, the respondents themselves agreed that they were fascinated by the food culture in Sabah (M = 3.74, item 9) and have enough experience about it (M = 3.81, item 10). In addition, they also agreed that they enjoyed the local eating manner (M = 3.74, item 11) and they did not hesitate to try it (M = 3.47, item 12).

3.3 Tourist acceptance

Table 3 shows the mean scores of respondents' overall acceptance level on Sabah gastronomic products. Based on the table, the respondents agreed that the price of food and beverages in Sabah is reasonable (M = 3.65, item 1). The taste of the food and beverages is also acceptable (M = 3.66, item 2). In the table, it

Table 4. Pearson correlation matrix between independent variables and dependent variable.

No.	Measures	1	2	3
1.	Acceptance level	–	–	–
2.	Food and beverages	.804**	–	–
3.	Food culture	.308**	–	–

shows that the respondents agreed that the aroma of the Sabah’s gastronomy products stimulated their appetite ($M = 3.62$, item 3) and the textures are consistence ($M = 3.69$, item 4).

From the respondent’s point of view, the overall food preparation is acceptable and interesting ($M = 3.53$, item 5). The cooking method that is used in preparing food and beverages in Sabah is also acceptable ($M = 3.62$, item 6). Table 4.6 showed that the overall respondents were attracted and accepted ($M = 3.43$, item 7) the eating manner of the locals while they were in Sabah. The overall activity or events that related to Sabah’s gastronomic products such as Tamuand night market are interesting and acceptable by the respondents ($M = 3.39$, item 8). Lastly, the majorities of the respondents accept and excited ($M = 3.58$, item 9) with the overall experiences that related with Sabah’s gastronomic products that they have encountered.

3.4 Relationship between Sabah’s gastronomic products and the acceptance level among tourists.

Pearson Correlation and linear multiple regression was conducted to test the relationship between variable and to find out the factor that most influential to the acceptance level of tourist towards Sabah gastronomy products. The predictor consists of food, beverages and food culture of Sabah. The criterion variables relates to the acceptance level of the tourists. All of these variables were calculated into the regression equation.

Based on Table 4, there was a significant relationship between food and beverages towards the acceptance level of the tourist ($r = .804$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, it can be said that this variables had a positive relationship with high strength of association (Hair et al., 2007). Further, the relationship between food culture and the acceptance level of the tourist ($r = .308$, $p < 0.05$) was also significant with small but definite relationship (Hair et al., 2007).

From the Table 5 above, the results showed that Sabah gastronomic products were able to explain 64.8 percent (64.8%) of the observed variations in the acceptance level of tourists in Sabah. Among the two independents variables which are food and beverages and also the food culture, food and beverages significantly contributed to the prediction of the acceptance level of tourists.

Food and beverages ($\beta = .829$, $p < 0.05$) had the most impact on levels of acceptance among the tourists compared to the food culture ($\beta = .058$, $p < 0.05$). As

Table 5. Results of multiple regression of the acceptance level on the Sabah’s gastronomic products.

Variables	Standardized coefficients Beta	Sig.
Food and Beverages	.829	.000
Food Culture	-.058	.083

Note: Dependent variable: acceptance level of tourist, $R^2 = 64.8\%$, $*p < 0.05$.

the two independents variables, which are the food and beverages and also food culture, were found to be significantly influencing the acceptance level of the tourists, it can be said that the relationship between the acceptance levels of the tourist and Sabah gastronomic products is strongly supported by food and beverages as the best predictor.

4 CONCLUSION

The study evidently shows that the acceptance level of Sabah’s gastronomic products among the respondents is high and majority of them have accepted the food, beverages and food culture of Sabah as the tourism products and can be one of the attractions in Sabah in addition to its interesting and remarkable nature. The high level of the acceptance level among the respondents towards Sabah’s gastronomic products is quite crucial in improving the attractions and the uniqueness of Sabah. The authorities such as Ministry of Tourism should take active role in identifying popular Sabah’s food and beverages among the tourist and promote the items to attract people.

In conclusion, the collaboration and cooperation of all parties that involve with food such as the food operators, travel agencies and government authorities and other stakeholders are very crucial and should be tougher in order to increase the level of satisfaction among the tourists in terms of food, beverages and also food culture in our country. If this measurement and cooperation does not work, our various and unique gastronomic products especially in Sabah would be left wasted. Last but not least, future studies focusing on the local’s ethnic food, beverages and food culture needs to be conducted in the upcoming future in order to examine the acceptance level of tourist towards the gastronomic products of Sabah.

REFERENCES

- Day, D. S. 2001 Retrieved December 15, 2011, from <http://www.migf.com/2011/messages>
- Hall, M.C. and Mitchell, R. 2001, “Wine and Food Tourism”, in Douglas, N., Douglas, N. and Derret, R. (Eds), Special Interest Tourism, Wiley, Sydney.
- Holmes, R., Dahan, H.M. and Ashari, H. 2005. A Guide to Research in the Social Sciences. Kuala Lumpur: Pearson Prentice Hall.

- Jalis, M. H., Zahari, M. S. M., Zulkifly, M. I. and Othman, Z. 2009. Western tourists perception of Malaysian Gastronomic Products. *Asian Social Science*. Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 25–36.
- Krejcie, R. V. & Morgan, D. W. 1970. Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational And Psychological Measurement*. Vol 30, pp. 607–610.
- Meler, M. and Cerovic', Z. 2003, "Food marketing in the function of tourist product development", *British Food Journal*, Vol. 105, No. 3, pp. 175–92.
- Neild, K., Kozak, M. and LeGrys, G. 2000, "The role of food service in tourist satisfaction", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 375–84.
- Pomero, P. 2005. Travelers explore new world of culinary tourism. *Nation's Restaurant News*, 39(26), 3–5.
- Quan, S. and Wang, N. 2004, "Towards a structural model of the tourist experience: an illustration from food experiences in tourism", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 25, pp. 297–305.
- Remington, M. and Yuksel, A. 1998, "Tourist satisfaction and food service experience: results of an empirical investigation", *Anatolia*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 37–57.
- Reynolds, P. 1993. Food and Tourism: Towards an understanding of sustainable culture. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1(1), 48–54.
- Salkind, N. J. 2003. *Exploring Research* (5th Ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Santich, B. 2004. The study of gastronomy and its relevance to hospitality education and training. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 23(2004), 15–24.
- Scarpato, R. 2002. Perspective of gastronomy studies. In Hjalager, A, and Richard, G. (Eds), *Tourism and Gastronomy*. Routledge. London, pp. 51–70.
- Sekaran, U. 2000. *Research Methods for Business* (3rd Ed.) New York: Wiley and Sons.

This page intentionally left blank

Are gastronomic products important to Malaysian tour operators?

M.Y. Nuraisyah, M.S. Mohd Zahari, A. Inoormaziah & O. Zulhan
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Malaysia standing as a multi-cultural country holds a unique culture, custom and tradition. Having a diverse ethnic groups and races (Malay, Chinese, Indian and other ethnic groups) giving an advantage to Malaysia with a vast of gastronomy products to increase the country economy and recognize through the gastronomic tourism. This paper discusses the gastronomic products specifically related to food, beverages and food cultures activities from the general to specific Malaysian perspectives and how it implicates the local tours operators.

Keywords: Gastronomic products, Malaysia, tour operators

1 INTRODUCTION

Not to exaggerate that the importance of tourism besides the conventional products in this modern era are gradually shifted whereby not only aims in delivering experiences to the tourists but it goes beyond that. Tourist no longer expected to be passive, relaxed and looking at sight but the increasing sophisticated and adventurous travellers are demanding more tangible activities (Boniface, 2003). Offering variety of products ranging from conventional ones to the niche new products like sport, shopping, golf, MICE, gambling and entertainment, cruise, cultural tourism, yacht and many others are the examples and these have lead tourism becoming more interesting industry (Aydin and Boz, 2009).

Besides those mentioned products, foods and beverages and food related activities which are part of gastronomy realm is realizing and significantly important for creative tourism that contributes substantial international revenues or foreign exchange earnings (Hjalager and Richards, 2002). Goeldner and Ritchie (2006) deduce that gastronomy products and tourism cannot be separated from tourists as they will bring their taste bud together while travelling and in fact food and drink is one of the criterion or reason for travel (Boniface, 2003). Santich (2004) regard gastronomic tourism as a form of travelling not only focused on food, drink but food related activities like food culture and events while Chaney and Ryan, (2011); Frochot, (2003) denote that gastronomic tourism is a subset of cultural tourism which reflect the culture and heritage of each country and destination (Jalis et al. 2009). Santich (2004) also explains gastronomic tourism is about participation or engagement in one culture, including place and people of particular destination and even 8000 – 10000 years ago food, drink, tourism and

culture is already seen as a platform featuring the destination image and interrelated with each other although not been given serious attention (Boniface, 2003).

Scholars contend gastronomy through food not only means as nourishment but increase tourist's experience towards a particular destination (Kivela and Crots, 2006; Hjalager and Richards, 2002). Gastronomy products are now used by the tour operators as a marketing tool, a pulling factor in attracting visitors and play a leading role in adding value to a destination (Shenoy, 2005; Jalis et al., 2009). The Intrepid Travel Agency (2004) reported that much of the tour operators in Australia, United States, Europe and some of Asian countries especially Thailand, China and Japan offering gastronomy packages on top the shopping and sightseeing. Holiday with cooking, food related activities and wine appreciation feature regularly in destinations like Tuscany as well as Provence in Europe, Melbourne and the Sydney Napa Valley in Australia and the Sonoma Valley in California. In fact, tour operators in New Zealand, Australia, Germany and United Kingdom are aggressively offering weekend's gastronomy packages owing to demand for a short and/or weekend holidays among food and wine lovers (Scarpato, 2002).

It is proven that many western countries' tour operators in particular perceived the importance of gastronomic tourism not only in creating the memorable experience for tourists (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006) but would be the best predictor of future behavior and choices among potential tourists (Conner and Armitage, 2002). Kivela and Crotts (2006) posits that tourists will revisit a destination whenever the gastronomy products of one particular destination are unique, suit to their taste bud subsequently disseminate the information on their experiences (Morrison, 2002) or willingness to share experience among friends and

family and willingness to recommend a trip to friends and relatives (Smith et al., 2010). For instance, Cela, Knowles-Lankford, and Lankford (2007) revealed that tourists in Northeast Iowa were primarily motivated to participate in the food festivals resulted through information obtained by word of mouth (WOM). Morrison (2002) in fact conveys that the positive or negative impact of WOM information is considered a crucial to ensure the successfulness or failure of the gastronomy products at one destination.

2 LITERATURE

2.1 *Gastronomy*

The word gastronomy is derived from the greek word “gastros”, which means stomach and “nomos” which refers to rules or regulation (Scapato, 2002; Santich, 2004). Despite many interpretation of gastronomy since twelve century, Brillat-Savarin in 1826 through his text ‘The Physiology of Taste’ has come out with the new concept of gastronomy. This book in fact has become a benchmark and inspired many series of magazines and other gastronomy literatures such as *Le Gastronom* (1830–1831), *La Gastronomie* (1839–1841), *Il Gastronomo Italiano* (1866), and *Le Gastronom* (1872–1873). He described gastronomy was related to the method by which food is produced, its economic implications, its treatment, storage, transport and processing (Santich, 2004). Gastronomy also touched on the preparation and cooking, meal manners and etiquette, the chemistry involved, digestion and the sociological effects of food, food choices, custom and tradition. They concluded that tourists will consume foods and beverages while traveling and at the same time noted that gastronomy and tourism therefore are inseparable or in the precise statement they are closely related with each other (Scapato, 2002; Santich 2004).

In the 19th century, researchers expanded the term gastronomy into the broader realm. Gastronomy was described by Borchgrevink, Nelso and Ruf (1998) as the art and science which relate to the technology of food and beverages, consumption and its applications by referring to Brillat-Savarin’s definition. They viewed gastronomy as a science the aim of which was the preservation of man by the best possible nourishment; this was to be achieved by giving guidance to all who seek, provide or prepare substances which may be turned into food. This notion is further supported by many other commentators (Santich, 1996a; Scapato, 2002; Santich, 2003; Shenoy, 2005; Hall and Mitchell, 2005).

From the perspective of art, there were broader dimensions of gastronomy discussed particularly in the areas of psychology, sociology and anthropology (Santich, 1996b; Bessière, 1998; Kellner, 1999). Santich (1996b) described gastronomy as reflective eating and expanded this into reflective cooking and food preparation as well, maintaining the association

with excellence and fancy food and drink. It not only offers a path towards an understanding of the art and science of food and good eating, but also has great relevance to the society and culture and plays a part in the wider economy (Bessière, 1998). Santich (2004) again contended that gastronomy is associated with the social, cultural and historical aspects of food and eating, encompassing cuisine, restaurants, dining and food culture and tourism. Despite the broad definition of gastronomy given by many scholars, this paper only focuses on food and beverages and food culture elements in relation to tourism.

2.2 *Gastronomic and tourism*

Food and tourism often interrelated to each other (Henderson, 2009; Quan and Wang, 2004) whereby whatever the reasons for travelling, tourists just like the other people need to eat and drink (Richards, 2002; Hall, 2003). In simple word food and beverages cannot be ignored by tourists when travelling and they in fact cannot visit a country without consuming food and beverages (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006; Hall and Mitchell, 2005). Richards (2002) positively conveyed tourists are now consider food and drink as one of the most important elements of travelling (Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Santich, 2004; Long, 2003).

Long (2003) used the term culinary tourism to express the idea of experiencing food and beverages (wine) and other cultures related to them. O’Halloran and Deale (2004) in fact, believed culinary tourism is a newly defined niche that intersects and impacts both the travel and food and beverage industries. Culinary tourism has been taken for granted for a long time; however it cannot be denied that eating and drinking are the integral component of our daily lives (Hall and Sharples, 2003). Owing to its importance, the form gastronomic tourism undoubtedly encouraged the pursuit of travel in the quest for the enjoyment of prepared food, drinks and other related food activities which can resulting in a great memorable gastronomic experiences (Wolf, 2002). In that sense, gastronomic products not only focus on food and beverage but it include food related activities which can reflects the local cultures and heritage to the international tourists (Jalis et al., 2009).

Hjalager and Richards (2002) supported that gastronomic is very significant to tourism industry and play a vital attraction for a particular destination. Each country or cities could be appealing for their unique gastronomic attraction where its products act as a destination image and identity (Cohen and Avieli, 2004). Gastronomic products also were an integral part of travel experience as it serves as both entertainment and cultural activities (Bessiere, 1998; Hall and Sharples, 2003; Fronchot, 2003). In addition, the importance of gastronomic products has catalyzed the overall branding development and marketing strategies for some tourist destinations (Elmont 1995; du Rand et al., 2003; Kivela and Crofts, 2006).

3 GASTRONOMIC PRODUCTS AND MALAYSIAN TOUR OPERATORS

As with other countries, Malaysia holds a great identity that represents a unique culture, custom and tradition. Standing as a multi-cultural country with various ethnic groups and races (Malay, Chinese, Indian and other ethnic groups) giving an advantage to Malaysia with a vast of gastronomy products (Jalis et al., 2007). Owing to the diverse cultures and ethnic groups, the Ministry of Tourism (MOTOUR, 2007) in fact, stressed that Malaysia could simply be a gastronomic heaven.

A vast culinary gourmet comprises variety of tastes ranging from mild, spicy to sweet and sour could make Malaysia one of the best places to experience the gastronomic vacation (Jalis et al., 2009). The styles of cooking, equipments used and the way food and beverages being served are also interesting (Jalis et al., 2007). Not only foods and beverages, food cultures or food related activities are also part of the gastronomy products. Ramadan Bazaar, street stall and night market or known as Pasar Malam are the interesting local food culture activities (Jalis et al., 2009 and Abdul Karim, 2012). Besides those, each ethnic festivals and celebrations also are the strong predictor for international tourists to experience the Malaysian gastronomic products (Jalis et al., 2009). For instances, during Hari Raya festival, varieties of Malay traditional foods like ketupat lemay serunding, rendang, masak lodeh, sambal kacang, cakes, sweets, biscuits and other delicacies are prepared, sell and served (Anon, 1995). Chinese society commonly celebrating Chinese New Year Festival is having traditional foods like nian gao (sticky rice pudding cake), fish vegetables, oyster, abalone, fish balls (yu-wan) and meat balls (jou-wan), duck or chicken. As for the Indian community, a wide variety of spicy foods are being served like chicken tandoori, prawn sambal, fish head curry, thosai, chapatti, idlis, and naans (Jalis et al., 2009) when celebrating Deepavali festival. All those foods and celebrations therefore represent the identity of each ethnic group that could be seen as an interesting to be explored by the international tourists while visiting a country.

Other Malaysian gastronomic products are the uniqueness of traditional eating manner which is being practiced and inherited from one generation to another. Malays and Indians basically pile the plate with rice and other side dishes heaped on top and tucked heartily using their fingers of the right hand while Chinese eat their meals by using chopsticks (Hutton, 2000; Jalis et al. 2007).

With such examples, Malaysia therefore perceived gastronomic products are having a huge opportunity to increase country economy (Jails et al., 2009). Mohammad (2006) argued that Malaysian gastronomic products are interesting and excellent products to be marketed that can boost the international tourists receipt. Other than promoting the conventional tourism products like shopping, sightseeing, theme parks, beaches, historical places and others,

government also aggressively promoting the niche tourism products like Meeting, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE), yacht, culture tourism and sport without ignoring gastronomic as a new means for country revenue (Malaysian Ninth Plan, 2006; Malaysian Tenth Plan, 2010). Street Food Festival which promotes vast of fascinating of the local foods, Malaysia Halal Showcase (MIHAS) where halal foods being introduced to tourists and international potential buyers and the Malaysia International Gourmet Festivals which portrays the combinations of the local and international food are few examples of gastronomic events and festival held (Tourism Malaysia, 2011). As these events produced lime-light and substantially attracted the international tourists, the government through Ministry of Tourism even highlighted Ramadhan Bazaar and listing it in Malaysian tourist calendar (Tourism Malaysia, 2012).

Abdul Karim (2012) revealed that the Ramadan Bazaar attributes (food and beverages, events and culture) significantly influenced the attraction of international tourists to visit the bazaar. A survey conducted by Jalis et. al, (2009) showed that western tourists strongly agreed food events and festivals are one of the main attractions of the Malaysian food culture. International tourists strongly agreed that Malaysia offers a great choice of foods, beverages, snacks and food culture practices which represents the uniqueness as well as identity of multi racial societies.

The effort of government through Ministry of Tourism in promoting gastronomic tourism start to show some positive indication when majority of the international tourists enjoyed, experienced and learnt about Malaysian foods, beverages and food cultures during their vacation although with their own accord (Jalis et al., 2009). In line with this notion, questions arise especially relating to Malaysian tour operators. How Malaysian tour operators perceived the importance of Malaysian gastronomy products and what are their behavioral actions toward it? To be more precise, do Malaysian gastronomic products are important to them and what are their actions toward promoting those products to the international tourists through their tour itineraries? In other word, do dining activities, food festivals and events, as well as food culture are being included in tour packages by the operators?

To date, diverse dimensions of food and tourism or gastronomic tourism have been studied by many researchers (Santich, 2004; Mohd Zahari, 2009; Scarpato, 2002; Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Boniface, 2003; Hall and Sharples, 2003; Cohen and Aveili, 2004; Kivela and Croots, 2006; Fronchet, 2003; Karim, 2006; Henderson, 2009; Jalis et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2009; Shenoy, 2005). Santich (2004) and Mohd Zahari (2009) for instance addressed the relevancy of gastronomy with hospitality education as well as the diversity of gastronomy field and urged the institutions and educators to introduce more gastronomy programs and courses. Henderson (2009) reviewed the contribution of gastronomy to tourism industry, whilst Hall and Sharples (2003) assessed that food as

an essential element of tourist experience and Karim (2006) looked that gastronomy or culinary tourism as a destination. On the level of international tourists experience and consumption of the gastronomic tourism products, study revealed that tourist positively perceived the importance of gastronomic products while traveling to a destination (Jalis et al., 2009).

Despite the proliferation of such studies there has been very limited published studies specifically looking at gastronomic tourism from tour operator's point of view. The extent to which tour operators perceived the importance of gastronomic tourism products and their behavioral action have not yet been widely researched. In other words, do the perceived importance of gastronomic tourism products (food, beverages and food related activities) by the tour operators being translated through their tours itineraries is not known. In fact, no published or unpublished research related to Malaysia has been identified.

This highlighted issue therefore is being investigated under the proposed study. It is expected that the understanding on the perceive importance of gastronomic products and tour operators behavioral action will directly assist the government especially the Ministry of Tourism and related authorities in planning several actions through a collaboration with the local tour operators, travel agencies in promoting the Malaysian gastronomic tourism and in turn contribute and boast up the country economy through foreign revenue.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Karim, N. I. 2012. *Ramadan bazaar, International tourist's attraction and disseminating information behavior*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Universiti Teknologi Mara.
- Anon, 1995. Malaysia festive cuisine. Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing Sdn. Bhd., Malaysia.
- Aydin, S., & Boz, M. 2009. The importance of alternative types of tourism in the continuous development of the tourism industry: Antalya case. Retrieved February 1st, 2012 from <http://turizm-pazarlama.com/?p=30>
- Bessiere, J. 1998. Local development and heritage: Traditional food and cuisine as tourist attractions in rural areas. *European Society for Rural Sociology*, 1 (38), 21–34.
- Boniface, P. 2003. *Tasting tourism: Traveling for food and drink new directions in tourism analysis*. London: Ashgate Publishing.
- Borchgrevink, C.P., Neslso R.H., and Ruf L.J. 1998. It is a chef's life. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Educators*, 10 (2), 13–17.
- Cela, A., Knowles-Lankford, J., & Lankford, S. 2008. Local food festivals in Northeast Iowa communities: A visitor and economic impact study. In M. Robertson, & E. Frew (Eds.), *Events and Festivals: Current Trends and Issues* (pp. 70–85). London & New York: Routledge.
- Chaney, S., & Ryan, C. 2011. Analyzing the evaluation of Singapore's World Gourmet Summit: An example of gastronomic tourism. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31 (2), 309–318.
- Cohen, E., & Avieli, N. 2004. Food in tourism: attraction and impediment. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31 (4), 755–778.
- Conner, M., & Armitage. C. J. 2002. *The social psychology of food choice*. Wallingford: CABI.
- du Rand, G., Heath, E., & Alberts, N. 2003. The role of local and regional food in destination marketing: A South African situation analysis. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 3 (14), 97–112.
- Elmont, S. 1995. *Tourism and food service. Two sides of the same coin*. Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, 57–63.
- Frochot, I. 2003. "An analysis of regional positioning and its associated food images in French tourism regional brochures". *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 14 (3), 77–96.
- Goeldner, C. R., & Ritchies, B. J. 2006. *Tourism: Principles, practices and philosophies* (10th Ed.). New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Hall, C. M. and Mitchell, R. 2005 *Gastronomic tourism: Comparing food and wine tourism experiences*. In Novelli, M. (Eds.), *Niche tourism: contemporary issues, trends and cases* (1st ed., pp. 89–100). Boston: Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann.
- Hall, M., & Sharples, L. 2003. *The consumption of experiences or the experience of consumption? An introduction to the tourism of taste*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Henderson, J. C., 2009. Food tourism reviewed. *British Food Journal*, 111 (4), 317–326.
- Hjalager, A., & Richards, G. 2002. *Tourism and gastronomy*. London: Routledge.
- Hutton, W. 2000. *The food of Malaysia: Authentic recipes from the crossroads of Asia*. Singapore: Periplus.
- Intrepid Travel. 2004. *Intrepid gourmet traveller*. Melbourne, Australia.
- Jalis, M. H., Mohd Zahari, M. S., Zulkifly, M. I., & Othman, Z. 2009. Western tourists perception of Malaysian gastronomic products. *Asian Social Science Journal*, 5 (1), 25–36.
- Jalis, M. H., Mohd Zahari, M. S., Zulkifly, M. I., & Othman, Z. 2007. Gastronomic products as tourist motivational factors: An opportunity to Malaysia. In proceeding of the 2007 Tourism Educators of Malaysia Conference.
- Jalis, M. H., Mohd Zahari, M. S., Zulkifly, M. I., & Othman, Z. 2009. Malaysian gastronomic tourism products: Assessing the level of their acceptance among the Western tourists. *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, 2, 31–44.
- Karim, S. A. 2006. *Culinary tourism as a destination attraction: An empirical examination of the destination's food image and information sources*. Published doctoral thesis, Oklahoma State University.
- Kellner, D. 1999. *The Frankfurt school and British cultural studies: the missed articulation*. Retrieved September 8th, 2007, from <http://www.popcultures.com/theorists/kellner.html>
- Kivela, J., & Crofts, R. 2006. Tourism and gastronomy: gastronomy's influence on how tourists experience a destination. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 3 (30), 354–377.
- Long, L. M. 2003. *Culinary tourism*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Malaysian Ninth Plan. 2006. *Economic planning unit*. Retrieved January 2nd, 2012, from <http://www.epu.jpm.my>
- Malaysian Tenth Plan. 2010. *Economic planning unit*. Retrieved January 2nd, 2012, from www.epu.gov.my
- Ministry of Tourism Malaysia (MOTOUR). 2007. *Malaysia profile of tourists by selected markets 2003–2006*.
- Mohamed, B. 2006. *Image of Malaysia as an International destination*. Retrieved July 17, 2007, from <http://www.hpb.usm.my/tourism>.

- Mohd Zahari, M. S., Jalis, M. H., Zulkifly, M. I., Radzi, S. M., & Othman, Z. 2009. Gastronomy: An opportunity for Malaysian culinary educators. *International Education Studies*, 2 (2), 66–71.
- Morrison, A. M. 2002. *Hospitality and travel marketing*. (3rd ed.). New York: Delmar Publishers Inc.
- O'Halloran, R. M., & Deale, C.S. 2004, June. Food tourism: creating and positioning tourism supply chain. Paper and proceedings for Administrative Sciences Association of Canada, Laval City, Quebec Canada.
- Quan, S. and Wang, N. 2004. Towards a structural model of tourist experience: an illustration from food experiences in tourism. *Tourism Management*, 25 (8), 297–305.
- Richards, G. 2002. *Gastronomy: an essential ingredient in tourism production and consumption?* London: Routledge.
- Santich, B. 2004. The study of gastronomy and its relevance to hospitality education and training. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 23 (1), 15–24.
- Scarpato, R. 2002. *Gastronomy as a tourist product: The perspective of gastronomy studies*. London: Routledge.
- Shenoy, S. S. 2005. *Food tourism and the culinary tourist*. Published doctoral thesis, Clemson University.
- Smith, S., Costello, C., & Muenchen, R. A. 2010. Influence of push and pull motivations on satisfaction and behavioral intentions within a culinary tourism event. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 11, 17–35.
- Taylor, E.A. 2004. Perceptions of the bureaucratic nightmare of HACCP: A case study. *British Food Journal*, 106 (1), 65–72.
- Tourism Malaysia. 2011. Events and festivals. Retrieved February 3rd, 2012, from <http://www.tourism.gov.my/events/>
- Tourism Malaysia. 2012. Events and festivals. Retrieved February 3rd, 2012, from <http://www.tourism.gov.my/events/detail.php?id=1225>
- Wolf, E. 2002. *Culinary tourism: A tasty economic proposition*. Portland: International Culinary Tourism Taskforce.
- Zainal, A., Zali, A. N., & Kassim, M. N. 2010. Malaysian gastronomy routes as a destination. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, 2 (24), 15–24.

This page intentionally left blank

Displacement: Orang Asli socio-culture and food practices

N.M. Shahril, M.S. Mohd Zahari, A.H. Hamizad & M.N. Shuhirdy
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Displacement or resettlement is movement of large number of people from the original settlement to a new settlement or when people leave their original places to resettle in new foreign places where they can begin new life and adapting to new biophysical, social and administrative systems of the new environment. This paper discusses on the displacement or resettlement from the general realm to the specific issue related to Malaysia Orang Asli social-culture and food practices.

Keywords: Displacement, Orang Asli, socio-culture, food, practices

1 INTRODUCTION

It is not harsh to say that over the time and even today the processes of movement from original places to a new one by certain tribes are still occurring in this world. This process happened either by their own free will or because of the exogenous factors (Woube, 2005) and this popularly known as displacement. Akpanudoedehe (2010) denotes displacement or resettlement as movement of large number of people from the original settlement to a new settlement. As explained by Woube (2005), displacement happens when people leave their original places and resettle in new foreign places where they can begin new life and adapting to new biophysical, social and administrative systems of the new environment.

Jibril (1990) names two displacement processes which either by voluntary or involuntary. Woube (2005) clarify voluntary displacement as naturally occur due to nomadic behavior of the indigenous peoples and involuntary displacement occur due to planned displacement scheme introduced by the government for the development of the countries. UN (1997) states voluntary displacement or spontaneous movement allows the tribes to decide whether they want to stay behind or move to other new places. The process has occurring due to factors such as socio-political upheavals like wars, civil unrest, religious; natural disaster such as droughts, famines, and flood. Voluntary movement is cause by the nature of the indigenous community owing to their nomadic behavior causing their voluntary movement from one place to the other places when resources such as food and other essential item for the community is scarce (AITPN, 2008).

Even though voluntary displacement is common among the indigenous however involuntary displacement has been introduced and enforced by the

authorities for the benefits of the tribes, community and society. The displaced peoples are usually resettled closed to a civilization. Involuntary movement or forced displacement involves policies that have the purpose or the effect of compelling people to leave their home and place of habitual residence, or relocating them to another area which sometimes against their will or consent. It is also an act of planned movement of people from their original place to new determined places (UN, 1997). Involuntary displacement occurs due to factors such as planned agriculture, government project like dam construction, which affected a massive land requisition and resettlement of human (Cernea, 1993; Olawepo, 2008). In addition, this displacement process also been introduced by the government to evade the deforestation by indigenous peoples (Nicholas, 2000).

Both displacements processes highlighted are commonly involved the indigenous peoples or tribes and according to Gomes (2004) displacements are to curb the nomadic behavior of tribes including shifting cultivation nature or swidden farming.

2 LITERATURE

2.1 *Element of displacements*

According to Mukherji (1976) as cited in Woube (2005), there are three basic elements in the displacement process namely: type, form or shape, and patterns whereby type explains the formal and functional relationship of the resettlement site, for example house-to-house, house-to-street and street-to-street relationships. Form refers to the geometrical shape of the aggregate of buildings and streets. The shapes of farms, buildings and streets such as square, circular or rectangular are explicitly indicated. A displacement

form can be described as scattered or dispersed in which families form a village or urban community. The design of a dispersed settlement can be made through understanding the microenvironment that includes the fertility of the soil and moisture supply, health advantages and physical distance (Woube, 2005). With respect to the physical and cultural landscape there is another form of settlement, namely in a row or linear. This type of settlement can be formed through kinship affiliation and mutual responsibility.

Pattern describes the geometrical arrangement of a large number of urban and rural settlements that fit into natural and cultural features to determine whether a pattern is clustered, dispersed, linear, in a row, and random, and to what degree of each. Morphological change can also be explained by land-use changes which in turn lead to social and political conflicts, strengthening or weakening of rural institutions and deterioration of the ecological systems. On the other hand, a marginal landscape can be converted into mosaic and beautiful cultural landscape (Woube, 2005).

2.2 *Displacement and socio-culture dynamics*

According to Dubey (2011), displacement happens in real life situation commonly and without hesitation, it is causing major cultural disruption and losses. However, it depends on the magnitude of displacement varies according to population density and ecological conditions (Cernea, 2000). As reported by Viser (1972), Lightfoot (1979), Afolayan (1987), Jibril (1990, 2006), Olawepo (2000, 2006) and Johnson (2009), the socio-culture implications of displacement also happened in developed and developing countries. Resettling in a new country involves establishing economic and social independence, creating capacities to build a future, establishing family and community networks, and developing tools – such as language – that make participation in the larger society possible (Beiser, 2009). Based on behavioral science theory peoples who retain their own cultural identity and incorporating elements of the new ones are more likely to be successful. This is difference from others who choose to assimilate completely to the new cultural identity or who retreat to the familiar while rejecting the new or who abandon the old and at the same time reject the new (Beiser, 2009). Beiser (2009) named four socio culture dynamics of displacement; integration, heritage language retention, adherence to traditional practices, retention of traditional beliefs, and incorporation of majority culture behaviors.

2.3 *The diffusion theory*

In short, the diffusion theory is a theory concerning the spread of innovation, ideas, and technology through a culture or cultures. This theory states that there are many qualities in different people that cause them to accept or not to accept an innovation. There are also

many qualities of innovations that can cause people to readily accept them or to resist them. The Diffusion Theory is widely practiced or applied by sociologists, psychologists, and anthropologists. Gould (1969) and Hudson (1972) interpreted the diffusion theory and applied to the location of resettlements. Their studies focused on the interaction, spread, contact, change and growth of resettlement patterns and the physical distances separating the original settlements from the new resettlements, the local economic resource sites and central settlement places. The reasons why a new area or innovation is adapted rapidly or slowly have to do with the characteristics of geographical barriers such as mountains, rivers, lakes, deserts, languages, cultures, ethnicity, income and bureaucracy (Hägerstrand, 1965).

Hägerstrand (1965) and Gould (1969) stated that the population movements of a certain area manifest four stages: (a) the first stage refers to the physical transfer of resettlers to the new settlement sites; (b) the adaptation process to the biophysical and human environments; (c) the achievement of socio-economic development by the resettlers; and (d) the resettlers are able to manage the biophysical and human environments.

2.4 *Displacement and food practices*

There are lacks of available literatures or studies looking at the relationship between displacement and food practices therefore this section review on the indigenous and food practices and the changes on food practices in general.

Indigenous peoples' food practices contain treasures of knowledge from long-evolved cultures and patterns of living in local ecosystems (Kuhnlein et al, 2009). The dimensions of nature and culture that define food practices of an indigenous culture contribute to the whole health picture of the individual and the community – not only physical health but also the emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of health, healing and protection from disease (Kuhnlein, Erasmus & Spigeliski, 2009). Indigenous people are those who retain knowledge of the land and food resources rooted in historical continuity within their region of residence. The local food practices that they are currently using are those define as “traditional food practices”, which invariably include some foods that may be used by many outside of the indigenous culture (Kuhnlein et al, 2009). Erasmus (2009) and Spigeliski (2009) state that in the indigenous peoples “traditional foods” are refers to food that can be accessed locally, without having to purchase them, and within traditional knowledge and the natural environment from farming or wild harvesting.

Martinez (1998) noted that food like living things are sensitive or involves changes or alteration (Martinez, 1998) and modernization, urbanization are found to have a major impact on it and strongly link to social change (Cwierka, 2000). Some behavioral shifts are occurring in the preparation and

consumption of food including the traditional food and this largely associated with modernization. Modernization in fact not only affects on daily food practices but also in traditional events, celebration as well as ceremonies (Gillette, 1997). Modernization is also a structural change that involves technology development and adoption representing materials (Inkeles & Smith, 1974). The production, processing, distribution of food were extensively shaped by modernization (Sobal et al. 1998 and Sobal, 1999). Jussaume (2001) posited that the modernization of food production, distribution as well as consumption is encouraged by business and policy makers.

Food changes are also influenced by the new trends in the consumption which Miele (1999) described as the emergence of a post-modern circuit of food and the rise of a new culture of consumption among the consumers. The convenience concept of food which comprises of three components like time, physical energy and mental energy significantly contributes to the alteration or changes (Buckley, Cowan & McCarthy, 2007). The convenience concept of food which comprises of three components like time, physical energy and mental energy significantly contributes to the alteration or changes (Buckley, Cowan & McCarthy, 2007).

Berry (2000) argued that as the world move, a slight change occurs not only to the daily consumed food but also to the festival customary food which involved ingredients, methods of preparation, cooking and eating decorum. Similar goes to the cooking equipments and methods of cooking. If in the medieval days, people used equipments made of clay, metals and ceramic in the preparation of festival customary food however, they were gradually modified along with human civilization. A range of stoves, ovens with the gas burners and electric coils, equipments from stainless steel used to roast, bake, poach, simmer and fry are among the examples (Bakalian, 1993).

In sum, the changes of food practices intricately related to the complexities of social and economic circumstances through the force of globalization. Kuhnlein et al (2009) states that with increasingly more of the produced, processed food and marketed at a global scale the less practice of the local food traditions among the urban society and the indigenous are apparent.

2.5 Displacement of Orang Asli in Malaysia

According to Sarah (2009) indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories and consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. Affairs (2010) noted that indigenous peoples are normally involve in non dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued

existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system.

In line with the above notion, the 'Orang Asli' is the indigenous minority in the Peninsular of Malaysia. In Malay and as collective term introduced by the anthropologists and administrator Orang Asli means the Original Person or first people in Malaysia (AITPN, 2008). According to JHEOA (2004), Orang Asli comprises at least nineteen culturally and linguistically distinct groups and the largest are among the Semai, Temiar, Jakun (Orang Hulu), and Temuan with the total number of 149,512 in 2004 representing merely 0.6% of the total National Population. Scattered throughout the Peninsular of Malaysia Orang Asli inhabit areas like mountains, remote valley and thick tropical forest canopy. In spite their small numbers and not homogeneous, each group having its own language and culture and, most importantly, perceiving itself as different from the others (Nicholas, 2000).

Similar to other indigenous peoples in the other country, historically to be exact before 1948, Orang Asli mostly depends on various combinations of activities such as hunting, fishing, gathering, swidden farming, aborigiculture and trading forest products (AITPN, 2008). Having different ways of life and livelihoods, some groups Orang Laut, Orang Seletar and Mah Meri in particular living close to the coast as fisherfolk, Temuan, Jakun and Semai adopting permanent agriculture, planting cash crops such as rubber, oil palm or cocoa, while many around forty percent including Temiar, Che Wong, Jah Hut, Semelai and Semaq Beri continue to live close to or within forested areas and engage in swidden farming, hunting and gathering. Some other groups such as Negritos (e.g. Jahai and Lanoh) are still semi-nomadic, preferring to take advantage of the seasonal bounties of the forest (Affairs, 2010).

Owing to state of emergency or popularly known by the local as "*Darurat*" between 1948 to 1960, which was declared by the British authorities, the process of resettlement of the Orang Asli to the new displacement camp were undertaken to curb or to avoid the communist guerilla spreading their communist ideology towards this indigenous groups (AITPN, 2008). As explained by Carey (1979), thousands of Orang Asli have been brought out or transported from the forest by British and the local authorities to the new resettlement sites. With this, resettlement sites to name a few like Pengkalan Hulu in Perak, Gua Musang in Kelantan were apparent.

According to Dubey (2011), displacement occurs due to the pressure of the development and rapid economy growth. Affairs (2010) explained because of the effect on the rapid economic growth and development, Orang Asli is being reallocated to a new resettlement area provided to give way to the development process. This is happened owing to the Infrastructure Development Project (Pulau Carey), dam construction (Kenyir Dam), highway (PLUS highway), Land Acquisition (FELDA), and mining activity (Iron ore Mining) (Gomes, 2004; Dubey, 2011). Resettlement process

also been introduced by the government to avoid the deforestation and swidden farming by nomadic behaviour of Orang Asli (Nicholas, 2000).

2.6 Displacement, Orang Asli and food practices

Akpanudoedehe, (2010) argue that displacement inevitably causes social cultural changes to the indigenous peoples or tribes. In the new places or new settlement, tribes without doubt encountering and adjusting many facets in their life including economy, education, lifestyles, belief, religion and many others (Woube, 2005). Jamal (1996) noted that indigenous tribes have to adapt and sometimes force themselves to blend in with the locality or new peoples surrounding them. With this, it is argues that Orang Asli through displacements program are believed to have altered their socio-culture elements like domestic economy, household income, education, religious belief, cultural including food practices.

The available studies on Orang Asli mostly were focusing on the socio-economy such as household income and the compensation value paid after the acquisition of the land by the authority (Gomes, 2004; Akpanudoedehe, 2010). However, not to exaggerate that there is no available studies specifically looking at the impact of displacement on Orang Asli traditional food practices from nomadic period until the displacement processed. In other words, to what extent the displacement program besides economy, lifestyle, others altered or influence the Orang Asli traditional food practices yet not discovered and documented. This is also relate to the type of the food prepare, method of cooking, utensils, ingredients and eating decorum. Therefore, the investigation on this issue is still under investigation.

REFERENCES

Afolayam, A. A. 1987. The Sasa Resettlement Project: A Study in Problems of Relocation. *Habitat International*, 2, 43–57.

AITPN. 2008. The Department of Orang Asli affairs, Malaysia: An Agency for Assimilation (On-line) Available <http://www.aitpn.org>

Akpanudoedehe, J. J. 2010. Socio-economic and Cultural Impacts of Resettlement on Bakassi People of Cross River State Nigeria. Unpublished Seminar Paper Presented at the Department of Sociology University of Calabar – Nigeria.

Bakalian, A., 1993. *Armenian Americans: From Being to Feeling American*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publisher.

Beiser, M. 2009. Resettling refugees and safeguarding their mental health: lessons learned from the Canadian Refugee Resettlement Project. *Transcultural psychiatry*, 46(4), 539–83.

Berry, J.W. 2000. Cross cultural psychology: A symbiosis of cultural and comparative approaches. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*. (3): 481–501.

Buckley, M.C., Cowan, & McCathy, M. 2007. “The Convenience Food Market In Great Britain: Convenience Food Lifestyles Segments.” *Appetite*. 49, 600–617.

Carey, I. 1979. The Resettlement of the Orang Asli from a Historical Perspective. Reprint from Federation Museums Journal Vol. 24, New Series 1979, Kuala Lumpur: Museums Department.

Cernea, M. M. 1993. Africa Population Resettlement in A Global Context. In C. Cook (ed). *Involuntary Resettlement in Africa*. Washington D.C: World Bank.

Cernea, M. M. 2000. Impoverishment risks and reconstruction: A model for population displacement and resettlement. In M. M. Cernea, & C. McDowell (Eds.), *Risks and Reconstruction: Experiences of resettlers and refugees* (pp. 11–55). Washington, DC: World Bank.

Cernea, M. M. 2005. ‘Restriction of access’ is displacement: A broader concept and policy. *Forced Migration Review*, 23, 48–49.

Cwierka, K. J. 2000. Encounters and traditions in foodways: Japan and the west. *Food Culture*, 8–11.

Dubey, M. 2011. Capacity Building for Resettlement Management. Management, (December 2010).

Erasmus, B. 2009. *Indigenous Peoples’ food systems?: the many dimensions of culture, diversity and environment for nutrition and health*, Quebec, Canada: FAO Publishing

Gillette, B.M. 1997. Contemporary Chinese Muslims (Hui) remember ethnic conflict: Stories of the late 19th century “Hui Uprising” from Xian. Paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies meeting, Chicago, United State of America.

Gomes, A, G. 2004. The Orang Asli of Malaysia. *Social Sciences*, (November 2004).

Inkeles, A. & Smith, D. 1974. *Becoming modern: Individual Change in Six Developing Countries*. Havard, MA: Harvard University Press.

Jamal, A. 1996. Acculturation?: the symbolism of ethnic eating among contemporary British consumers. *Business*, (December 1996).

Jibril, I. U. 1990. *Resettlement Problems in Usman Town of Nigeria’s New Federal Capital Territory*. Unpublished M.Sc. Thesis of Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria.

JHEOA. 2004. *Orang Asli Berjaya: Edisi II*. Kuala Lumpur: JHEOA.

Johnson, K. 2009. Scars of Bakassi. *The Nation*. (On-line) Available: <http://the.nation.onlineng.net/wb2/articles/25/212/1/scars-of-Bakassi>.

Jussaume Jr., R. A. 2001. Factors associated with modern urban Chinese food consumption patterns. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 10(27), 219–232.

Kuhnlein, H. V., Erasmus, B., & Spigeliski, D. 2009. *Indigenous Peoples’ food systems?: the many dimensions of culture, diversity and environment for nutrition and health*, Quebec, Canada: FAO Publishing

Lightfoot, R. 1979. Planning Reservoir Related Resettlement Programme in North-East Thailand. *Journal of Tropical Geography*. 48, 47–57.

Martinez, R. O. 1998. Globalization and the social sciences. *The Social Science Journal*, 35, 601–613.

Mieli, M. 1999. Short circuits: new trends in the consumption of food and the changing status of meat. *International Planning Studies*, 4(3), 373–387.

Nicholas, C. 2000. *The Orang Asli and the Contest for Resources: Indigenous Politics, Development and Identity in Peninsular Malaysia*. Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs; Subang Jaya, Malaysia: Centre for Orang Asli Concerns.

Ogoboh, A. M. 2010. Socio-Economic and Cultural Impacts of Resettlement on Bakassi People of Cross River. *Science*, 1(2), 50–62.

- Olawepo, R. A. 2008. Resettlement and Dynamics of Rural Change in Jebba Lake Basin, Nigeria. *Journal of Social Science*, 16 (2), 115–120.
- Shaw, M. E. & Wright, J. M. 1967. Scales for the Measurement of attitudes. NY: McGraw Hill.
- Sobal, J. 1999. Food System Globalization, Eating Transformations, and Nutrition Transitions. In: Grew, R. (ed.) *Food in Global History*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Sobal, J., Khan, L.K., & Bisogni, C.A. 1998. A conceptual model of the food and nutrition system. *Journal of Social Science and Medicine* 47: 853–63.
- Spigelski, D. 2009. Indigenous Peoples' food systems?: the many dimensions of culture, diversity and environment for nutrition and health, Quebec, Canada: FAO Publishing.
- UN. 1997. Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francis Deng, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1997/39. Addendum. *Compilation and Analysis of Legal Norms, Part II: Legal aspects relating to the protection against arbitrary displacement*, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.1, 11. February 1998, IV.
- Viser, S. A. 1972. General Introduction in Kainji, a Nigeria Man Made Lake. *Kainji Studies One*. Ibadan: Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research.
- Woube, M. 2005. Effects of Resettlement Schemes on the Biophysical and Human Environments: The Case of the Gambela Region. Ethiopia: Mengistu Woube Universal Publisher

This page intentionally left blank

Ramadan bazaar, international tourists' attraction and disseminating information behaviour

A.K. Noor Ibtisam

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Alor Gajah, Melaka, Malaysia

M.S. Mohd Zahari, S.M. Radzi & S. Izni

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: As part of experiential tourism, many regards food events through gastronomic tourism are considerably important in enhancing visitors' experiences. Realizing the importance and contribution of food events to country economy, greater efforts are undertaken by Malaysian government to promote such tourism activities to the international tourists. Among other food events held, Ramadan bazaar is a unique food culture event which receives significant attention from the Ministry of Tourism. This study reports the empirical investigation on the international tourists' perceptions, attraction towards Ramadan bazaar, their experience, satisfaction and willingness in disseminating the information. Using Ramadan bazaar at Kampung Baru, Kuala Lumpur as data collection setting, results revealed that the Ramadan bazaar attributes (food and beverages, events and culture) significantly influenced the attraction of the international tourists to visit such bazaar. This is further supported by their high level of experience and satisfaction which positively influenced their willingness to disseminate information. The positive response among the international tourist indicates that Ramadan bazaar as gastronomic tourism can be used in addition to other tourism products as catalyser to generate and boost the local economy. The related authorities which are closely associated with the tourism industry therefore should not ignore this indicator but continually take a proactive action in promoting the gastronomic event as one of the major tourists' attraction.

Keywords: Ramadan bazaar, international tourists, attraction, disseminating information behaviour

1 INTRODUCTION

The continuous globalization in tourism industry no doubt has spilled over to Malaysia and becoming progressively important and contributes extensively in economic as well as socio-cultural development. This is an evident when tourists' receipts are continually raised from year to year. For instance, tourists' arrivals surpassed at 19 million with an increase of 7.9 percent 2009 compared to 2008 (Tourism Malaysia, 2009). This situation resulted from wide and various tourism products and activities promoted. Among those, events and festivals are becoming new main attraction and motivating factors for international tourists to choose Malaysia as their travel destination (Tourism Malaysia, 2009). MICE or business tourism (meeting, incentive, convention and exhibition), social events and religious festivals like Thaipusam, Malaysia International Shoe Festival and KL Sunday 1Malaysia Family Fair are types of events held throughout Malaysia.

Besides, food event is also getting important in promoting Malaysia as tourists destination. The Minister of Tourism, Dato' Sri Dr. Ng Yen Yen proclaimed that Malaysian food is unique as it necessitates cuisine

from various culture and most importantly, tourists spent about RM9.7 billion or 17 percent of total tourists expenses on food and drinks (Bernama, 2011). Some of the food events held in the country are the Fabulous Food 1Malaysia 2011, Malaysia International Gourmet Festival, and Malaysian International Food and Beverage Trade Fair.

Among those examples, Ramadan bazaar is another unique food culture event that is getting attention from the Ministry of Tourism. The bazaar in particular is special food stalls that come alive in the late afternoon, providing food and shopping, selling in conjunction with Muslims' fasting month (Aquino, 2011). Naney (2010) stated, Ramadan bazaar without doubt is becoming a yearly food market that happens only during this holy month with huge array of traditional Malay delicacies and local drinks.

Ahmad (2008) argued that although Muslims are not encouraged to overspend or follow their lust with regard to food during this month but Ramadan bazaar attracted many people. Bernama (2010) reported, Ramadan bazaar always packed with people of all races including the foreign tourists and Bavani (2008) noted that they were impressed with the event. The

previous Deputy Tourism Minister, Dato Sri Sulaiman Abdul Rahman Taib additionally noted that though Ramadan bazaar is a Muslims event, it can be one of Malaysia food events that able to attract the international tourists and urged the tour agents to promote the bazaar (Sarawak Tourism Federation, 2009). However, to what extent the perceptions, attraction of the international tourists towards Ramadan bazaar, their level of satisfaction and willingness in disseminating experiences to others have not been widely researched. To date, the available studies focused on the relationship between food and events (Hall and Sharples, 2008; Smith and Costello, 2009; Vecchio, 2010; and Smith, Costello, and Muenchen, 2010) with to researcher knowledge none has touched on how and to what extent Ramadan bazaar in Malaysia potentially in attracting international tourists.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Ramadan and food*

The word 'Ramadan' is universally understood by peoples across the world as its associated with fasting and one of the five pillars of Islam. In particular, Ramadan is the ninth of the Muslims calendar month when Muslims with a few exceptions are obligates to fast during the hours of daylight until sunset for twenty nine to thirty days (Is'harc, 1997). Ramadan indeed, requires Muslims to be patience, perseverance and awakens in the feelings of gratefulness (Khan, 2003).

Apart from religious obligatory, food plays significant roles in this holy month and peoples are looking forward to enjoy many traditional foods prepared or sell through a Ramadan bazaar (Barkha, 2011). Garcia, (2008) and Bastawy, (2008) stated that during Ramadan, Muslims around the world perform the same types of worship however the bazaar and food may vary from one country to another or even from town to village. Timothy and Iverson (2006) contended that Ramadan bazaar has multiple elements including food, culture and sense of feast to be shared among the Muslims and none Muslim. Similar activities are occurring in other Muslim countries whereby Ramadan not only portrays as a windfall to food traders and sellers to intensify their income but promoting food tourism among the international tourists (Ismail, 2006).

2.2 *Ramadan bazaar in Malaysia*

Ramadan bazaar is one of the best activities in the holy month of Ramadan in Malaysia where much flavour of various traditional and tasty foods is selling for breaking the fast (Samsuddin, 2008). With wide selection of delicacies, Ramadan bazaar welcomes the locals and international visitors from various background and ages. Shazana (2006) noted that the changing of lifestyle, economy and busy working, contribute to the popularity of Ramadan bazaar. A variety of delicacies available tempt the eyes from basketfuls of

kuih-muih (local cakes or sweets) to rows of other main and side dishes like chicken 'satay' (skewered marinated chicken grill over the charcoal flame) ayam golek (grilled herbs marinated chicken), grilled fish, murtabak (meat or chicken patty with onions, herbs and egg), tepung pelita (sweets) and many others (Tourism Malaysia, 2005). Visiting Ramadan bazaar is just like taking a culinary walk through Malaysia as it serves visitors with all kinds of food aromas (Tourism Malaysia, 2011).

Kampung Baru, located at the centre of Kuala Lumpur is one of the top Ramadan bazaar sites among Malaysian and getting known among the international tourists and its tasty 'bubur lambuk' becomes tittle-tattle among Malaysians. As Ramadan bazaar portrays a bundling package of food cultural event, it is perceived that this bazaar potentially to be promoted as Malaysia tourism event (New Straits Times, 2011).

2.3 *Food event as attraction*

Tourism scholars claimed that food events are becoming a significant 'pull' or attracting factor to tourism industry recently compared to the early days where it fundamentally acts as a minor conscious among the tourists (Bessiere, 1998; Haukeland and Jacobsen, 2001; Kivela and Crotts, 2006; Hall and Sharples, 2008). This awakening scenario is reflected by the changing of tourists' behaviour that attentively seeking the experiential of food consumption while travelling and tourism operators are urged to creatively enhance and shape the tourism products and services (Yang, 2010). Local food festivals are essential to be utilized as mechanisms to boost the nation's tourism industry. Food events through media coverage developed an intrinsic linkage between events and tourism (Brown, Chalip, Jago and Mules, 2005). Hall and Sharples (2008) noted that events have long been synonymous with food either in religious and spiritual festivals and some of them have been repackaged as tourism events with the aim to draw new visitors to the country (Felsenstein and Fleischer, 2003).

Studies have shown that festival attributes are powerful in attracting tourists to the particular culinary or food events as each of them might has its own unique characteristics and distinctive traits (Kim, Goh and Yuan, 2010). Axelsen and Swan (2010) identified unique different, new experiences, atmosphere, one-off nature, timing of the event, interaction and interactivity, social experiences, special marketing hype and elements of the spectacular as the most effective attributes influenced tourists to experience wine and food festivals. The festive atmosphere, a festive crowd, the entertainment, uniqueness of the festival and novelty of the festival are also recognized as pulling factors (Yuan, Cai, Morrison and Linton, 2005).

2.4 *Disseminating information behaviour*

In tourism realm, disseminating information behaviour of visitors is related to the intention to recommend or

revisit intentions and relies on the quality of attractions that have been experienced by the tourists (Nowacki, 2009). The relationship existed between tourist satisfaction or dissatisfaction with intention to revisit and positive or negative word-of-mouth (WOM) (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Lee, Graefe & Burns, 2004; Woo, Yen & Kim, 2009) and the degree of satisfaction significantly affected the customer retention, repurchase and revisiting (Cronin, Brady and Hult, 2000). Yoon and Uysal (2005) proposed a hypothetical model of the causal relationship between pull and push motivations, satisfaction and destination loyalty. Lee et al. (2004) stated, the effect of service quality on behavioural intention is completely mediated by satisfaction. On food, Chi, Ab karim, and Gursoy (2010) contended positive food image in tourists' mind crucial in generating revisiting intentions and recommendations to others. In short, Hall, Basarin, and Lockstone (2008) claimed that WOM communication, recommending or disseminating information behaviour start to receive significant interest among the tourism field researchers.

3 METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design using a quantitative approach through cross sectional study is applied with self-reported and self-administered questionnaire. The survey instrument was developed into five major sections. Section A comprises of twelve questions using nominal scale and focused on respondent demographic profile. Section B was created to examine the general perceptions of the international tourists' general perception towards Ramadan bazaar. Section C was concerned with the factors attracting the international tourists toward the bazaar based on three attributes (event, food, cultural) while Section D determined the level of experience and satisfaction. Section E is designed to investigate the willingness of the international tourist to disseminate information on their experiences on the bazaar. Respondents were required to translate their view using Likert scale ranging from 1 with "totally disagree" to 5 "totally agree". The pilot study was initially conducted to verify the reliability and validity of the item used. The survey was personally conducted by the researcher during Ramadan month at Kampung Baru Ramadan bazaar. The international tourists mostly Caucasians and Middle Eastern were approached and a total of 180 responses were obtained. The data were coded and keyed in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 16 for analysis.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before undertaking the descriptive analysis, the underlying relationships between items in each stipulated dimensions were statistically tested with exploratory factor analysis. Using Principal component analysis

Table 1. Overall mean scores of perception.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std dev.
Perception	180	3.22	5.00	3.9401	.39852

with varimax rotation and Kaiser Normalization on the fifty items with factor loading of 0.30, six factors were extracted with three items deleted. The six factors were Food (9 items), Events Attributes (7 items), Culture Attributes (6 items), Experience Level (6 items), Satisfaction Level (8 items) and Disseminating Information Behaviour (6 items).

4.1 Overall view of the international tourists

From the mean scores, most of the international tourists agreed that Ramadan bazaar offers important and various experiential attributes including event, food and culture. Evidently they perceived Ramadan bazaar enhancing their food knowledge and experiences ($M = 4.32$, item 1), gives them an opportunity to experience varieties of Malaysia authentic food ($M = 4.22$, item 2). They also believed Malaysia is rich in food culture ($M = 4.08$, item 3) with Ramadan bazaar acts as food tasting event ($M = 4.03$, item 4), truly portraying Malaysian food culture ($M = 3.99$, item 5) and is a very unique food event ($M = 3.88$, item 6). With that, they agreed that the bazaar is a good marketing tool to promote Malaysia as one of the interesting gastronomic tourism destinations ($M = 3.79$, item 7). This notion is strengthened when they considered Ramadan bazaar as part of Malaysia gastronomic tourism ($M = 3.58$, item 8) and one of the tourist attractions ($M = 3.57$, item 9). Result indicates that Ramadan bazaar is having multi elements of events related to food and food culture. The result is summarized in the Table 1.

4.2 Ramadan bazaar attributes

This section further looking at the Ramadan bazaar attributes from the perspective of event, food and culture.

(i) Event attributes

Positive outcomes have been recorded when majority of respondents agreed that the bazaar serves some eventful aspect, suited their interests. Ramadan bazaar as an event offers them to learn more about Malaysia traditional food ($M = 4.11$, item 1), food culture ($M = 4.00$, item 2) with unique atmosphere ($M = 3.94$, item 3). The international tourists agreed that Ramadan bazaar creates an opportunity to understand deeper of Malay food culture ($M = 3.91$, item 4) by experiencing the hawker stalls concept ($M = 3.66$, item 5) and creating chance to interact and socialize with local people ($M = 3.47$, item 4). Majority of them also agreed that the bazaar acts as the melting pot which attracted them to experience ($M = 3.41$, item 7).

Table 2. Overall mean scores on event attributes.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std dev.
Event	180	2.86	4.57	3.7865	.45565

Table 3. Overall mean scores on food attributes.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std dev.
Food	180	3.25	5.00	4.0000	.39040

Table 4. Overall mean scores on cultural attributes.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std dev.
Cultural	180	2.50	5.00	3.7417	.56493

(ii) Food attributes

The respondents mostly visited the bazaar with the intention to understand the different types food offered ($M = 4.43$, item 1), to taste or to experience the varieties of Malaysia typical food and beverages ($M = 4.23$, item 2) and to enhance their food knowledge ($M = 4.19$, item 3). They also intended to learn special and typical local cuisines ($M = 3.87$, item 4), to see the way of some of the foods are being prepared ($M = 3.74$, item 5), to learn locals' cooking style and technique ($M = 3.71$, item 6) and to see the presentation of the food at the bazaar ($M = 3.69$, item 7). Consequently, food becomes the most attracting factor for the respondents to visit the Ramadan bazaar.

(iii) Cultural attributes

Most of the international tourists agreed that they decided to visit the bazaar to learn more about local food culture ($M = 4.13$, item 1), to experience and learn of how the local people with different ethnics enjoying themselves at the bazaar ($M = 3.84$, item 2) and therefore increase their knowledge about Malaysian lifestyle ($M = 3.75$, item 3). They also agreed that the bazaar provides chance for them to see traditional equipments used in preparing the food ($M = 3.69$, item 4) and understand the hospitality and culture of the local peoples ($M = 3.57$, item 5).

4.3 International tourists' attraction

This section measured the international tourists experience and level of satisfaction toward the Ramadan bazaar.

(i) Experience

Most of the international tourists agreed that the bazaar delivered the experience of tasting new and different food ($M = 4.34$, item 1) and they were enjoying the learning and tasting new food ($M = 4.24$, item 2).

Table 5. Overall mean scores on experience.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std dev.
Experience	180	2.50	5.00	4.1083	.51798

Table 6. Overall mean scores on experience.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std dev.
Satisfaction	180	2.50	4.88	3.7951	.48435

The bazaar creates a sense of discovery ($M = 4.21$, item 3) as most of the food and beverage stimulated their appetite ($M = 4.04$, item 4) with a pleasant smells ($M = 3.78$, item 6) and therefore enjoying the experiences of new and local culture ($M = 4.05$, item 5).

(ii) Satisfaction

Majority of the international tourist were satisfied with the taste of the food and beverages experienced in the bazaar ($M = 3.92$, item 1), satisfied with overall scenario of the bazaar ($M = 3.88$, item 3), food culture portrayed ($M = 3.89$, item 2) and food the knowledge gained from there ($M = 3.83$, item 4). Their levels of satisfaction were also expressed to the following items:

- Visiting Malaysia during Ramadan ($M = 3.81$, item 5)
- The overall environment of the bazaar ($M = 3.76$, item 6)
- Malaysian hospitality and culture experienced ($M = 3.68$, item 7)
- Presentation of the food and beverages at the bazaar ($M = 3.61$, item 8)

4.4 Disseminating information behaviour

As resulted, majority of the international tourists expressed that their good experience will be shared with their fellow country mates ($M = 4.31$, item 1), admitted they will recommend and encourage family, friends and others to visit Malaysia even during Ramadan month ($M = 4.09$, item 2). With that feelings, it is not surprising that they were also willing to disseminate information about their experience ($M = 3.88$, item 3), willing to come again to Malaysia during the Ramadan month ($M = 3.77$, item 4) and agreed to recommend the travel agency ($M = 3.58$, item 5).

5 IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ramadan bazaar through its attributes (food, events and culture) evidently attracted significant number of

Table 7. Overall mean scores on disseminating information.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std dev.
Disseminating information	180	2.50	5.00	3.8889	.55235

international tourists to visit and experienced such bazaar. The positive perceptions indicate that Ramadan bazaar able to generate the local economy. Those responsible authorities therefore should not ignore this good sign but take a proactive action in promoting this gastronomic event. It appears that the international tourists who experienced the bazaar were among the young and first time visitors. As they are actually more eager in experiencing and learn new things, the current promotional efforts should draw more attention among the young travellers.

The experiences and high level of satisfaction of the international with Malaysian Ramadan bazaar attributes positively influenced their willingness in disseminating information with others. The authorities who are responsible in managing the bazaar therefore should enforce necessary regulations for food operators like maintaining cleanliness, greetings, kindness and politeness not only toward the local but the international tourists as well. Emphasizing and practicing on these manners will at least create the optimistic dissemination information behavior (WOM) thus encourage repeat and attract new visitors.

Of all, the most remarkable findings learnt from this study is, the connotation of fasting month inhibits the international tourist arrival, restrict their tourism activities in Muslim countries as accused by some people is totally vague. In actual fact, fasting month not only allow none Muslim, but international tourists in particular to explore the country as usual, at the same time creates the opportunity for them to experience the unique food event like Ramadan bazaars which only occur once a year. Therefore, many events in this beautiful country can be taken into advantage as tourism products as long as it is done in a proper manner with the collaboration and cooperation among the government related authorities and stakeholders.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, A. 2008. The Ramadhan Bazaar in Langkawi, Malaysia. *Articlebase: Free online articles directory*. Available at <http://www.articlebase.com>
- Aquino, M. 2011. Ramadan and aidilfitri in Southeast Asia: The Muslim fasting season and its joyous conclusion in Singapore and Malaysia. *About.com Guide*. Available at <http://goseasia.about.com>
- Axelsen, M. & Swan, T. 2010. Designing festival experiences to influence visitor perceptions: The case of a wine and food festival. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49 (4), 439–450.
- Baker, D.A. & Crompton, J.L. 2000. Quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27 (3), 785–804.
- Barkha, M. 2011, August 7. Iftar: Feast after the fast promotes social bonding. *The Times of India*. Available at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>
- Bastawy, U. 2008. Ramadhan in Egypt. *Ramadhanzone*. Available at <http://www.ramadhanzone.com>
- Bavani, M. 2008. Fascinating Ramadan experience for tourists, *The Star Online*. Available at <http://thestar.com.my/metro/story>
- Bernama. 2010. Bazaar Ramadhan best food attracts even non-Muslim. Available at <http://tmreview.com.my>
- Bernama. 2011. Promote Malaysian food in travel packages. Available at <http://blog.drngnyen.com>
- Bessière, J. 1998. Local development and heritage: Traditional food and cuisine as tourist attractions in rural areas. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 38 (1), 21–34.
- Brown, Chalip, Jago & Mules. 2005. Events and branding. In Morgan, N., A. Pritchard, & R. Pride (Eds), *Destination branding: Developing a destination position*, Butterworth: Heinemann.
- Chi, C.G., AbKarim., S. & Gursoy., D. 2010. Examining the relationship between food image and tourists' behavioral intentions. Available at <http://www.eurochrie2010.nl/publications/15.pdf>
- Cronin, J.J.Jr., Brady, M.K. & Hult, G.T.M. 2000. Assessing the effects of quality, value, and customer satisfaction on consumer behavioral intentions in service environments. *Journal of Retailing*, 76 (2), 193–201.
- Felsenstein, D. & Fleischer, A. 2003. Local festivals and tourism promotion: The role of public assistance and visitor expenditure. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41, 385–392.
- Garcia, B. 2008. Observing Ramadan the Indonesian way. *McClatchy-Tribune Business News*. Washington, Available at <http://proquest.umi.com>
- Hall, C.M. & Sharples, L. 2008. Food events and the local food system: Marketing, management and planning issues. In *Food and wine festivals and events around the world*, Butterworth: Heinemann
- Hall, J., Basarin, V.J. & Lockstone, L. 2008. Analysis of satisfaction at Gallipoli on Anzac Day, 2007: Results of a survey of event participants. CAUTHE 2008 conference: where the bloody hell are we?.
- Haukeland, J.V. & Jacobsen, J.K.S. 2001. Gastronomy in the periphery: Food and cuisine as tourism attractions on the top of Europe. Paper presented at 10th Nordic Tourism Research conference (18–20 October), Vasa: Finland.
- Is'harc, I. 1997. *Islam and its festivals*. London: Ta-Ha Publishers.
- Ismail, R. 2006. Ramadan and Bussorah street: The spirit of place. *GeoJournal*, 66, 243–256.
- Khan, M.W. 2003. *Principles of Islam*. New Delhi: Goodword Books Pvt. Ltd.
- Kim, Y.H., Goh, B.K. & Yuan, J. 2010. Development of a multi-dimensional scale for measuring food tourist motivations. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 11, 56–71.
- Kivela, J. & Crofts, R. 2006. Tourism and gastronomy: gastronomy's influence on how tourists experience a destination. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 3 (30), 354–377.
- Kozak, M. & Rimmington, M. 2000. Tourist's satisfaction with Mallorca, Spain as an off-season holiday destination. *Journal of Travel Research*, 38, 260–269.
- Lee, J., Graefe, A.R.S & Burns, R.C. 2004. Service quality, satisfaction and behavioral intention among forest visitors. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 7 (1), 73–82.

- Naniey. 2010. Ramadan bazaar 2010 @ bandar Tun Hussein Onn, Cheras. Eat Your Heart Out. Available at <http://goodyfoodies.blogspot.com>
- New Straits Times. August 5, 2011. Ramadan Bazaar to attract Arab tourists. Available at <http://e.nst.com.my>
- Nowacki, M.M. 2009. Quality of visitor attractions, satisfaction, benefits and behavioural intentions of visitors: verification of a model. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 11 (3), 297–309.
- Samsuddin, M. 2008. Ramadhan in Malaysia. *Ramadhanzone*. Available at <http://www.ramadhanzone.com/malaysia.asp>
- Sarawak Tourism Federation. 2009. Ramadan bazaars have potential to attract many tourists. Press Collection. Available at <http://www.stf.org.my>
- Sharifah Shazana, S.S. A. 2006. Ramadan a time of bustling trade. *The Halal Journal* Nov/Dec 2006. Available at <http://www.halaljournal.com>
- Smith, S. & Costello, C. 2009. Culinary tourism: Satisfaction with a culinary event utilizing importance-performance grid analysis. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 15, 99–110.
- Smith, S., Costello, C. & Muenchen, R.A. 2010. Influence of push and pull motivations on satisfaction and behavioural intentions within a culinary tourism event. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 11, 17–35.
- Timothy, D.J. & Iverson, T. 2006. Tourism and Islam: considerations of culture and duty. In Timothy, D.J. and Olsen, D.H. (Eds) *Tourism, Religion & Spiritual Journeys*. New York: Routledge.
- Tourism Malaysia. 2005. The official launch of bazaar ramadan 2005. Media Release. Available at www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my
- Tourism Malaysia. 2009. Composition of tourist expenditure, 2001 and 2005. Available at <http://www.Chapter8-rmk9.pdf>
- Tourism Malaysia. 2011. Ramadan in Malaysia. Media Feature by Communications & Publicity Division, Tourism Malaysia, 2011.
- Vecchio, R. 2010. Local food at Italian farmers' markets: Three case studies. *International Journal of Social of Agriculture and Food*, 17 (2), 122–139.
- Woo, G.K., Yen, Christy, N.N. & Kim, Yen-soon. 2009. Influence of institutional DINESERV on customer satisfaction, return intention, and word-of-mouth. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28, 10–17.
- Yang, Wan-Chi. 2010. The study of consumer behaviour in event tourism-a case of the Taiwan Coffee Festival. *The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning*, 6 (2), 119–126.
- Yoon, Y., & Uysal, M. 2005. An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: a structural model. *Tourism Management*, 26 (1), 45–56.
- Yuan, J., Cai, L.A., Morrison, A.M. & Linton, S. 2005. An analysis of wine festival attendees' motivations: A synergy of wine, travel and special events?. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 11 (1), 41–58.

Gastronomy in Malay feasts: Sociological changes and modernization

M.R. Alina Shuhaida, M.S. Mohd Zahari, A. Roslina & M. Rosmaliza
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

M. Aishah@Eshah
Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The pursuit of globalization as part of the sociological changes in gastronomy of the Malay feasts raises two fundamental questions that need to be understood. First, how globalization impacts and colors the gastronomy culture in Malay feasts? Second, how other gastronomy cultures from other ethnics impacts the globalization of feasting in Malay culture. Drawing upon these precedents and the impact of globalization, study on multiple layers of social, geographical and historical issues is needed. In fact, study on the differences between Malay gastronomy in Malaysia with other Malays within the Malay archipelagoes is still lacking especially in terms of sociological spheres. Hence, this study will discover the impact of sociological changes in the gastronomy of Malay feasts and the localization of globalization culture in Malay gastronomy which cannot be described in a straightforward manner. The reason being the boundary that delineates Malay ethnics' food is never fixed, or more exactly, it is always adjusted as an effective response to the relevant various Malay ethnics that form Malay, social transformations and the impact of both globalization and localization.

Keywords: Gastronomy, Malay feast, sociology, culture and modernization.

1 INTRODUCTION

From late 19th Century to present, anthropologists have been tracking methodological and theoretical trends in the development of food from various perspectives. Food is not just a topic worthy of inquiry in its own basic states. Food is seen as universal tools that illuminate wide range of cultural and social practices although 'every nation has its own cuisine' (Cusack, 2000). In this era of post socialist for instance, food and culture in many ways have become the instruments of social revolution (Watson, and Caldwell, 2005).

Gastronomy from other countries has influx into this country era since the pre colonization date and colors the core ethnic groups in Malaysia as a sign of globalization. Internationalization is unobtainable through globalization as it is part of internationalization culture where there lays acculturation of food from other cultures. It is probably no cuisine that at one time or another has no relied on foreign borrowings (Cwiertka, 2006).

This globalization phenomenon is unavoidable in this postmodern era and brought changes (Morawski, 1995) in dietary patterns of the nation and the social status of the society (Cwiertka, 2006). Watson and Caldwell (2005) argued internationalization as a major factor causing the product boom and the dietary

change among the core countries in world especially amongst the upper and middle strata earners. Hence, it is understood by considering the fact that both social changes and cultural revolutions accompanying the rise of collectivity reach down to the level of the ordinary and the everyday (Waugh, 2011 and Auslander, 2009).

To the locals, Malay gastronomy is considered as a local food and has been part of the identity of Malaysia. However, the word 'local' carries various meanings which should not be treated as having a unity in the fixed geography; rather, the concepts of locality in regional studies and political geography perspectives seem inherent by virtue of their being bound within a predetermined space as part of globalization. However, as far as this study is concerned, the concept of locality is not only associated with space but also with time. Historically, Malay cuisine varies from region to region due to various sub ethnic groups such as Javanese, Buguese, Rawa, Mandaling and others. Sharif et al. (2008) said the 'local' in can be said that the 'local' should be defined both by the alteration of its spatial relationship and its context in a transitional history of Malaysia with the dominating factors of ethnic groups that rest under the name of Malay. Hence, the concepts of locality are in some sense always floating because they are the products of time-space imagination (Anderson, 1983). In a sense,

it is problematic if the concept of Malay gastronomy is founded on homogenous and essentialist grounds without geographical and historical contextualization in analysing the globalization impacts.

This issue not only raises the question of how far globalization impacts French food or other nation's food such as Japanese, Chinese or Korean food that are steadily globalized compared to Malay food. This is also implies that the nationalization and globalization of foods in these countries are different from the processes that have taken place in Malaysia. Drawing upon these precedents and the impact of globalization, this study inquire Malay gastronomy to be revealed into multiple layers of social, geographical and historical issues. In fact, how does the Malay gastronomy in Malaysia thought to be different between other Malays within the Malay Archipelago or only minor dissimilarities exist within it.

Nevertheless, the increasing quest for Malay gastronomy and globalization is not a social phenomenon that simply reflects the problems of social possibility and restriction for such a pursuit, but also involves the question of why and how it has come to be pursued. Hence, this study will discover the impact of globalization in the Malay gastronomy and the localization of globalization in Malay gastronomy which cannot be described in a straightforward manner because the boundary that delineates Malay ethnic food is never fixed, or more exactly, it is always adjusted as an effective response to the relevant various Malay ethnics that form Malay, social transformations and the impact of both globalization and localization. This is due to the fact that as liked other gastronomy culture, gastronomy in Malay feasts is continually influx with all of the food and culinary components flowing from outside to inside and blending together to construct a unique gastronomy.

2 LITERATURE

The influx of international tourists in Malaysia via its open door policy and warm friendly culture and globalization, is more or less the same as other gastronomy around the world. The various influences in the Malay gastronomy describe the taste of the players and the demand for the changes in the taste. As describes by prominent French Sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu (1984:6), 'taste classifies and it classifies the classifier'.

From this stand of point, this study raises question as an analytical angle on the impact of food revolution due to globalization towards the Malay gastronomy culture. By using the phenomenological approach, this study incentive is primarily founded on the observation of these proceedings, and recently formed global concern about the nation-state as the 'container of culinary culture.' Sociologists define culture as including all those aspects of human life that are learned and shared by members of a society (Riddell, 1989).

3 CONCEPTUAL THEORY AND THEMATIC DISCUSSION

Ferguson (2004) has elaborated on the social construction of culinary fields and gastronomic fields in order to claim that cultural capital, to some extent, corresponds to the notion of revolution of identity: 'Much French culinary culture shares with other culinary cultures, while, the structure of gastronomy as a field is distinctively French'. The important point Ferguson made is that the antecedents and development of discursive power can actually construct any cultural field. Following Ferguson's employment of Bourdieu's theory of the field of cultural production, this study will, **first**, reexamine how the impact of globalization towards gastronomic culture, in particular the Malay gastronomy culture. According to Bourdieu, the field is full of power relations, and the social construction of a field is fiercely involved in power struggles. The field of power is sustained and reinforced by cultivation of proper actions for the effective play of cultural game (Calhoun 2006: 1405).

Differing from Ferguson (2004), we propose that the revolution of Malay gastronomic culture should not be separated from the analysis of the following distinctive but linked fields of globalization—agriculture, economy, technology and knowledge in terms of how cultural reproduction takes place and how they have mutual impact among the fields.

This study will show the rupture between the agricultural field and economy with a historical propensity as the global division of labor and colonial domination developed. Whereas the field of agricultural production is overwhelmingly dominated by the power of political economy, the field of technology and knowledge manifest as the autonomy of cultural practice.

Second, Bourdieu sees the implementation of tactics to be a kind of practice of structuring the established relationship/cooperation between economy and politics. Bourdieu's concepts of structured agency and structuring structure provides an analytical approach for the study of culinary practice in everyday life that echoes what *Michel de Certeau* theorized as *the practice of making-do*, or everyday tactics, in order to illustrate how people strive to maintain their cultural identity as well as to get through economic and political colonization (Certeau, 1980). Drawing on *Certeau's concept of making-do tactics*, we will analyze how the practice of culinary alternation or adaptation commonly results from improvisation in domestic spheres as well as profit-making kitchens.

In addition, the tactic of making do is a practical operation of spatial and temporal relationships, which Certeau elucidates as the 'innumerable practice through which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production' (Certeau, 1984). He further clarifies the difference between space and place to illustrate the concept of tactic and the practical possibility for the implementation of the concept under relations of power. Because the emergence of a making-do tactic does not rely on a

legitimated standing place, it 'has no place except in that of the other' (Certeau, 1980). This provides an adequate approach to understanding the formation of Malay food in the revolutionized and globalized gastronomy culture.

Third, we merge the discussion of social space and spatial practice from the theories of Bourdieu (1984), Certeau, (1984); Foucault (2006) and Lefebvre (2006) as to understand how the reciprocal interaction between structure and agency occurs and manifests its consequence—*space shapes practice, and practice changes space*. We mainly employ Bourdieu's argument on how continuous practice in the field is a response to the change in the material conditions reflecting how they transform spatial and temporal operations, and elaborate on Certeau's concern of social space by pointing out that the tactic of making-do appears, because some social practices are deemed not 'proper,' because they lack spatial or institutional localization (Certeau, 1984). Furthermore, Lefebvre's analysis is used to conceptualize how spatial practice might involve the commodification and symbolization of culinary culture in consumer society. Drawing on these theories, we propose the spatialization of foods refers to the trend that food does not only come from culinary production but also from the production of space that rooted to the globalization perspectives and theories.

Fourth, in order to understand the spatialization of foods, we clarify how the symbolic position of foods is placed in the spatial order and in the hierarchical structure of social distinction by articulating Bourdieu's concepts of *symbolic capital in cultural reproduction and consumption*. The structuring of culinary practices in spatial relations also shapes the representation of Malay gastronomy culture. To be sure, the process of spatialization not only has a great impact on food practices, but also has an impact on the construction of Malay cultural identity, ethnicity, nationality and globalization. In addition, the spatialization of symbolic consumption can also be viewed as a special pattern of '*conspicuous consumption*,' as Thorstein Veblen analyzed it, linking it with the practice of social distinction and class identity.

Furthermore, the transformation of Malay banquets and feasts will be examined to show how Malay gastronomy is designated to present the image in specific time and space. As feasting is an important social institution in Malay culture, the analysis of Malay feasting and banquet culture will provide an understanding of how the symbolic representation of revolution identity in Malay gastronomy in accordance with political demands and influence from other ethnic cultures.

4 METHODOLOGY AND REFLEXIVITY

Certeau (1983) points out the issue of the historical representation and visibility of social things in time-space relationship; the concern of power relations between absence and presence is unavoidable in

Certeau's analysis. Power relations pertain to important social processes determining what is invisible or absent from spatial and temporal situations, and which affect the continuity of social relationship in the present state. This continuity might be made possible by the power of *interpretation* as a part of sociologists' skills. Besides this skill, sociologists can understand the visibility of social things through the analysis of trivial practices in our everyday life. As Certeau implies, trivial or publicly invisible social subjects should be re-evaluated much more to reveal presence as a way to identify the state of revolution.

This sociological research might involve the representation of history as the way to make the invisible and absent history to be represented again in social stages. It will explore the relationship between the macro transformation of social structure and the micro gastronomy culture in Malay history. This phenomenal problem manifests what Certeau (1983) would call the spatial absence or temporal ignorance of social things. The absence of studies on Malay culinary practices is not simply a phenomenon arising in a vacuum of power relations. Instead, it is due to the historical absence of the representation of Malay foods in ancient literature.

To deal with a scarcity of organized historical records, we employ multiple methodologies and frameworks complementing each other in order to analyze the field in which the production and consumption of a national culinary culture took place. On the one hand, this involves multiple frameworks of historical comparison on how culinary cultures form, mutate and continue under different regimes and social milieus. This involves a political economic analysis of the macro-social background. In addition, ethnography is used to illustrate the cooking and eating experiences in everyday life and how banal experiences may be invoked for the construction of collective memories, especially of Malay identities.

This research is built primarily on the phenomenology methodology. From the philosophy of phenomenology comes a focus on the experience itself and how experiencing something is transformed into consciousness. According to Zukin (2008) phenomenologists are interested in 'lived experience' such a focus requires us to explore directly to the things themselves. Phenomenology is a study if people's conscious experience of their life-world, that is their 'everyday life and social action' (Zukin, .2008). It conducts emphasizes on experience and interpretation and using the particular 'tools' of phenomenology. The experiences of different people are bracketed, analyzed, and compared to identify the essences of the phenomenon. The responsibility of the phenomenologist, then to depict the essence or basic structure of experience in human civilization (Merriam, 2009).

To get at the essence or basic underlying structure of the meaning of an experience, the phenomenological interview is the primary method of data collection. Prior to interviewing those who have had direct experience with the phenomenon, the researcher will explore own experiences, in part to examine dimensions of

the experience and in part to become aware of personal prejudices, viewpoints and assumptions. This process is known as *epoche*, a Greek terminology that describes to refrain from judgment. In the epoch, the everyday understandings, judgments and knowing are set aside and the phenomena are revisited (Moustakas, 1994). In addition to epoch, a phenomenological process known as phenomenological reduction method is applied. It is the process of continually returning to the essence of the experience to derive the inner structure or meaning in and of itself. There is a need to isolate the phenomenon in order to comprehend its essence. Hence, a phenomenological approach is well suited with study that examines the affective, emotional and often intense human experiences.

This research focuses on in-depth interviews with the industry players as the informant including gastronomy researcher or academician that seriously embark into the study of gastronomy revolution, Malay gastronome or a person who has a serious interest and well experienced in the Malay gastronomy, service provider such as caterer who always keep in track with the latest trends in the needs of customers towards gastronomical products and services. In summary, it is hope that this study will provide significant insight on the underlying issues.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, B. 1983. *Imagine Communities: Reflection of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso. 2008 pp. 724–748.
- Auslander, Leora 2009. *Cultural Revolutions: Everyday Life and Politics in England, North America, and France*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Bestor, T.C. 2005. How sushi went global. In Watson, J.L. and Caldwell, M.L. the cultural politics of food and eating. U.K.: Blackwell Publishing.
- Bourdieu, P. 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Calhoun, C. 2006. Pierre Bourdieu and Social Transformation: Lessons from Algeria. *Development and Change*. Vol. 27, Issue 6, pp. 1403–1415.
- Certeau, M. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Translated by Rendall, S. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Chuang, Hui-Tun. 1998. *Cultural Hegemony and Resistant Narrative: Analysis on the development of press industry in the early post World War II*. Unpublished MA. Thesis Chungli: National Central University.
- Cusack, I. 2000. African Cuisines: Recipes for Nation-Building. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*. Vol. 13, No.2. (Dec.). pp. 207–225.
- Cwierka, K.J. 2006. *Modern Japanese Cuisine. Food, Power and National Identity*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Ferguson, P. 2004. *Accounting for Taste: A Triumph of French Cuisine*. University of Chicago Press.
- Foucault, Michel (2006). *History of Madness*. New York: Routledge.
- Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. 1983. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lefebvre, H. 2006. *A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Lie, J. 2001. *Multiethnic Japan*. Cambridge, MA.
- Merriam, S.B. 2009. *Qualitative Research. A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA.: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Morawski, S. 1995. *The troubles with post modernism*. Routledge: London.
- Moustakas, C. 1994. *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Palmer, C. 1998. 'From theory to practice: experiencing the nation in everyday life.' *Journal of Material Culture*, 3 (2): 175–99.
- Ridell, R. 1989. *Food and culture in Australia*. Melbourne : Longman Cheshire.
- Sharif, M. S. M., Supardi, A., Ishak, N. and Ahmad, R. 2008. *Malaysian Food as Tourist Attraction*. Paper presented at the 1st Malaysian Gastronomic – Tourism Conference 2008, KDU College Petaling Jaya.
- Watson, J.L. and Caldwell, M.L. 2005. *The cultural politics of food and eating*. U.K.: Blackwell Publishing.
- Waugh, E. 2011. *Balancing flavors, constructing identities and building a community: rethinking diaspora and migration through the foodways of a thai community in Washington D.C*. Thesis Master of Arts in Anthropology, University of Miami.
- Zukin, S. 2008. Consuming Authenticity: From outposts of difference to means of exclusion. *Cultural Studies*, Vol.22 No.5 Sept

Current trend

This page intentionally left blank

Impact of information exchange of e-Word-of-Mouth towards intention to purchase

A.N. Zamzuri, M.S. Mohd Zahari & S.M. Radzi
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Word of mouth has been a powerful form of marketing tool that is found in the discipline of marketing and even sometimes deemed the most important. This paper looks into the impacts of e-word of mouth towards purchase intentions in restaurants especially on the exchanges happening on Facebook. This information exchanges is found in previous studies outside of Malaysia to have impact in influencing the purchase decision of a social networker. Regression analysis shows positive relations between the information exchange towards the intention to purchase in restaurants. Some constructs have been found to characterize the determinants of information exchange being positively affecting purchase intentions such as the nature of relationship of the sender and receiver as one of the determinants for creating the intent to purchase. The norms of information exchanges have also been found to have some similar characteristics with offline information exchange. It can be concluded that restaurants must be pro active in facing this communication challenges as social networks have been important information exchange platforms if they wish to expand marketing efforts on the social network platform.

Keywords: e-Word-of-Mouth, social network, facebook, intention to purchase, information exchange, online communication

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Problem statement*

The internet is one of the leading forms of knowledge and information exchange and communication available to mankind. Information either true or false are exchanged and transferred daily with minimal filtering or supervision has become a recent interest of researchers (Godes and Mayzlin, 2004; Kozinets, 2002; Nelson and Otnes, 2005). The emergence of social websites, blogs, opinion based sites and others has been an alternative to mainstream media for information on almost anything including reviews and endorsements on food and beverage establishment reviews.

Since the rise of popularity of the internet in the new millennium, independent or established website has been another source of review of food and beverage establishments for consumers which is a phenomenon of online interpersonal influences (Senecal and Nantel, 2004). These so call reviews are in proper terms called information exchange of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). Following a research done by Forrester Research (2000) that more than 50% of young internet surfers depend on e-WOM in making their purchase decision. Furthermore even mature rational customer do pay attention to anonymous posts on the internet even though the credibility is questionable (Mayzlin, 2001).

It is unknown whether the reviews and ratings given by consumers on websites give a clear impact on the food and beverage establishment especially in Malaysia. The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the online word of mouth sender and the consumers' intention to purchase.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Information exchange*

Information exchange is deeply embedded in the communication process which involves the sender, receiver and the channel (medium of transmission) which is the classic and traditional of looking towards the understanding of information exchange (Shannon and Weaver, 1949). Research throughout the years have expanded the understanding of communication by adding message, decoding, encoding and disturbance as part of the communication process (Schramm, 1954) and further advancing the understanding of communication by looking upon what in builds the factors in the communication process such as the S-M-C-R model by Berlo (1970). The effect of information exchange towards purchase behavior have been studied by Schiffmann and Kanuk (1997) as information exchanges in the purchase decision process involves the psychological factors of trustworthiness of information received. Furthermore,

past research has stated that information exchange is a particular type of communication which excludes certain social or personal interactions such as phatic communion or discourse relating to social or personal matters (Denize, 2004). The author also stated that, an exchange of information is part of a communication process where a set of knowledge is transmitted between two or more participants. The statements above shows that information is exchanged in a basis whether it is direct or indirect, known or anonymous and seek or been picked up unintentionally. The relation of the information exchange and purchase decision has been studied in the field of other mediums of communication but little has been done in analyzing the effects of information exchange in the realm of social networks. Hence, the study is important in understanding the dynamics of information exchange towards purchase decision in a social network environment as information is transferred unfiltered and has a larger interpersonal span of information reach.

2.2 *Electronic word-of-mouth(e-WOM)*

The study of word of mouth (WOM) has long been studied by scholars in the field of communication. The importance and usefulness of WOM has long been debated since the 1950's. The study by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) which is the pioneering studies on WOM defined WOM as a system of interpersonal relations among friends, co-workers, family members, neighbors, and the like, that is characterized by regular interaction (or communication). Observations by the study show that individuals or groups who communicate in a high basis seem to be collectively and continuously generating ideas and behavior that are common to each other. The author also discovered that WOM was the main source of information and review that are used by individuals for certain household items during the 1950's.

Bikhchandani, Hirshleifer, & Welch (1991) indicates that an agent which is the receiver of information in obtaining new information can shift an agents actions and opinions radically. This in simple terms means that information that is deemed interesting by an individual has a large effect on the view and actions taken by the receiver. The authors tested that the radical shifts of opinions and actions differs from different products were the receiver selects which source of information is deemed more believable for a certain classification of products. Example that is given is that a consumer is more likely to believe WOM more than other information sources for common products such as household items or services but for medical products, a government or medical council report/bulletin is the most believable source of information.

According to Bowman and Narayandas (2001), WOM is more likely to be engaged by customers who consider themselves loyal due of the motivation of showing their expertise on the product. Furthermore the study shows these loyal customers will have the tendency of spreading negative forms of WOM when

a certain degree of dissatisfaction occurs while consuming the product. Anderson (1998) pointed out that WOM engagement is negatively related to the degree of the satisfaction of information obtained.

All the studies above addressed the high importance of WOM in the communication context of business. Understanding how WOM affects the opinion is essential in marketing a product. All studies do not contradict towards each other but shows a similar pattern throughout a half century of WOM studies. Based on the study done by Bickart and Schindler (2001) Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM) is feedbacks and communications to others that is written by means of emails, discussion boards and other online communication medias. Due to the internet's global nature, e-WOM can be provided by consumers to consumers who have never met physically (Gruen et al., 2006).

The power of e-WOM is shown in the study done by Mayzlin (2001) where it is proven that even consumers who consider themselves rational has a tendency of paying attention to on line post done by unknown individuals. Some consumer also consider e-WOM to be more credible than common market form reviews or advertisements (Bickart and Schindler., 2001). The term 'buzz management' is proof that marketers from business firms are taking e-WOM seriously. According to Godes and Mayzlin (2004), firms adopt buzz management as a proactive creation of e-WOM and it is a part of their promotion mix by creating 'buzz' which is e-WOM purposely created by the firm in websites and discussion boards to create information that is deemed credible by the consumer. It is good to mention that the study also shows that e-WOM is a precursor of decisions and information done offline by the consumer.

One could not escape to mention of Facebook when discussing on the e-WOM issues. There are more 68 million active users as stated by Carlson (2010) around the world as of 2010 and is currently growing gradually. That makes it the most widely used social media platform comparing to other competitors such as Friendster, Tagged, Twitter just to name a few. Little scholarly study has tried to determine the true definition of an active Facebook user. According to Viswanath et al. (2009) an active user is defined by as a person who comments, posts and responds to informational activities in a social network (Facebook) with at least a frequency of 5 times a month. This term includes the all the communication services that Facebook provides that is wall post (most common), personal messaging, chat and notes (discussion boards are also considered notes).

2.3 *Study framework*

Axelsson and Easton (1992) suggested eight dimension for the e-WOM actively sought construct to be *Properties of transfer activities, Properties of information, Type of information, Motivations of information Exchange, Properties of exchange media, Types*

of transformational activities, *Information exchange Norms and Nature of relationship*. A five point likert scale was used to rate the five dimensions mention above. According to Cooper and Schindler (2001) the likert scale measures the unfavorable or favorable attitude towards the object of interest. Likert scales measures one person's score with the distribution of scores.

Gilly et al. (1998) suggested five items for the intention to purchase to be *new information given, significant influence, mention helpful things, provided different ideas and influence in service and influence in features*. A semantic differential scale will be used to rate the five items mention above. According to Cooper and Schindler (2001) the semantic differential scale measures the unfavorable or favorable attitude towards the object of interest. Semantic differential scale measures one person's score with the distribution of scores.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sampling

The population that is researched is Malaysian with internet accessibility. According to the Central Intelligence Agency Factbook, the population of Malaysia is estimated to be 25,715,819, the population with internet access is 64.6%. As suggested by Fliess, Levin and Paik (2003) in determining the sample size required for research activities, the calculation presented shows that for a census of 16.903 million a sample size of 384 is suggested with a confidence of 95% and an error of 5.0%. Being align with the study, this study selects 384 respondents as the sample. Non probability sampling is used in attaining data. The method of non probability sampling that is selected is convenience sampling method.

3.2 Data gathering methods

Primary data is collected through questionnaire that was self administered computer-delivered questionnaire e-mailed to the respondents. The questionnaire was written in English and Malay to make the questionnaire more understandable. After completing the questionnaire, the respondent was asked to send back the questionnaire via e-mail.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response rate

From the total number of questionnaires that was distributed, only 217 respondents returned with feedback as the pre requirement of this study as the respondent must be a Facebook account holder. Therefore the response rate is 56.5% which according to Punch (2003) is an adequate number of responses.

4.2 Results of data analysis

Simple regression method was used in measuring the relationship between e-WOM information exchange towards intention to purchase the simple regression is a model approach of investigating the relationship of a variable towards one or more other variables (Cooper and Schindler, 2001). The variables involved in the analysis are e-WOM Information Exchange as the independent variable and Intention to Purchase as the dependent variable.

None of the assumption of the data was violated as the Cook's distance score not exceeding 1.0 as the score is 0.087 which is way under 1.0 which shows that the data has no major data problems as aligned to Pallant (2005) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2001). the R Square score is .286 which in turns means that the predictors explain 28.6% of the dependent variable.

Next, the p-Value is extracted, in this case the p-value is 0.000 which is <0.05 . Thus the data is statistically significant (Cooper and Schindler, 2001). Other than that, it is vital for the analysis to extract the Sig. (p-Value) which scores 0.000 and Standard Coefficients (Beta) which scores .534. The score for the p-value which is <0.05 shows there is a significant unique contribution of e-WOM Information Exchange towards Intention to Purchase which is align to Pallant (2005). The beta score for the analysis is .534.

The p-value of motivations of information exchange, information exchange norms and nature of relationship which is <0.10 shows there is a positive relationship. While, the other constructs type of information, properties of media and motivations for transformational activities which its p-value is >0.10 has a negative relationship. Finally, the beta score of motivations of information exchange rank the highest at .169 which has the highest significant unique contribution of e-WOM Information Exchange towards intention to purchase which is align to Pallant (2005). While the other beta scores are rank following from highest to lowest: information exchange norms (.152), nature of relationship (.146), motivations for transformational activities (.119), properties of media (.054) and type of information (.043).

4.3 Discussion on results

The analysis found that there is a positive relationship between e-WOM information exchange and intention to purchase similar to past research such as Bansal and Voyer (2000). When discussing this issue, one should not see the quantity of the e-WOM but how believable whether positive or negative the e-WOM would be a strong determinant of whether the receiver has the intention to purchase/dine the talked about restaurant. Hence, this proves that some social networkers will pick up the information as it is and trust it without any reservations on its validity.

Construct such as nature of relationship and motivations of information exchange which are negatively

related in the previous subchapter are found to be positively related in this discussion. Only information exchange norms are found to be positive in both analyses. To answer this one must see the nature of relationship of both sender and receiver which is in turn another construct. As confidence was scored the highest mean in the construct, one with close relationship with the sender would not have the worry to have any reservations on the information. Thus, one would perceive someone with very close relation (e.g. family, peers) or high prominence (e.g. Scholars) would have researched the truth on the e-WOM as it would tarnish their relationship or reputation as somebody that can be trusted.

As for motivations of information exchange the construct itself is build upon the receiver has knowledge on the matter and uses information collected from time to time and treats information exchange as a value added process to make decisions. One with prior knowledge doesn't need to scrutinize the truthfulness of an information as he is well conversed in the subject matter.

4.4 Implications of study

The understanding of e-WOM is still considered new in the hospitality domain. Since, the boom of the internet very apparent since the turn of the new millennium has shown that website providers has offered arrays of online services to replace many conventional services and so does the domain of communication has changed as information are sourced out thru many online channels such as Facebook. This study is beneficial mostly on restaurant operators who are currently and planning to have social network accounts or fan pages; more specifically those who are interested in the field of sales and marketing. Understanding the information exchange behaviors of people online will be the main factors of understanding human needs and wants in the future. As WOM is the best form of promotion due to it being free but still it is sometime uncontrollable. Since there is no previous e-WOM on social networks research in the field of restaurant especially those having social networks accounts and fan pages, the outcome of this study will be a stepping stone for further understanding of e-WOM information exchange on social networks.

The research done clearly shows the main characteristics of what will cause people to believe or question is reliability. Furthermore, the research has discussed on factors that will interest social networkers to dine in a restaurant. As many more restaurant are having facebook accounts it is good that they can use this information to filter and react to any comments that are given or written on their or others' walls on their restaurant. It is also discovered that having online recommendations from people with prominence in the restaurant business also will boost the possibility of a receiver to dine in a restaurant. This method can be use as a form of buzz marketing that is being applied by some firms who create buzz intentionally

online to induce purchasing. Other than being beneficiary to restaurateur, this study will be useful for the academic community especially for the hospitality marketing education field in understanding the relationship of e-WOM in social networks towards the purchasing behavior of potential diners in restaurants. This study will also add up to vast knowledge of restaurant operating that is available.

4.5 Conclusion/future research

In this study, we have look into the influence of e-WOM towards intention to purchase in restaurants in Malaysia. As study is still in its infancy in Malaysia in the influence of e-WOM, it is vital for this study to come out with evidence of the influence of e-WOM especially in the domain of social network.

As being been proven in past researches (Denize and Young, 2007; Bansal and Voyer, 2000) on e-WOM it is proven that the Malaysian social networkers are also being significantly influenced by e-WOM in having the intention to purchase.. This can be said that the psychology of intention to purchase is influenced by e-WOM in Malaysian society who are social networkers. It is hope that future research could look upon the information trustworthiness as a mediating variable towards both variables.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, E. W. 1998. Customer Satisfaction and Word of Mouth. *Journal of Service Research* 1, pp. 5–17.
- Axelsson, B., & Easton, G. 1992. *Industrial networks: A new view of reality*. London: Routledge.
- Bansal, H. S., & Voyer, P. A. 2000. Word of mouth processes within a services purchase decision context. *Journal of Service Research* 3, pp. 166–177.
- Berlo, D. K. 1960. *The process of communication*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
- Bickart, B., & Schindler, R. M. 2001. Internet forums as influential sources of consumer information. *J Interact Mark*; 15(3), pp. 31–40.
- Bikhchandani, S. D., Hirshleifer, D., & Welch, I. 1991. A theory of fads, fashions, custom and cultural change as information cascades. *Journal of Political Economy*, 100, pp. 992–1026.
- Bowman, D., & D. Narayandas. 2001. Managing customer-initiated contacts with manufacturers: The impact on share of category requirements and word of mouth behavior. *Journal of Marketing Research* 38, pp. 291–297.
- Carlson, N. 2011, July 15. Facebook has more than 600 million users goldman tells clients 2011. Retrieved August 11, 2011, from Business Insider: <http://www.businessinsider.com/facebook-has-more-than-600-million-users-goldman-tells-clients-2011>
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). 2010. Central Intelligence Agency. Retrieved 05 05, 2010, from CIA Factbook: Malaysia: <http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/my.htmlpdf>
- Cooper, D. R. & Schindler, P. S. 2001. *Business Research Method*, 7th ed. New York, NY; McGraw Hill.
- Denize, S. 2004. *Information Exchange in Interfirm Relationships*, PhD, University of Technology, Sydney.

- Denize, S., & Young, L. 2007. Concerning trust and information. *Industrial Marketing Management* 36 (2007), pp. 968–962.
- Fliess, J. L., Levin, B. and Paik, M. C. 2003. *Statistical Methods for Rates and Proportions*, Third Edition, John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- Gilly, M. C., Graham, J. L., Wolfenbarger, M. F., & Yale, L. J. 1998. A Dyadic Study of Interpersonal Information Search. *Journal of Consumer Research* 20, 1–31.
- Godes, D., & Mayzlin, D. 2004. Using online conversations to study word-of-mouth Communications. *Marketing Science* 2004; 23(4): 545–60.
- Gruen, T. W., Summers, J. O., & Acito, F. 2000. Relationship marketing activities, commitment, and membership behaviors in professional associations. *Journal of Marketing*, 64(3), 34–49.
- Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. F., 1955. *Personal Influence*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.
- Kozinets, R. V. 2002. The field behind the screen: Using netnography for marketing research in online communities. *Journal of Marketing Research* 39, 61–72.
- Mayzlin, D. 2001. *Promotional Chat on the Internet*. PhD dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management.
- Nelson, M. R., & Otnes, C. C. 2005. Exploring cross-cultural ambivalence: a netnography of intercultural wedding message boards. *J Business Research*, 58(1): 89–95.
- Pallant, J. F., 2005. *SPSS Survival Manual: a Step by Step Guide to Data Analysis Using SPSS* (2nd ed.). New South Wales: Allen and Unwin.
- Punch, K. F. 2003. *Survey Research: The Basics*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Schramm, W. 1954. How communication works. In W. Schramm (Ed.), *The process and effects of communication* (pp. 3–26). Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.
- Schiffman, L. G., & Kanuk, L. L. 1997. *Consumer Behavior*, 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ; Prentice Hall.
- Shannon, C. E., & Weaver, W. 1949. *The mathematical theory of communication*. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.
- Senecal, S., & Nantel, J. 2004. The influence of online product recommendations on consumers' online choices. *Journal of Retailing*, 80, 159–169.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. 2001. *Using multivariate statistics* (4th edn). New York: Harper Collins.
- Visnawanth, B., Mislove, A., Cha, M. Y., & Gummadi, K. P. 2009. *On the Evolution of User Interaction on Facebook*. Barcelona: ACM Publications.

This page intentionally left blank

Visitors' preferences on travel website content

Norfadhilah Mohd Akhuan, Fauzunnasirah Fazil & Shareenie Shera Abdul Hamid
Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This study is important to understand the preferences of visitors on travel website content. It is mainly confined to the features of travel websites that are preferred by visitors. This research is able to enhance the effectiveness of travel websites and increase the usability of travel websites among visitors. Besides that, this study also reveals the pattern of internet use among visitors when planning a trip and direction which lead them to perform online transaction. The three main objectives of the study are to: (1) define visitors' levels of usage of the travel websites as information source and for product purchase; (2) determine the website features that would most likely to attract and retain visitors; and (3) measure the relative importance of various content attributes on travel websites. The research method used in this study involves a survey technique which has been used to gather information. A structured questionnaire which consists of four sections were developed and distributed to the sample of study in Melaka. The location for data collection was chosen based on the place where visitors could be accessed conveniently. Tourist destinations in Banda Hilir and Ayer Keroh were located and the international and domestic visitors have been identified as the respondents. The findings of this study indicate the existence of important features that could be considered in websites development, and this includes the accessibility, content and security aspects of the websites. This study has presented a comprehensive description on the preferences of visitors on travel websites content. This defines a mechanism which travel marketers could apply in developing travel websites that able to deliver effective and good service quality to visitors.

Keywords: Internet, travel website, website content, preferences

1 INTRODUCTION

The use of internet has becoming a trend and emergence in this era of globalization. The rapid growth of information and communication technologies has contributed to the boost of e-tourism around the world. This has lead to an increase in the number of travel websites that can be found online, and provide alternatives for online searching. Sheldon (1997) said that information technology such as the internet is the backbone that facilitates tourism. This is proven when nowadays visitors could able to get information on their choices of destination with just a click away. In order to adapt with the current trend, tourism marketers has started investing in the travel websites in order to reach broader amount of visitors in promoting their tourism products. The internet supposedly enables online visitors to receive the real-time updated and unlimited travel information before travelling abroad, and ultimately their final choice of destination to visit. However, not all the websites are able to meet this requirements. This is due to the fact that some of the travel websites are outdated and not providing sufficient information on what they are looking for.

The use of travel websites is creating a new form of interaction in Malaysia. It is a key tool to achieve the competitive advantage in the travel and tourism

industry, and also an affordable way to connect with visitors in all around the world. Therefore, an effective online marketing strategy in travel and tourism plays a crucial role in establishing interactive relationships with visitors and utilizes all channels available on the internet. Besides that, another key feature of the internet lies in its role of facilitating information search for visitors (Mark et al., 2003). Visitors are expecting that they will be able to access a greater amount of detailed information via internet. Therefore, it is clear that such an important means of promoting tourism product requires detailed understanding by the visitors, in order to ease them to navigate the websites and able to get information that they needed.

With number of advantages and opportunities that can be obtained by the marketers through online marketing, it is vital to get more information and knowledge on the experiences of visitors in the use of online travel websites. According to Davern (2005), many online travel businesses failed to fully exploit the potential of the internet. Therefore, such information will identify areas in need of service improvements and will also allow for the development of effective service recovery strategies that may be implemented in situations when failures do occur. Besides that, they need to achieve the effectiveness of their online marketing initiatives by traffic source, online channel, advertising

partner or individual campaign. All of these will lead to the success of their e-customer relationship management efforts in terms of customer satisfaction, retention and loyalty.

Online service quality can be defined as overall customer evaluations and judgments regarding the excellence and quality of e-service delivery in the virtual marketplace (Santos, 2003). It can be divided into various sub-processes such as navigation, searching for information, online transactions, or customer interactions. Customers are unlikely to evaluate each sub-process in detail during a single visit to an online store, but rather will perceive the service as an overall process and outcome (Van Riel et al., 2001). Furthermore, for online customers, high standard of online service quality is the means by which the potential benefits of the internet can be realized (Yang, 2001). Therefore, it is crucial to develop and maintain a travel website that able to meet visitors' wants and needs.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The internet is one of the more recent developments in communications and information transfer. It has been found that the hypertext feature of the internet may have been specially designed for the tourism industry. Not surprisingly, the travel sector is rated among the top three product categories purchased via the internet (Vincent, 2003). Many business corporations use the internet as a valuable marketing tool and as a channel of communication to generate additional sales.

Although the potential for relationship building based on the internet exists, earlier studies indicate that relatively few companies take advantage of these possibilities and that most companies use the internet solely for informational purposes. Travel and tourism is just such an industry where the exchange of information plays a vital role. The industry comprises many independent, geographically dispersed actors offering a complex product to buyers who require some considerable pre-purchase information. Connecting buyers with sellers, the internet and web allows organisations to solve buyer's navigational (search) problems without a dependency on physical location (Russell et al., 2004).

In order to provide an inexpensive and effective platform for marketing and advertising, websites have to be well designed and easy to navigate, which potentially increase their competitiveness in the market space (Parets, 2002). It also notes that knowledge of consumer behaviour, including buying profiles and purchasing habits for related products did influence the design of travel websites. It is of critical importance to travel marketers in formulating appropriate marketing strategies that fully exploit the developing potential of this new medium.

The content of the site is very important, when customers purchase product and services, and has a significant effect on advertising and marketing. Content refers to the information features or services that

are offered in the website and is not limited to the subject, product or services provided. Rather, content includes the solutions and strategies employed to make it easy for the user to accomplish important tasks, such as information retrieval, search and navigation required in making a purchase, and obtaining feedback. Web sites will have also to offer reservation facilities and value added services in order to attract customers to the electronic marketplace. A correct content in a web site allows its users to find the information they are looking for. This is a non trivial problem because users' content preferences change frequently and is not clear which is the best way to define the correct content of a site (Rob and Billy, 2008).

When looking at what makes a good quality website, it is important to take into account the main objective of the design. A website should reflect the value proposition and address whether it is trying to satisfy the customer needs to ensure repeat visits from the customer in the hope of gaining customer loyalty (Khaldoon, 2008).

For most e-business, too much attention is paid to the aesthetic design of the website which ends up looking amazing but actually causes frustration because customers have difficulty in finding what they are looking for. The main reasons why customers go onto the Internet are to find information or buy a product or service with an emphasis on convenience and speed. Any e-business that sticks to this basic principle when designing its website should be relatively successful. Perhaps the most critical factor for any website is accessibility. This refers to the ability for customers to access the website of a particular e-business and navigate its site. Vassilopoulou and Keeling (2000) rate accessibility as the speed with which the home page and following pages download.

Lack of security whilst making transaction online is reported to be the main barrier to customers shopping online (Vincent, 2003). It is crucial that any website has a security policy accessible on every page or offers a secure payment method online. However, customers are far more reluctant to give out card details online and new ways of paying for goods over the internet are being rapidly developed.

Another key barrier to shopping online is privacy. Unless they give permission, customers do not want their personal information being accessed by third parties or being used by companies to increase their customer base. In some countries this kind of information is legally protected, in others it is not the case and with the internet crossing many borders, worried customers should learn to look at the privacy policies before committing any personal details to that e-business (Vassilopoulou and Keeling, 2000).

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Tourist destinations in Banda Hilir and Ayer Keroh, Melaka have been seen as an appropriate location

Table 1. Profile of respondents ($n = 200$ respondents).

Particular	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	84	42.0
Female	116	58.0
<i>Age</i>		
Under 20	2	1.0
20–30	92	46.0
31–40	60	30.0
41–50	40	20.0
51–60	6	3.0
Over 60	0	0.0
<i>Education</i>		
High School	12	6.0
Diploma	40	20.0
Bachelor's Degree	134	67.0
Master's Degree	6	3.0
Doctoral Degree	2	1.0
Other	6	3.0

for this study, and the population is the international and domestic visitors in this both areas. 200 questionnaires were distributed. A structured questionnaire was developed after an extensive review of the relevant literature of previous study. The questionnaire was adapted from previous study by Lorri (2004). However, for this study, it has been developed in dual language, English and Malay. It was aimed to ease the respondents to answer in the language that they preferred. To ensure the content validity and comprehensiveness, the questionnaire was pilot-tested prior to the fieldwork, with 20 participants. Some minor adjustments were made in response to the comments received from the participants.

Interviewer completed questionnaire were used in collecting data from the respondents. This was aimed to reduce the possibility of questionnaire being missing or not return back to the interviewer. Besides that, the interviewer's presence was to clarify or explain if the respondent has any queries on the questionnaire given. After completing the survey, each respondent was given a souvenir for appreciation. Before giving the questionnaire to respondent, interviewer would need to explain and ask permission from the person intended for the survey.

4 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Profile of respondents

4.2 Research findings

Objective 1: Travel websites as information source and product purchase

The respondents were asked to indicate all information sources that they use when planning a trip. Internet was cited most frequently with 92% of the respondents were access to internet when planning

Table 2. Mean score on preferred website features.

Particular	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fast downloading home page	4.49	0.642
Find information only	3.43	0.865
Difficult to find information	3.77	0.861
Amazing-designed travel website	3.81	0.835
Content offered is sufficient	3.44	0.831
Clear menu and relevant information	4.46	0.519
Secure online payment method	4.49	0.757
Having an account with a website	3.97	0.935
Personal information confidentiality	4.68	0.707
Provide online feedback	4.16	0.746

a trip. Secondly, 66% of the respondents were referring to friends/word of mouth when planning a trip. Travel agent was consulted by 58% of the respondents, while television/radio was rated by 51% of the respondents. In terms of printed materials, only 44% of the respondents refer to brochures, and followed closely by magazines which were referred by 43% of the respondents. Travel catalogues were cited by 31% of the respondents, while the least often consulted of information source was visitor guides, as only 28% of respondents refer to this source when planning a trip. The types of travel purchases made by respondents are summarized in this study. The most frequently purchased product was airline travel (74%), followed by accommodation (19%), guided tour (6%), and other category (1%) such as car rental and event tickets.

Objective 2: Preferred website features

Ten statements were developed to reflect the opinion of respondents on the preferences of travel websites. A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure these opinions, with 1 indicating 'strongly disagree', and 5 denoting 'strongly agree'. The responses show that the respondents indicated strong agreement on most of the items.

It can be seen from the results that information on travel websites are not sufficient for the respondents. They have intention to make an online transaction if the information provided is clear. Therefore, a website must be equipped with a clear menu and relevant information. Besides that, it is crucial to provide a fast downloading home page to attract them to visit the particular website.

In terms of online payment, it can be found from the survey that respondents want a secure online payment method in order to encourage them to proceed with online purchase. Most of the respondents were prefer to have an account with a particular website to ease the process of filling in their details in the next visit. However, the respondents do not want their details and personal information being accessed by third parties for other marketing purposes.

The respondents were found more attracted to amazing-designed travel website. But, the respondents

Table 3. Mean score on website content attributes.

Particular	Mean	Standard Deviation
Clear picture with information	4.46	0.715
Accessible everyday and every time	4.45	0.671
Communicates on a mistake made	4.34	0.653
Simple online transaction	4.31	0.675
Site maps	4.18	0.768
FAQ should be available	4.15	0.755
State clearly the website function	4.12	0.767
Consistent in appearance and design	4.03	0.756
Drop down lists	3.97	0.715
Get feedback from users	3.97	0.756

easily get frustrated with the website if they not able to find the information that they want. Therefore, the respondents prefer to have an online feedback in the website, so that they could get immediate response from when they want to seek help.

Objective 3: relative importance of various content attributes

This study further analyzes the features of travel websites that are seen to be important to respondents. The ten statements used in the questionnaire were developed using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 indicating 'very not important' to 5 indicating 'very important'. From the results, the respondents placed the information as the very important feature in a particular travel website. Clear pictures with necessary information are significant for the respondents. Besides that, the respondents indicated that it was important to have websites that are accessible everyday and every time. In terms of website navigation, the respondents rated the site maps as the very important feature so that all parts of the websites are linked and ease the user in navigating a particular website. Another very important feature indicated by the respondents was the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) which should be available on the website. FAQ is aimed to help the user get an immediate solution to particular questions that are frequently asked by most users.

In this study, the results also show that the respondents stated that it is important for a website to state whether it provides just information or allow user to make online transaction. Another important feature is the respondents prefer pages within website need to be consistent in appearance and design. The use of drop down lists was also has been indicated as important by the respondents, in order to inform user what information is available in the search facility. In addition to this, the respondents indicated the importance to get feedback from users through that particular website. However, these few features were at a low relative importance compare with the rest of the features mentioned in previous paragraph.

5 CONCLUSION

Results from the survey show consistency with the findings of Holt (2000). There are several features that need to be emphasized and included in a particular travel website in order to attract and retain the visitors. Information on travel websites seen to be the crucial factor that need to be improved, as visitors were not satisfied with the information provided by most of the travel websites. Therefore, it is important that a website must be equipped with a clear menu and relevant information with a fast downloading home page to attract them to visit the website. Besides that, they prefer a secure online payment method which will lead them to proceed with online purchase. This supports the findings of Vassilopoulou and Keeling (2000) that it is crucial any website has a security policy accessible on every page or offers a secure payment method online. Next, in order to ease the process of purchase, visitors prefer to have an account with a particular website to ease the process of filling in their details in the next visit. However, they do not want their details and personal information being accessed by third parties for other marketing purposes. In terms of website design, visitors will be more attracted to amazing-designed travel website. But, they will easily get frustrated with the website if they not able to find the information that they want. Therefore, an online feedback in the website is seen to be important, so that they could get immediate response when they seek for help. As such, information has been addressed as the very important feature in a particular travel website, and clear pictures with necessary information are significant to give a clearer description.

There are a number of limitations to the findings of this study. One is that only limited numbers of sample have been studied. The possibilities of generalising the findings to whole population in Malaysia are unknown. Although the context in some previous studies is probably fairly similar, generalisations can only be made with substantial caution. Further research in other countries and particularly cross-country comparisons should therefore be valuable. The choice of the empirical field provides another limitation. Research in the both sides of visitors and marketers would also be useful for a more complete understanding of this area. This will be an interesting area for future research. Future research could make several extensions of the current study. It would be useful to empirically test and verify the dimensions developed in this study and to enhance the generalizability of the research findings. An empirical investigation can be examined by using diversified samples across age groups, education level, and the type of the travel site. Additionally, future research may build on the existing model by expanding the numbers of sample studied in this research. Without a doubt, with further research and refinements, the propositions established in this study would certainly be useful in providing a more comprehensive mechanism in enhancing the quality of travel websites among Malaysian travel marketers.

REFERENCES

- Davern, F. 2005. Online sales grow despite site flaws. *Travel Trade Gazette UK & Ireland*, No. 2676, pp. 6.
- Holt, M. (2000). Strategy: ten steps toward a better website design. *Bangkok Post*.
- Hung, Y.C., Yang, Y.L., Yang, H.E., Chuang, Y.H. 2011. Factors affecting the adoption of e-commerce for the tourism industry in Taiwan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 105–119.
- Khaldoon, N. and Jay K. 2008. The antecedents of customer satisfaction with online travel services: a conceptual model. *European Business Review*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 4–19.
- Law, R., Qi, S., Buhalis, D. 2010. Progress in tourism management: A review of website evaluation in tourism research. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 297–313.
- Lorri Katherina Krebs 2004. The effectiveness of the internet as a marketing tool in tourism. Doctoral dissertation, University of Waterloo.
- Mark, B., Nigel, P., and Kevin, V. 2003. Buying or browsing? An exploration of shopping orientations and online purchase intention. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 37 No. 11/12, pp. 1666–1684.
- Parets, R. (2002). Getting the word out: profiting from smart internet marketing isn't just for the big boys. *Lodging Magazine*, August, pp. 37–38.
- Plaza, B. 2011. Google Analytics for measuring website performance. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 477–481.
- Rob Law, Billy Bai 2008. How do the preferences of online buyers and browsers differ on the design and content of travel websites? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 20 No. 4, pp. 388–400.
- Russell W., Rulzion R., and Alexandra S. 2004. Web site accessibility of German and UK tourism information sites. *European Business Review*, Vol. 16, No. 6, pp. 577–589.
- Santos, J. 2003. E-service quality: a model of virtual service quality dimensions. *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 13 No. 3, pp. 233–46.
- Sheldon, P. 1997. *Tourism Information Technology*, Wallingford, UK, CAB International.
- Van Riel, A., Lemmink, J., Streukens, S. and Liljander, V. 2001. E-service quality expectations: a case study. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 437–50.
- Vassilopoulou, K. And Keeling, K. 2000. Usability measurement tool survey: differences between Australia and UK. *Manchester School of Management, UMIST, Manchester*, March 29.
- Vincent C.S. Heung 2003. Internet usage by international travelers: reasons and barriers. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, pp. 370–378.
- Yang, Z. 2001. Customer perceptions of service quality in internet-based electronic commerce. *Proceedings of the 30th EMAC Conference, Bergen*, pp. 8–11.

This page intentionally left blank

User reluctance to post online recommendation: A Brunei case study

D.I.N.F. Pengiran-Kahar

Institusi Teknologi Brunei, Gadong, Brunei Muara, Brunei Darussalam

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study is to investigate variables influencing Brunei recreational attraction users' reluctance to post online recommendation. By using convenience sampling across eight chosen attractions, an analysis of 655 questionnaires shows three user types with separate attraction preferences and usage reasons. There is a significant difference on the users' satisfaction spectrum which reflects a high tolerance for attraction facilities with 'satisfactory' ratings. This paper explores the relation of a user's tolerance towards the state of an attraction's facilities which influences their motivation for online recommendation.

Keywords: online recommendation, servicescape, user satisfaction spectrum, zone of tolerance

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the non-oil, service industries in Brunei which is currently put forward in strategic planning in support of the country's economic diversification. With the number of tourists increasing yearly, managing information on the country's visitor attractions is of importance as it would assist tourists in planning their journey before arriving into the country. Today's technology has a great influence on the tourism industry which involves a change in delivering information useful for tourist travel. Normal online behavior for a tourist may be firstly to browse for attractions of interest to visit in a destination, entertainment available followed by booking a flight and accommodation online. Sources of online information for these attractions may derive from online feedback and recommendation from either locals using or tourists visiting these attractions as well as online corporate information provided by the specific authorities. The availability of these online recommendations creates a personalized relationship between the tourist and the attraction (Smith, 2010).

Social media is a tool for user generated content and hence a source for online recommendation. It is increasing in importance imperceptibly and without encouragement in Brunei. The country has the highest penetration percentage rate of Facebook users across the Asia region with 53.3% as of June 2011 (Internet World Stats, 2011) and its population's Internet involvement is an encouraging 80.7% (318,900 Internet users) as of June 2010 (Internet World Stats, 2010). Yet interestingly, the current state of online recommendation for Brunei recreational attractions on Facebook pages, Youtube videos and Flickr photos does not reflect a balanced ratio with the population's advancement in technology and use of the

Internet. With the keyword used 'brunei attraction', the major recreational attractions resulted with a substantiated number of irrelevant results not representing the place. With such search results seen by a potential tourist to Brunei, the Internet as a communication medium to provide interactive information (Sevdik & Akman, 2002) appears ineffective for the attractions.

The purpose of this study is to investigate variables influencing Brunei recreational attraction users' reluctance to post online recommendation which is useful for independent travellers. This study will help us to provide recommendations for utilizing the current resources present and propose justification to improve and support development of the tourism industry overall.

2 TOURIST AND LOCALS' BEHAVIOUR AS ATTRACTION USERS

An online recommendation by an attraction user is substantial for tourists and local visitors whom are planning trips to these attractions. The current user's attitude towards the creation of user generated content (UGC) (Daugherty, Eastin, & Bright, 2008) may affect the statistical presence of online recommendation. These recommendations allow potential users to embark their own experiences before arrival at the attraction due to the authentic nature of content posted online.

The Internet as an online social communication tool (Nations, 2011) can make an attraction appealing to both international and domestic market if the tool has a market oriented focus (Dunn, 1999). Examples of such tools are an informative website with interactive features (Yocco, Danter, Heimlich, Dunckel, & Myers, 2011) and 'Internet-based applications' (Kaplan and

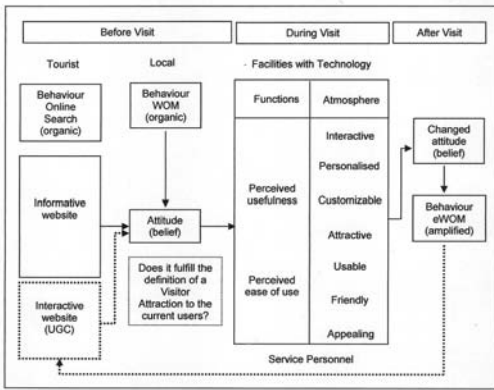


Figure 1. Proposed model to increase e-WOM for a visitor attraction.

Haenlein, 2009:565) which allows attraction visitors to share and gain opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives of their places of visit. It acts as an influencing platform for other potential attraction users (Smith, 2010) travelling to a respective destination. It is important to create positive customer experiences with UGC to promote a service offering (Daugherty, et al., 2008). The technology before physically experiencing the attraction may influence the tourist's overall experience when finally visiting an attraction.

The World Tourism and Travel Council (2006) recommended for a technological advancement in Brunei's tourism industry as it is a technology intensive industry. Introduction of technology related facilities and applications for an attraction with lesser service personnel may provide a better interactive experience for a tourist or a local visiting an attraction. The availability of on-site technology facilities such as touch-screen computer kiosks, guided cell phone tours and video screen monitors (Yocco, et al., 2011) can assist the attractions to understand (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2006) on the engaging behavior of the visitors and their user experiences while visiting these attractions. It is of utmost importance for visitors of various age ranges feeling satisfied after using any facilities in an attraction. In order to achieve a quality visitor user experience, the presence of quality physical facilities which offers comfort (Morgan & Lok, 2000) aims to improve the experience which encourages repeat visits and positive recommendations (Dunn, 1999).

Figure 1 shows a proposed model of an attraction successfully creating a high user service experience and cyclical promotion process. The main factors provided are (1) an informative website with add-on interactive feature as a point for future online recommendation and (2) functional physical facilities with service personnel presence for an utmost service quality. The model incorporated Servicescape model by (Bitner, 1992), Word of mouth (Buttle, 1998), Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), Theory of

Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), Theory of Attitude and Belief and Expectation Disconfirmation Theory.

A good example for the model is Schonbrunn Palace, Austria (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Affiliate Members, 2011) which introduced itself using social media applications, interactive website and a maintained physical historic originality. The complement of technologies with a high service quality created an authentic visitor and user experience before, during and after planning for visiting the attraction. Evidently, this fulfilled visitor expectations and the attraction successfully received millions of visitors.

3 ENCOURAGING USER ONLINE RECOMMENDATION

Any tourism service organisation may encourage online recommendation by identifying their user's level of satisfaction and individual's zone of tolerance.

A user's satisfaction is a continuum within the range of 'Dissatisfaction', 'Satisfaction' and 'Expectations Exceeded' (Khera Communications, 2011). There are multiple levels within each range which is crucial for tourism service organizations to understand their customers (Bartell, 2011). When a user experiences satisfaction as their expectations are met, the higher likelihood there will be an increase in offline recommendation.

In relation to provide online recommendation, users have to be in their individual extreme points of the other two ranges mentioned which is either 'dissatisfaction' or 'expectations exceeded' and not merely satisfied. A tourism organization which delivers an original and novel service creates either strong positive or negative user experience which motivates a user to post an online recommendation (Dahl, 2012). It is important for a tourism service organization to identify its objective in either to simply satisfy or delight their customers (Johnston, 1995) in relation to online recommendation.

Both recommendations require either meeting or exceeding user expectations. When expectations are met, a tourism service organization reveals its service delivery as minimum tolerable performance (Devlin, Gwynne, & Ennew, 2002). An ideal stand for any service organization is to match their delivered tolerable performance with the user's zone of tolerance (MacGregor, 2010). The description of tolerance is the gap between user's own definition of adequate service (influenced by a user's prediction for a service) and desired service (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1993). Generally, a user with lesser knowledge and involvement of the service offered has a wider zone and greater tolerance towards service experienced (Johnston, 1995). The greater the tolerance towards a service delivered, the easier it is to merely satisfy a user's expectation. For online recommendation, a narrower zone for user tolerance would be beneficial to support the organisation's promotion strategy. A tourist

and a local as users clearly will have different width for their zones of tolerance. Additionally, the difference also depends on the user's tolerance towards the success and failure of either functional facilities or the personnel of a service organization (Trianasari, Sparks, & Butcher, 2011).

The study will test this hypothesis as follows:

H1 The user's zone of tolerance towards an attraction's state of facilities does influence their motivation to post online recommendation.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Eight visitor attractions chosen for this study are a combination of 5 natural and 3 man-made attractions. The natural attractions are Kampong Ayer, Tasek Lama Recreational Park, Bukit Shahbandar Forest Recreational Park, Damuan Recreational Park and Serasa beach. The man-made attractions are Jerudong Park Playground, Royal Regalia Museum and Brunei Museum. The criterion for these chosen attractions is based on the fact that locals majorly use the attraction for recreational purposes as well.

The study uses a questionnaire covering five sections to understand the attraction's users' personal details, their consumer behavior, perceptions of the attraction's servicescape (including use of facilities), emotional state and behavioral intention after the visit. The instrument designed with the basis of SERVQUAL (Bitner, 1992) has a total of 30 items.

Twenty students undertaking HND in Business (Marketing) – Intake 25 from the university collected data over a period of two weeks and coded in one single supervised session in April 2011. The sampling procedure chosen was convenience sampling as it captures feedback of any users who were at the attractions.

5 FINDINGS

The study collected a total of 655 completed questionnaires by interviewing users in eight chosen attractions in Brunei Darussalam. There are three user types identified namely locals (82%), expatriates (6%) and tourists (11%). Each user type shares a different combination of natural and man-made Brunei visitor attractions preferred and has different reasons for using them. Local users are using these attractions for the reason of visiting/sightseeing, exercising and quality time with family and friends. Expatriates have a different set of reasons which is to exercise followed by quality time with family and friends. Where else tourists prefer to visit/sightseeing, learn something new and look at the interesting exhibits in these attractions.

5.1 State of attraction facilities

Overall, 73% of the respondents rated 'satisfied' after visiting the recreational attractions. Tourist and local

Table 1. Attraction facilities ratings and its cross tabulation with recommendation behaviour.

Facilities	Usage	Rating	%	95% confidence interval
Facilities 6 – Parking Spaces	Yes	Good	32%	0.028
Facilities 4 – Signboard – Direction	Yes	Good	28%	0.011
Facilities 8 – Playground	Yes	Good	20%	0.011
Facilities 1 – Restroom	Yes	Satisfactory	34%	0
Facilities 2 – Pathway	Yes	Satisfactory	31%	0
Facilities 3 – Signboard – Information	Yes	Satisfactory	28%	0.005
Facilities 10 – Stalls and Restaurants	Yes	Satisfactory	26%	0.122
Facilities 5 – Info Services	No	Good	18%	0.029
Facilities 7 – Picnic Area	No	Good	17%	0.117
Facilities 9 – Surau	No	Good	15%	0.474
Facilities 12 – Activities for Visitors	No	Satisfactory	20%	0
Facilities 13 – Entertainment	No	Satisfactory	16%	0
Facilities 11 – Taxi Services	No	Satisfactory	11%	0.081

respondents' user level of satisfaction fits the normal distribution curve. The user 'expatriates' has a slight difference in its satisfaction distribution where significantly 'very dissatisfied' slowly peaks up resulting to an abnormal pattern.

Thirty three percent (33%) of the respondents commented the visitor attraction's layout as 'satisfactory'. The facilities provided are majorly rated 'good' and 'satisfactory' and considered to fall under the 'satisfaction' range in the satisfaction continuum. Sixty eight percent (68%) of the respondents have a positive mood and 24% of the respondents feel indifference after visiting the place. Eighty three percent (83%) of the respondents suggested for an improvement for the visitor attractions.

Table 1 shows the attraction facilities ratings and its cross tabulation with user's recommendation behavior.

These facilities namely – Restroom, Pathway, Activities for Visitors, Entertainment and Information Signboard has a strong significant impact on users recommending behavior as its minimum function may lead to lesser online recommending behavior. Notably, Information services, Parking Spaces, Direction Signboard and Playground also has a slight significant impact on the recommending behavior.

Table 2 shows the attractions' environment ratings and its cross tabulation with User's Recommendation behavior.

'Feel of excitement' and 'Ambience' in an attraction shows a strong significant impact on the users recommending behavior. This supports Table 1 specifically 'Activities for Visitors' and 'Entertainment' as it creates the environment mentioned. The feelings associated after using facilities of the attractions mentioned above were neither strong positive nor strong negative and merely satisfied. Seventy percent (73%) of the respondents explained their expectations of the

Table 2. Attraction environment ratings and its cross tabulation with recommendation behaviour.

Environment	Rating	%	95% Confidence Interval
Environment 1 – Cleanliness	Satisfactory	37%	0.013
Environment 2 – Ease of Info Signboards	Satisfactory	34%	0.145
Environment 3 – Feel of Excitement	Satisfactory	32%	0
Environment 4 – Safety	Good	29%	0.071
Environment 5 – Temperature	Satisfactory	28%	0.06
Environment 6 – Air Quality	Satisfactory	32%	0.001
Environment 7 – Ambience – Noise	Satisfactory	33%	0
Environment 8 – Music	Satisfactory	20%	0.001
Environment 9 – Ground Staff available	Satisfactory	14%	0.003
Environment 10 – Ground Staff not available	Poor	9.6%	0.474

attractions matched their perception with facilities functioning satisfactorily.

The respondents rated 42% of these attractions with the presence of personnel or ground staff. A Chi-Square statistical test on relationship shows significant difference between presence of personnel with satisfactory performance and the users recommending behavior using alpha 95% confidence levels. This explains the reluctance for online recommendation may be due to (1) personnel's absence in the 58% of the attraction and (2) the satisfactory performance of available personnel.

There were no significant differences ($p > 0.05$) found for recommendation behavior by the three user types. Ninety one percent (91%) of the respondents believe the place has potential to be a tourist attraction and 86% would still provide a personal recommendation for the satisfactory rated attraction for other users which create a cycle of offline recommendation for the attraction.

The three users' main sources of knowledge for these attractions are 'family and friends' (60%), 'Internet' (7.6%) and 'broadcast media' (5.8%). They are users of the attraction who came and visit 'once in a blue moon' (41%); 'first time' (19%); 'once in a month' (14%); 'once in a week' (10%); 'daily' (7%) and 'once in two weeks' (6%). There is no significant impact found between the users' knowledge and involvement with the attraction towards their current recommendation behavior. Interestingly, with alpha 95% confidence level, the user's involvement has a significant impact (0.000) on the users' expectations for the attraction's service offering which are simply to satisfy.

From the results above, the functional state of most facilities with the presence and performance of personnel in an attraction do influence the respondents recommending behavior. With the attraction meeting the user expectation by offering a 'satisfactory' state of

facilities and 86% users still willing to offer personal recommendation, this explains the users having a wide zone of tolerance. This may be the source of reluctance in respondents' to recommend online as there was no excellent feature to stimulate their online recommending behavior. Therefore, the hypothesis H1 above is supported.

6 IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Research limitations/implications – In academic terms, this paper seeks to contribute to understanding of the enhancing importance of a user's tolerance towards an attraction after experiencing physically in order to provide online recommendation.

Practical implications – In terms of policy and practice, this paper aims to assist Brunei Tourism to design a standard for all visitor attractions in the country. A visitor experience achieved via an 'original and innovative servicescape' is highly influential in providing online recommendation about these attractions. The online recommendation envisions intensifying the current brand strategy – "A Kingdom of Unexpected Treasures".

Originality/value – This paper is the first to undergo a study on Brunei visitor attractions.

In conclusion, the important factors which affect the user's reluctance to online recommendation stems from the service organization with a mission to offer satisfactory service quality rather than delighting customers. The case of Brunei visitor attractions is observed to be adequately satisfying requirements of a tourism industry by having the presence of tourist attractions, accommodations as well as transportation. This leads to a user having wider zone of tolerance as their expectations for the attraction's facilities are 'satisfactory' before arriving at the place of interest. Clearly, this may not benefit the country's tourism initiatives. Users would have a narrow zone of tolerance if attractions have more presence of personnel. More than half of these attractions do not provide service personnel which resulted to lesser online recommendation. Their presence can help to improve the attractions environment through provision of activities and entertainment.

It is recommended to all tourism service organizations to revisit their mission and vision for each of their tourist attraction. A service culture has to be in place to encourage online recommendation amongst the users of the attraction which in return increases the number of new visitors amongst the current loyal users of the attractions.

REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. 1991. The Theory of Planned Behaviour. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179–211.

- Bartell, S. 2011. The Customer Satisfaction Spectrum. Retrieved 13 March 2012, from <http://www.scottbartell.com/the-customer-satisfaction-spectrum>
- Bitner, M. J. 1992. Servicescape: The Impact of Physical Surroundings on Customers and Employees. *The Journal of Marketing*, 56(2), 57–71.
- Buttle, F. A. 1998. Word of mouth: understanding and managing referral marketing. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 6, 241–254.
- Dahl, S. 2012. eWOM and tWOM: Are they the same? Retrieved 13 March 2012, from <http://dahl.at/wordpress/2012/02/14/ewom-and-wom-motivations/>
- Daugherty, T., Eastin, M. S., & Bright, L. 2008. Exploring consumer motivations for creating user generated content. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 8(2), 16–25.
- Davis, F. D. 1989. Perceives Usefulness, Perceived Ease Of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), 319–340.
- Devlin, J. F., Gwynne, A. L., & Ennew, C. T. 2002. The effects of a change in customer disposition on the zone of tolerance: A longitudinal study *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 10(1), 47–58.
- Dunn, L.-D. 1999. *Tourism attractions: a critical analysis of the subsector in Jamaica*: Canoe Pr.
- Internet World Stats. 2010. Usage and Population Statistics. Retrieved 27 December, 2011, from <http://www.internetworldstats.com/asia/bn.htm>
- Internet World Stats. 2011. Asia: Asia Marketing Research, Internet Usage, Population Statistics and Facebook Information. Retrieved 27 December 2011, from <http://www.internetworldstats.com/asia.htm>
- Johnston, R. 1995. The zone of tolerance: exploring the relationship between service transactions and satisfaction with the overall service. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 6(2), 46–61.
- Khera Communications. 2011. Customer service techniques: Making customer satisfaction better!, 1–2. Retrieved from http://www.morebusiness.com/running_your_business/businessbutts/ah_goodservice.brc
- MacGregor, D. 2010. Customer satisfaction is not a point but a continuum. Retrieved 13 March 2012, from <http://www.cra.co.za/index.php/Blogs/customer-satisfaction-is-not-a-point-but-a-continuum.html>
- Morgan, D. J., & Lok, L. 2000. Assessment of a comfort indicator for Natural Tourist attractions: The Case of Visitors to Hanging Rock, Victoria. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 8(5), 393–409.
- Nations, D. 2011. What is Social Media? Retrieved 11 October 2011, 2011, from <http://webtrends.about.com/od/web20/a/social-media.htm>
- Sevdik, A. B., & Akman, V. 2002. Internet in the lives of Turkish women. *First Monday*, 7(3).
- Smith, K. T. 2010. Digital marketing strategies that Millennials find appealing, motivating, or just annoying. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 19(6), 489–499.
- Trianasari, N., Sparks, B., & Butcher, K. 2011. *Exploring factors affecting customer's zone of tolerance towards service failure within a hospitality context*. Paper presented at the The 2nd International Research Symposium in Service Management.
- World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Affiliate Members. 2011. *Technology in tourism*. Madrid, Spain.
- World Travel & Tourism Council. 2006. *Brunei Darussalam: The impact of travel & tourism on jobs and the economy*.
- Yocco, V., Danter, E. H., Heimlich, J. E., Dunkel, B. A., & Myers, C. 2011. Exploring use of new media in environmental education contexts: introducing visitor's technology use in zoos model. *Environmental Education Research*, 17(6), 801–814.
- Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. 1993. The Nature and Determinants of Customer Expectations of Service. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 21(1), 1–12.

This page intentionally left blank

Teenagers' involvement in the night club: A case study of Langkawi Island

A.M. Sultana, Ahmad Sohaimi bin Lazim & Mazni BT Mat Akonb

Department of Social Studies and Citizenship, Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The main aim of this article is to examine teenagers' involvement in the night club at Langkawi Island. The article also identified the factors that influence teenagers to go to the night club. Finally, the impacts of night club culture on teenagers have been examined in this article. Respondents of this study consist of teenagers including male and female who live in Langkawi Island. In order to get depth information, the study also used the in-depth interviews with 10 respondents who frequent night club. In addition, community perceptions were also measured through the in depth interviews. Research findings show that various factors influence teenagers' to be involved in the night club. The factors include tourisms, peers influence, lack of parental attention and relief from stress. However, although there are various factors influence teenagers to go to the night club, the influences of tourisms are certainly important. The results show that majority of teenagers who visited night club are influenced by the culture of tourists and friends. The results show that teenagers' involvements in the night club are associated with various social problems such as free socialization, sexual misconduct, alcohol consumption and even drug. The study concluded that night club culture has negative impact on teenagers and the community in Langkawi Island as a whole.

Keywords: Tourisms, teenagers, night club, community, social problems, alcohol, drug

1 INTRODUCTION

Since 1960, tourism industry in Malaysia has been contributing significantly towards international markets as well as economy of the country. Currently, this sector has developed extremely and it has been ranked the second largest foreign income earners in 2000 and the following years (Tourism Malaysia, 2003). It was noted that Malaysia is a growing international tourism sector where 24.6 million international arrived in 2010 and it generated over US \$18.2 billion which contributed at least seven per cent of GDP (MOTOUR, 2011). Additionally, in Malaysia, Islands are fast growing tourism sector in terms of international arrivals.

Langkawi Island is one of the fast growing tourism areas in this country. Since the late 1980s the Langkawi Island has been considered as a major tourism destination by the Malaysian government. In this Island, tourism is economically significant as a source of income for the government. Langkawi Island, therefore, undergo various development processes which change culture, society and socioeconomic condition of the Island. The study focuses the impact of tourism and nightclub culture in Langkawi's teenagers which influence them to be involved in various social problems such as illegal sex, drugs abuse and alcohol related problems.

According to Yahaya Ibrahim (2008) the development such as tourism sector provides a huge impact on

bringing changes to the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the local community. Tourism brought one of the important changes among the local communities such as teenagers' involvement in the Night club in Langkawi Island. In this Island, night club is provided for entertainment especially for the young tourists. But now the teenagers of Langkawi are regular night club visitors around Langkawi. Although only a small number of night clubs are established for the entertainment of the tourists, these are viewed as the most popular places for the teenagers. It was noted that on weekends, most of the night clubs are filled by local teenagers than foreign tourists. These environmental and cultural changes involve various social problems. According to the Ministry of National Unity and Community Development, Malaysia (1997) social problems among teenagers can be considered as Malaysian teenagers' involvement in drinking liquor, stealing, drug abuse, close proximity between sexes in a closed/secluded place, gambling, running away from home, loafing, illegal motor racing, truancy, smoking, vandalism, gangsters, and watching pornographic video.

In 1991, the Malaysian government announced a 30-year "Vision 2020" target of making Malaysia a developed nation in economic aspect, political, social, spiritual, and cultural aspects. Although economic success has been achieved at the considerable level, social problems are increasing, particularly among Malaysian teenagers (Haneef et al., 2001).

Currently, social problems such as crime, violence, drug abuse, adultery, rapes and others among teenagers at Langkawi are at very worrying rate. Very little is known about tourism and its impact for the teenagers around the Island. An understanding of tourism and teenagers' involvement in the night club that might increase various social problems are important to be investigated.

2 IMPACT OF TOURISM ON COMMUNITY: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The theoretical perspective of the impact of tourism on community of this article is predicated on social learning theory Albert Bandura (1977). According to Albert Bandura (1977) behavior is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning. The article starts with the argument tourism involves certain changes among local communities especially teenagers. Arrivals of young tourist and their modern lifestyle are very much influenced by the young teenagers in the Island.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) developed a theory which provides a way to view the problem of teen influenced contextually and environmentally. He suggests that a teen develops within different, interconnected environments, some of which are closer, or proximal, to the teen and others that are more remote, or distal. Each environment contains different influences: include family and peer contexts, whereas environments include community, culture, and historical contexts. It has been argued that teenagers in local communities are influenced with western culture and lifestyle brought by tourists.

Oppermann & Chon (1997) conducted tourism research associated with developing countries. The authors noted that tourism has the socio-cultural impacts on community in these countries. Oppermann and Chon (1997) further elaborated that tourist-host interactions have an effect not only on the hosts and the host society, but also on the tourists and the tourists' societies.

In another study, Smith (1995) stated that socio-cultural impacts of tourism result from the interaction between local people, and tourists. Similarly, Glasson, Godfrey and Goodey (1995) identified socio-cultural impacts are the local community impacts of tourism. The authors have focused on changes in the day-to-day quality of life of residents in tourist destinations, and cultural impacts concerned with changes in traditional ideas and values, norms and identities resulting from tourism (Roselyne N. Okech., 2010). However, most studies are concerned with negative impact on hosts and the host society.

3 OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The objectives of this study are: to examine teenager's involvement in the night club in Langkawi Island; to

identify the factors that influence teenagers to go to the night club; and to analyze the impacts of night club among Langkawi's teenagers. Qualitative methods were used in this study. This study was conducted in Pulau Langkawi, an Island which is located in the state of Kedah. A total of 10 teenagers ranged 18 to 25 years old who frequently go to the night club participated. In addition, community perceptions were also measured through the in depth interviews.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nowadays, due to modernization most of teenagers involve themselves in various activities to spend their time. One of the trends of modernizations are using internet and playing video games (Mohd Amin H.A. Shariff, 1998). Another modern trend is night clubs which are becoming famous among teenagers in the developing and developed countries. Most of teenagers believed that visiting night club is the modern culture as it is practiced in western societies. Thus, it is becoming a modern trend among teenagers (Mohd Al-Adib Samuri, 2010). Even the teenagers those who do not visit night club, they consider themselves as conservative and uncultured as they are not influenced by modern culture.

Night club culture, on the other hand, may spread various social problems such as drinking alcohol, smoking, illegal sex and watching phonographic videos etc. The article, therefore, attempts to examine the factors that influence teenagers to go to the night club and its related social problems that might occurred. However, in order to examine the factors that influence teenagers to go the night club, the in-depth interviews have been conducted especially among the teenagers who regularly visit night club. Respondents were asked what factors motivate them to visit night club." One respondent Daniel states:

"I go to the night clubs because I want to release the pressure and stress. My friends also encourage me to visit the night club to release the stress"

Another respondent Syazana said:

"I go to the night clubs to increase the contacts with visitors who come from other countries"

Based on the statements above, it can be noted that although most of respondents visit night clubs to release stress as well as for entertainment, some respondents reported that they go to night club to increase the contact with visitors who come from other places. To identify the influence of tourism on teenagers' involvement in the night club culture, community perceptions were measured. One of the community members Mr Rafuan who said the following statement,

"It is true that most of teenagers are influenced by foreign tourists that come to Langkawi from western countries"

Similar opinion is expressed by Azura who said:

“It is true that these teenagers are influenced by foreign tourists that coming to Langkawi”

Although many teenagers are influenced by the culture of the tourists, there are other factors that influence teenagers to go to the night club such as parents' lack of attention which can be viewed in Tasha's statement. According to Tasha:

“I go to the night club because my parents do not pay much attention on me”

Lack of attention from the parents might be one of the reasons that encourage teenagers to go to the night club. Lack of parental care and attention for teenagers represents a place of instability and emotional upheaval. However, peer influence is also one of factors that assist teenagers to go to the night club. This can be noticed in another statement provided by Muzani who states:

“I visit night clubs to enjoy with friends. It makes me happy while I go to the night club with my friends”

Peer influence has a strong influence on teenagers' involvement in various activities as well as their development (Noran Fauziah Yaakub, 2000). In general, teenagers spend most of their times with their friends rather than their parents. It is reported that the amount of time is spent with family by teenagers is the half of total amount they spent with peers (Larso et al, 1996). Even in some cases they feel that their peers better understand them compared to their family member.

The teenagers of Langkawi, therefore, are easily influenced by the outside culture especially by the tourists who come from western countries. Moreover, some of teenagers in Langkawi Island went to pursue their higher studies to foreign countries. It is observed that the teenagers who pursued their higher studies in foreign countries and later moved to the Langkawi Island are more involved in the night club culture than those who never visit those countries. From this observation, it can be assumed that tourist' or foreign culture has an influence on teenagers' involvement in the night club at Langkawi Island.

The article also argued that teenagers' involvement in the night club arise various social problems among the communities. One of the social problems can be noted that numbers of teenagers are taking alcohol when they go to the night club regularly. Secondly, these teenagers are frequently taking drug. Even some respondents stated that drinking alcohol is essential when they enter to the night club.

The third of social problem is a symptom of free sexual misconduct among teenagers. Free sexual misconduct among teenagers in Malaysia is very worrying matter. In 2003, a report was published by the Ministry of Health Malaysia on Sexual and Reproductive Health. This report reveals that some children about nine years old are involved in free sex. This phenomenon is also true for the teenagers who regularly

visit night club especially those who are influenced by modern culture.

It was noticed that many teenagers visit the night club without the permission of their parents. While the teenagers go to the night club, social problems might occur there without parents' expectations. According to Mohammad Shatar Sabran (2009):

“In many cases I found that teens are great acting to be good enough at home, but very wild when they are away from home”

From this statement it can be said that while teenagers are in the night club and away from home, there might a great change to be involved in various social problems. During the in depth interviews, most of respondents stated that when teenagers go to the night club, they are involved in various social problems especially drinking alcohol and sexual misconducts are common among them. In this regard one of the respondents Rizky said:

“Many teens lose consideration when they are in the night club and caused them to take drugs and engage in sex”

Muzani also shared similar opinion:

“The teenagers who visit night clubs are familiar with the practice of drinking alcohol as it gives them satisfaction when they visit night clubs”

From the above discussions, it can be summarized that teenagers' involvement in the night club are associated with various social problems free mixing, sexual misconduct and taking alcohol and even drug. Night club, therefore, has a negative impact on teenagers and the community in Langkawi Island as a whole.

5 CONCLUSION

The article examines factors influences teenagers that go to the night club in Langkawi Island. It also examines the impact of night club culture among the teenagers as well as the community as a whole in this Island. The article shows that although there are various factors influence teenagers to go the night club, the influences of tourisms are certainly important. It is noted that the teenagers of Langkawi are easily influenced by the outside culture especially by the tourists who come from western countries. However, there are other factors behind teenagers involvement in the night club culture such as peer influence, entertainment, decrease stress and lack of parental affection that influence teenagers to go the night club. Moreover, teenagers' involvements in the night club are associated with various social problems such as free socialization, sexual misconduct and taking alcohol and even drug. Although economic success has been achieved by tourism at Langkawi Island, teenagers'

involvements in social problems are a worrying matter in this Island. Night club, therefore, has a negative impact on teenagers and the community in Langkawi Island as a whole. Further investigation and serious attention are necessary for the overall development of this Island.

REFERENCES

- Bandura, A. 1977. *Social Learning Theory*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. 1979. *The ecology of human development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Glasson, J., Godfrey, K. & Goodey, B. 1995. *Towards visitor impact management: Visitor impacts, carrying capacity and management responses in Europe's historictowns and cities*. Avebury: Ashgate Publishers.
- Haneef, M., Aslam, Yusof A. Selamah, Amin M. Ruzita, & Noon M Hazizan 2001. *Values and Their Relationship to Social Problems in Malaysia*. *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 19(3), 58–78.
- Larson, R.W., Richards, M. H., Moneta, G., Holmbeck, G., & Duckett, E. 1996. *Changes in Adolescents Daily Interactions with their Families from Ages 10 to 18: Disengagement and Transformation*. *Development Psychology*, 744–754.
- Mohd. A & Shariff, H.A. 1998. *Perkembangan Remaja Pandangan, Pemahaman dan Interpretasi*. Cetakan Pertama. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- MOTOUR., 2011. *Tourism Statistic 2010*. [Report]. Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Tourism.
- Mohd. Shatar Sabran. 2009. *Keterlibatan Remaja dalam Salah Laku Seksual*. Serdang: Penerbit Universiti Putra Malaysia.
- The Ministry of National Unity and Community Development, Malaysia. 1997. *Executive Summary Report on Current Social Problems*. Paper presented by the chief secretary of the Ministry of National Unity and Community Development, Brainstorming Session on Social Issues and Problems in the State of Johor, Kota Tinggi, Malaysia (6–8 March 1997).
- Noran Fauziah Yaakub. 2000. *Perkembangan Sosiologi dan Emosi di Kalangan Remaja: Peranan Ibu Bapa*. Dalam: Ruzlan Md. Ali & Rosna Awang Hashim (Eds). *Perkembangan Sosioemosi Remaja: Tanggungjawab Bersama*. Sintok: Penerbit Universiti Utara Malaysia.
- Roselyne N. O. 2010. *Socio-cultural Impacts of Tourism on World Heritage Sites: Communities' Perspective of Lamu (Kenya) and Zanzibar Islands*. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 15(3), 339–351.
- Oppermann, M. & Chon, K. S. 1997. *Tourism in developing countries*. London: International Thomson Business Press.
- Smith, S. L. J. 1995. *Tourism analysis: A handbook*. Harlow: Longman.
- Samuri., M.A. 2010. *Clubbing Maksiat Purba*. Edisi 29, 2010. Solusi. 93–94.
- Tourism Malaysia 2003. *Tourism in Malaysia: Key performance indicators 2002*. Kuala Lumpur: Planning & Research Division, Tourism Malaysia.
- Yahaya Ibrahim 2008. *Tourism Development and Community Changes in Redang Island*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka

Social Network Sites (SNS) as purchase intention predictor for foodservice marketing on students with access to internet

Ahmad Sahir Bin Jais & Toh Poh See

Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Mara University of Technology (UiTM) Shah Alam, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This research examines the relationship of Social Network Sites (SNS) with purchase intention among students who has access to the internet. A working model is proposed for this research by adapting part of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), social network sites as independent factor, subjective norm as mediating and purchase intention as dependent factor. Sample group of 350 students are randomly chosen and questionnaires are distributed at four Malaysia's Polytechnics in the central region. Regression and correlation analyses are conducted to test the relationship and effect of independent, mediating and dependant factor. Social network sites shows that it does not affect the purchase intention as most of the result are significant among the factors. The results showed that personal comments affect motivation to comply with others $X^2(20) = 218, p < 0.001$. SNS site users also are most likely to purchase after being suggested even though there are and no social pressure from the subjective norm group and support the alternate hypothesis suggested in this research $X^2(16) = 95, p < .001$.

Keywords: Social Network Sites, marketing, students with Internet.

1 INTRODUCTION

With the advent and proliferation of computer hardware and system in the early 60's, humans have changed the function and mode of communication from personal centric communication to the next level of technological based medium of interaction. Initially started for military purposes, the internet began with humble beginning with bulletin board system to now, interactive, user aggregated content. Internet has become one of the major communication tools to date; blazing its way as the 3rd generation premises whereby technologies are the major factors changing the human civilization. Society today, embrace technology without hesitance, exploring every possibilities to their full extend. The potential of internet as marketing tools has long been realized as instrumental in many marketing campaign, even to the extent that it has become an integral part in small and medium enterprises (SME's). Most SME's (Small and Medium Enterprises) and SOHO (Small Office Home Office) are finding innovative means to promote their product and services through online means. The internet has become crucial and pertinent in order to reach their customer.

Not only being an information superhighway, the internet has become indispensable tools in the promotional mix to introduce and market new product (Herbig & Palumbo, 1998). Everything that the

consumer needs can be found on the internet, be it the actual product even to the performance review and highlighting the product strength and weaknesses. SME's which has low capital investment rely on internet as medium of marketing by opening online store, facilitate online ordering and maintaining close communication with their client. To date, it is estimated that online sales alone contribute to at USD 1 trillion in revenue each year. Yet the powers of the internet are not fully realized.

The revolution from web 1.0 to web 2.0 has changed how web content interact with potential consumer (Zakaria, Watson & Edwards, 2010). This is called user generated content. Pioneering the web 2.0 revolution are the social media, where social interaction is conducted on the internet, where people sharing with each other their interest, believe and experience with others.

Marketers and In Malaysia, over the years, number of internet user has increased tremendously, leaping by half in comparison with the population. According to the statistic by (World Bank, 2008), on average, out of every 100 people, 55.8 have access to the internet as compared to in the year 2000 at 21.4 on average. It is prudent to estimate to date, the number of internet user has increased significantly with the commercialization and easy access of mobile broadband services.

Before any purchase decision is made, it is the task of the marketer to create awareness, create interest and desire and stimulate acts which lead to the

actual purchase. The above mention activities might be easy to execute but when it come to services which most foodservice operation fell into this categories, it become harder to market this kind of product. Heterogeneity, intangible, inseparability, variability, makes it difficult to create awareness, let alone purchase intention.

Opportunities for marketing are tremendous, since information gathering stages has move from typical sources such as Yellow pages, advertisement and word-of-mouth to the internet. Social interaction also changes to the cyber space where social media take over one of the largest online communities ever. Malaysia ranked 4th place in the world of social network website user, facebook. (Gibs & Bruich 2010)

It is imperative that, marketer as whole, to get the current picture of the prevalent scenario so that foodservice operator especially can reap the benefits of social media, particularly facebook and blog in expanding their business and build brand loyalty in a long run. This research will examine the relation of social network, in creating consumer intention to purchase, which in turn might results in the actual purchase.

2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Social network began with intention of fostering cooperation connecting peers among other thing. But when the social network gain momentum and began as an instant success. Entrepreneurs then realize its vast potential as an untapped marketing resource with unlimited data mining capabilities (Martin et al 2009). By applying and redirecting proper resources within the company, marketing effort is enhanced by targeting the right consumer, within the right market segments who are only interested in specific products (Simmons 2006). Product placements strategically within the social network are not considered annoying advertisement but rather the main reason they enjoy social interaction online. The novelty of social networks depends largely on its character as a user-generated-content (Wu 2002). Viewers and member can actively participate in discussion, post comments and communicate vocal opinion with damaging consequences (Everett, 2010). Business with bad track record is often condemned openly to the point of tarnishing its reputation and chided away potential customer (Opoku, Abratt et al., 2007), (Palmer & Lewis, 2009). Foodservice operations in Malaysia are yet to realize the full potential of social network. Social network to marketers abroad, are integrate in the integrated marketing communications (IMC) to create awareness, maintain close customer relation and propagate a free channel of communication between customer and business entity (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Palmer and Lewis, 2009). Ironically in Malaysia, we are lagging in terms of tapping this free, unregulated media as it still new (Zakaria, Watson & Edwards,

2010). By doing this, marketers especially in the food-services industry should be aware and realized the full potential of this emerging trend, try to ride with the trends to reap as much as possible their benefits.

2.1 Research question

By examining the objectives, this research proposed to satisfy these following questions. The questions are:

1. Is social network sites suitable to be utilized as a major foodservice marketing tool?
2. Are social networks sites significant in creating purchase intention of foodservice products amongst students?

2.2 Hypotheses

Data gathered from this research will be analyzed to determine whether these following hypotheses are substantiated. Several hypotheses are presented and to be tested during this research.

- H1 There is relationship between personal comments by online friends in Social Network sites and motivation to comply with others
- H2 Suggestion by online friends in social network sites does creates purchase intention

By doing this research it is imperative to gauge the strength and extend of social media in invoking purchase intention among internet literate youth. Data from this research can be used to help foodservice operator to better plan and enhanced their marketing efforts. Previous published research mostly dealt with the closeness ties, exploring social network from sociological approaches even though the potential for direct marketing trough social network are officially recognized.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing has changed tremendously by leap and bound during last few decades. One Major reason for this change is contributed by technological advancement. Traditional distribution channel change to accommodate changing customer purchase pattern

3.1 Marketing opportunity by using the Internet

Previous research as early as 1995 has recognized the opportunity internet bring upon business and marketers alike. Keefer & Baiget (1995), Herbig & Hale (1997), Palumbo & Herbig (1998) recognised the true value of internet as a medium of marketing, citing it as "the most important promotional tools of the century". Yet, prior to year 2000 the internet are still undeveloped as it is today. The usage of the internet has branch out to cater various needs and wants of the market and marketing, still rely heavily on internet presence as major marketing tools to this date. Being dynamic, the

internet has gone through several “revolution” which changed the whole virtual world landscape. The phrase Web 2.0, generalized the idea that internet and web content being passive and static information storage, to being interactive with online collaboration from user and visitor. Oberhelman (2007), Paroutis & Al Saleh (2009), Kuhlen (2003).

3.2 Online purchase behavior

Studies have suggested that one of the major reason online purchase increase drastically over the years contributed by one factor, consumer involvement (Wu, 2002). The higher the degree of involvement, chances of online purchase are most likely to occur. Aboel-maged (2009) suggest that online purchase adoption is depending on the consumer attitude and influencing by a strong influencer. This assumption concur with Ajzen (1970;1980;2006) theory of planned behavior which stipulate one of the reason actual behavior took place due to strong influence in normative beliefs stage and exacerbate with motivation to comply with other creating intention that leads to actual behavior.

3.3 Social network – behavior relationship

Social networks sites or SNSs are defined as Web-based services that allow individuals to Construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, Articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Social network is a form of computer mediated communication (CMC).

Social network depends heavily on its appeal as user generated media. Web-based services that allow individuals to, i) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, ii) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and iii) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

Boyd and Ellison (2008) Shao (2008) and Keenan & Shiri (2009) examined the relationship of user generated media with human behavior. The finding indicates that person personal choices of interacting using social network are for self actualization and self expression. In order to achieve self actualization, human needs to be satisfy first, in this case social needs. Maslow (1943) suggests that within social needs, the sense of belonging and acceptance are needed by human in order to fulfill the necessity being deprived of lack of loneliness, anxiety and depression or part thereof. Being in a group, social pressure within the compounded environment somehow or eventually motivates human to work according to the social and subjective norms.

3.4 Social network to facilitate purchase decision making

It is undeniably that social network have a practical cognitive function in facilitating product choice.

Cited theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) it has been acknowledge that peer group plays a vital role in forming intention. When searching for information regarding services and product, potential customer prefers to be guided by friends and personal contact rather than directly dealing with the company itself (Harrison–Walker, 2001; Susskind, 2002).

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted over a period of four month at four Malaysian Polytechnics, Central region. 600 set of questionnaire were distributed and 350 sets were returned to be analyzed. Return rate of 58% justified the generalization and reliability of the sets of respondents. The questionnaire given which was modeled after instruments created by Ajzen (1985; 1991), utilized 5 point likert scales as oppose from the original 7 points instruments used by Ajzen (1985; 1991). The questionnaires measure responses in terms of normative believe subjective norms, purchase intention and general impression of the social network sites respectively.

One of the criteria for selecting respondents is that they must have internet access and have at least one social network sites accounts. Some respondents in the research mentioned that they did not owned any internet enable devices (18.3%), further exploration on this sub group find that even though they did not owned any internet enabled devices they still have access to the internet and their social network account through other means such as devices provided by their institution, borrowed from a friend and access through internet and cybercafé. Eighty one point seven percent (81.7%) of the respondents indicate that they have and owned internet enable devices such as laptops with mobile broadband, fixed internet line at homes and mobile devices such as tablets and hand phones.

From this research also indicates growing trends among the respondents on type of media they prefer to choose in order to get information. Media in printed form such as magazines, newspaper, flyer and hand-out are being replaced with the internet as main source of information among respondents, followed by electronic media (television, radio etc), words of mouth and printed material.

Another critical factor that will lead potential customer to engage into a service is their ability to afford such services in the places. A financial capability plays a vital role in the selection of products among several alternatives. Income does play a major decision making in the process. It is assumed that respondents will

Table 1. Most visited Social Network Sites.

Social network	Frequencies	Percentage
Facebook	282	80.6
YouTube	242	69.1
Yahoo messenger	132	37.7

Table 2. Social Network Sites ownership.

Social network	FREQ	%
Facebook	350	100
Youtube	191	54.6
Skype	158	45.1
Meebo	14	4
Yahoo messenger	253	72.3
Myspace	92	26.3
Twitter	123	35.1
Tagged	26	7.4
Friendster	33	9.4
Blogger	75	21.4

not even try the product if they have the capability to engage that services or they knew that the services existed and important to them. 172 respondents agree that they will only try if they can afford it while 39 disagree. The rest of the respondents remain neutral. Evidently Facebook is the biggest social network sites and popular among the respondents.. A research by Shafie, Mansor et al. (2011) concur with these finding. In their report, Facebook usage among university students in Malaysia is at 94% of the total respondents. The findings also revealed that facebook are the most frequently visited social network sites which 80% of the respondents mentioned that they visited that particular site in a day. This followed by YouTube and Yahoo Messenger.

4.1 Testing the hypotheses

H1 There is relationship between personal comments by online friends in Social Network sites and motivation to comply with others

There was a significant relationship between personal comments with motivation to comply of the social networks sites user, $X^2(20) = 218, p < .001$. The results showed that personal comments affect motivation to comply with others. In simpler terms, comments and review will influenced and dictated the behavior within the boundaries of certain groups and association. For example if a respondents is a member of a particular group in the social networks, his or her behavior towards a certain products or services or their judgment will be greatly influenced by other member of the groups. Social network sites do play a vital role in creating perception and boundaries among its user about what to and not to engage.

H2 Suggestion by online friends in social network sites does creates purchase intention

There was no significant relationship between online friends suggestion and intention to purchase of the social networks sites user, $X^2(16) = 95, p < .001$. The results showed that the assumption that comments in the social network sites that create purchase intention is clearly rejected. Even though from the first hypothesis, personal comments creates motivation to

comply but the outcomes of the said behavior is not fulfilled at the end. Normal assumption according to Ajzen, is that when a predictor such as social network sites will create motivation to comply and will eventually create intention. In this research it shows that respondents are independent of the predicting factor and does not conforms to normality. In relation to the research question, does a social network sites can be used as effective marketing tools? The results proved that social network sites do work until a certain extent of the buying process but does not eventually create purchase intention which most of the company look for.

5 CONCLUSION

Even though the results shows that SNS's did not play an important roles in creating purchase intention, nevertheless SNS can be used as communicating tools between consumer and service providers. Company most often uses SNS's as medium for public relation and communicating with consumer and at the same time channel grievances into a proper channel.

Subjective norm or social pressure does not mediate between SNS's and purchase intention. From the results it is clearly showed that consumer are still making rational judgment rather that engaging to the social pressure when it comes to purchase decision. Whether the product is recommended by friends and family, or receiving bad review in the SNS's site, respondents still rely on other input when they decided to purchase products.

REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. 1985. "From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behaviour". In J. Kuhl, & J. Beckmann (Eds.), *Springer series in social psychology* (pp. 11–39). Berlin: Springer.
- Ajzen, I. 1991. "The theory of planned behaviour". *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211.
- Everett, C., 2010. "Social Media, Opportunity or risk", *Computer Fraud & Security*, June 2010.
- Gibbs, J. & Bruich, S., 2010. "Advertising Effectiveness: Understanding the Value of a social media impression". The Nielsen Company.
- Guosong Shao 2009. *Internet Research* Vol. 19 No. 1, 2009 pp. 7–25.
- Harrison-Walker, L.J. 2001. "The measurement of words of mouth communication and an investigation of service quality and customer commitment as potential antecedents", *Journal of service research*, Vol. 4 No. 1 pp. 60–75.
- Herbig P. and Hale B. 1997. "Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy" Volume 7 Number 2 pp. 95–100 © MCB University Press ISSN 1066–2243.
- Keefer A. 1990. *Universitat de Barcelona Tomas Baiget Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya* 90 — VINE 124.
- Keenan A., Shiri A. 2009. "Sociability and social interaction on social networking websites", *Library Review*, Vol. 58, No. 6, pp. 498–450.

- Krejcie, R. & Morgan, D. 1970. "Determining sample size for research activities". *Educational and psychological measurement*, 30, pp. 607–610.
- Kuhlen, R. 2003. "Change of paradigm in knowledge management – framework for the collaborative production and exchange of knowledge", paper presented at the 69th IFLA General Conference and Council, 30 August 2003, Berlin.
- Mangold W.G and Faulds D.J. 2009. "Social Media: The new Hybrid Element of the promotion mix". Kelly School Of Business, Indiana University.
- Martin G., Reddington M., Kneafsey M. B., Sloman M., "Scenario and Strategies for Web 2.0". , Education + training, Vol 51.
- Maslow A. H. 1943. "A Theory of Human Motivation" *Psychological Review*, 50, 370–396.
- Oberhelman, David D. 2007. "Reference Reviews Coming to terms with Web 2.0", Volume 21, Number 7, pp. 5–6 q Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Opoku R. A, Abratt R., Bendixen M., Pitt L. 2007. "Communicating brand personality: are the web sites doing the talking for food SME's?" *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*.
- Palmer A. and Lewis N.K. 2009. " An experiential, social network based approach to direct marketing", *Direct Marketing : An International Journal* Vol. 3, No. 3, 2009, pp. 162–176.
- Palumbo, F. and Herbig, P 1998. "International marketing tool: the Internet", *Industrial Management & Data Systems*.
- Shwu-Ing Wu 2002. "Internet Marketing Involvement and Behaviour", *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistic*, Vol. 14, No 4, 2002, pp. 36–53.
- Simmons, Geofry j 2007, "I -branding: developing the internet as a branding tool". *Marketing intelligence & planning*, Vol. 25, No. 6, 2007, pp. 544–562.
- Sotirios Paroutis And Alya Al Saleh 2009 *Journal Of Knowledge Management* Vol. 13, No. 4, 2009, pp. 52–63, Q Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Susskind A.M., 2002 "I told you so! Restaurant words of mouth communication patterns", *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, Volume 43, No. 2, pp. 75–85.

This page intentionally left blank

E-payments: How Malaysian restaurant operators and customer respond?

S. Zurena @ Rena & M.S. Mohd Zahari
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Electronic payments or E-payment is becoming one of the Malaysia national agenda to increase the efficiency of financial services which would ultimately improve the competitiveness of nation economy. The continuous initiatives are undertaking with countless efforts to promote the greater use of this mode of payment among the consumers. E-payment technologies and its level of acceptance however have not been at its peak particularly in the restaurant industry. The usage of e-payments in the restaurant (full service, ethnic, casual and fast food restaurants) is reported the least as compared to other industries. This research note discusses the undertaking and investigating issue on the e-payment, restaurant operators' responsiveness and customers' usage behavior.

Keywords: E- payments, restaurant operators, customers' response

1 INTRODUCTION

In today's world, technology dramatically changed the way people live their lives and conducting businesses. What is happening is that business is becoming technology which makes national and international commerce much more feasible reality and the acceptance of new technologies in the business world is accelerating (Pavlou, 2003). In line with this, electronic commerce or e-commerce provides the capability of buying and selling products, information and services on the internet and other online environments.

Electronic payment or e-payment is a subset and being an integral part of an e-commerce are the most critical aspects when it comes to safety of money and security of information. Generally defined, e-payment is a form of financial exchange that takes place between the buyer and seller facilitated by means of electronic communications in an online environment (Jonathan, David, & Daniela, 1998). It is proven electronic payment increases the operational efficiency and improves productivity levels through expedient payments and receipts of funds. This method of payments would provide the speed and convenience in making payments from any place or time. It also reduces costs through the reduction of redeployment of resources used for handling cash and check. In fact, an electronic payment is one of the strategic tools to meet the objectives and achieve higher economic growth for the country.

E-payment made its first appearance in the 1970s with the advent of credit cards and banks have been employing proprietary electronic payment systems for decades. Technologies advances in e-payment since then have been so rapid and dramatic that some of those early forms of e-payment now appear primitive.

E-payment has been propelled into the public domain and is transforming regular, everyday payment transactions occur in all market segments (Abrazhevich, 2004). Thus, the well-functioning e-payment system in an economy is an essential part of facilitating agent's transactions and enhancing economic efficiency. This is being driven by competition, cost pressures, the convergence of regional markets and technological changes which are producing new products and processes.

The experience of remarkable changes in the payment system can be seen in the commercial banks, oil companies, departmental stores, drug stores, grocery stores and many others. The restaurant industry without exception is also becomes players by adopting the e-payment (Plouffe, Hlland and Vandenbosch, 2001). Scholars however argued that e-payment would not be succeeded without jointly efforts from the service providers, operators and customers (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000; Lu, Yu, Liu, & Yao, 2003).

In other words, service providers, restaurant operators as the merchants and customers as the end users must jointly adopt and accept the system and this in turn will lead to the actual usage and customers' actual usage behavior are believed to be depending on perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust and few other mediating attributes.

2 LITERATURE

2.1 *Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)*

There are many theoretical technology acceptance models available including the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Theory of Reasoned Action, the

Motivational Model, the Theory of Planned Behavior, a model combining the TAM and the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Model of Personal Computer Utilization, the Innovation Diffusion Theory, and the Social Cognitive Theory (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Among these, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis is believed to be the most robust, parsimonious, and influential in explaining information system adoption behavior (Davis, 1989; Davis et al., 1989). TAM has received extensive empirical support through validations, applications, and replications for its power to predict usage of information systems (Venkatesh and Davis, 2003; Lu, Yu, Liu & Yao, 2003). However, the generality of TAM is less strong to supply the meaningful information on users' opinion about a specific system. Furthermore, the TAM assumes that usage is volitional, which mean there are no barriers that would prevent an individual from using an information system. Nevertheless, there are many situations in which an individual may want to use an information system but is prevented by lack of time, money, expertise, etc. To overcome its weaknesses, many researchers (Amoako-Gyampah & Salam, 2004; Wixom, & Todd, 2005) have attempted to improve the TAM model.

2.2 *Perceived usefulness*

Users' intention to use an information technology is predicated, to a large degree, on their perceived usefulness of the system (Davis et al., 1989). There are certain empirical evidences in the literatures regarding users' intention to use mobile technology (Au & Kauffman, 2008; Mallat, 2007; Ondrus & Pigneur, 2006). Users will use m-payment systems when they find the system to be useful for their transaction needs or financial issues.

2.3 *Perceived ease of use*

Perceived ease of use (PEOU) involves the perception that the implementation of a specific technology will not be too difficult for the firm (Fuller et al., 2007). It creates a favorable behavioral intention toward using the technology, which consequently affects self-reported use (Al-Somali et al., 2009). TAM considers PEOU to be a fundamental factor for the study of technological behavior, so it has been included in most research in this field (Sun and Zhang, 2006). PEOU has been included as a determinant of users' attitude towards a technology (Taylor and Todd, 1995). PEOU favors complete learning, reduces asymmetric information and results in a greater ability to infer how a technology works (Kuo et al., 2004; Cao et al., 2005). These capabilities are obtained by users when they interact with the technology and can evaluate its characteristics more accurately. The connection between PEOU and trust has been discussed in the extended TAMs (Gefen et al., 2003; Pavlou, 2003; Pavlou and Gefen, 2004) and demonstrated that the ease of use perceived during users' interactions with a technology

improves their post-use trust level (Chen and Barnes, 2007; Klein, 2007).

2.4 *Perceived trust*

The importance of trust has been widely analyzed by previous research from many literature streams (Pavlou, 2002; Yousafzai et al., 2003; Luo et al., 2010). In the strategy and marketing, trust has been related to benefits such as richer information (Lo and Lie, 2008), competitive advantage (Barney and Hansen, 1994), firm performance (Garcia et al., 2008) and the attainment of long-lasting and profitable relationships (Flavian et al., 2006). From an economic perspective, trust reduces transaction costs (Bromiley and Cummings, 1995) and in the organizational literature, it is posited to operate as a governance mechanism.

Trust is the consumer's confidence that their money and personal information will not be used against their personal interest. Even if we use an imperfect system, consumers want to believe that vendors, banks and credit card companies will not misuse their personal information (Abrazhevich, 2004). Customers should trust the payment system adopted by the other user. The existing literature points out that high level of user confidence and trust is a contributing factor for the successful adoption of e-payment systems (Kurnia and Benjamin, 2007). In analyzing the success of the Octopus system trust was the contributing factor for its wide usage. This finding was backed by the survey conducted by Abrazhevich (2004), who found that customers will not use systems which they perceive to be less trustworthy. Similarly, if trustworthiness is there, adoption of e-payment system is credible (Kniberg, 2002). In other words, the higher the levels of consumer trust, the higher the degree of purchase intentions of consumers, and the easier it is to retain consumers. Overall, trust is the source of fundamental positive consequences.

2.5 *Attitude*

Attitude is defined as the inclination or feeling that predisposes an individual to react favorably or unfavorably to a certain object, person, institution, or to any other aspect in his/her environment (Ajzen, 1985; Dabholkar, 1994). In the technology arena, this concept refers to a user's favorable or unfavorable assessment regarding a behavior with the technology. In several studies, attitude has been considered a key variable which significantly influences the user's intentions and behavior (So et al., 2005). It is important to highlight that attitude is usually related to the final user of the technology (Davis et al., 1989), ignoring the fact that, in the business context, the role of the manager involved in the implementation of the technology is crucial to the analysis of the firm's behavior and performances. The manager may not be the final user of the technology but the firm's decision to adopt and employ technology relies on his/her attitude. Research has shown that the manager is a

crucial figure determinant of the innovative attitude of the firm (Rizzoni, 1991). He/she determines the management style of the firm and his/her decisions affect all its activities, from daily operations to future investment (Bruque & Moyano, 2007). Therefore, the manager directly influences the technology adoption process (Almeida & Sobral, 2008–9). The manager's attitude toward technology is an indicator of his/her predisposition towards the firm accepting or rejecting new technologies and it determines the success of the technology implementation process (Heintze & Nguyen, 2009).

2.6 *Malaysian scenario*

Similar to other countries, Malaysia is not leaving behind on the world's modern technology in embarking on the e-payment. Accelerating the country's migration to electronic payments has therefore become a part of Malaysia's larger national agenda to increase the efficiency of the nation's payment systems which would ultimately improve the competitiveness of our economy. The continuous initiatives are undertaking with countless efforts to promote the greater use of electronic payment in line with country mission.

Government and commercial banks are serious in integrating the e-payments nation widely (Bank Negara, 2010). According to Bank Negara Malaysia Governor, Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz, in the next 10 years, the Bank aims to increase the number of e-payment transactions per capita from 44 transactions in 2010 to 200 transactions by the end of 2020, which is comparable to the e-payment transactions per capita in the developed countries (Bank Negara, 2010). This is to make e-payments the preferred medium for economic transactions in Malaysia.

As such, many commercial banks like Malayan Banking, RHB, CIMB and other forms or business entities introduced the e-payment card. Touch 'n Go was incorporated in October 1996 whereby it provides a mode of payment via a prepaid e-payment card called the Touch n Go card and strongly supported by the government. However, despite the government, bank institutions and non commercial banks offering the e-payment services, it is evident that the success rate of it has not commemorated with operators and the customer's awareness and actual usage. E-payment technologies and its level of acceptance have not been at its peak (Bank Negara, 2010). Currently, there has been no strong evidence indicating the impact of e-payments on the operation of monetary policy. There is relatively small size and slow progress of e-payments transactions when compared with the currency supply. In other word, as if no indication that e-payment would replace the physical cash. The situation involved in some large, medium and even worst in the small business operations particularly in the departmental stores, drug stores, grocery stores, gaming including the restaurants. Report by Bank Negara Malaysia revealed that usage in e-payments in the restaurant (Full service, Ethnic, Casual and Fast Food restaurants) were the least as compared to other industries

(Bank Negara, 2010). Therefore, there must be the underlying reasons for this causation.

In line with this notion, it is assumed probably there is still a loose tie between service provider, restaurant operators and customers and from this conjecture several questions could be probed. Do the acquirers as the service providers and restaurant operators as the mediators' come to a consensus to have virtual understanding in adopting e-payment? Are the problems lying on the restaurant operators or customers attitudes relates to their perceived usefulness, ease of use and trust which lead to the unfavorable in the actual usage? In other words, to what extent the restaurant operators and customers' responsiveness through perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and trust influences the attitude of customers toward using e-payments and do customer's awareness and brand image moderates their actual behavior?

To date, various dimensions and perspectives of e-payments have been studied. To name a few, Guriting and Ndubisi (2006) addressed relative advantage in determining adoption of new innovation whilst Lai et al. (2011) investigated the element of trust as vital components to the attainment of long lasting and profitable relationship. However, only few studies have touched on the relationship between the service providers, merchants and end users' actual behaviour and none particularly looking at restaurant industry. In fact, to whether the awareness on, and the brand image of the prepaid cards moderates the relationship between customers perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust and attitude and subsequently using such card have yet not been widely research. No published or unpublished research related to Malaysia setting has been identified. Therefore, the empirical investigation on the e-payments, restaurant operators' responsiveness and customers' actual behaviour toward it is in verge of revealing the results. It is hope that this study will contribute towards eco-friendly environment, improving the competitiveness of the country economy and abreast with world technology advancement.

REFERENCES

- Abrazhevich, D. 2004, Electronic payment systems: a user-centered perspective and interaction. CIP-data library Technische Universiteit Eindhoven, Netherland.
- Ajzen, I., 1985. From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behavior. In: Kuhl, J., Beckman, J. (Eds.), *Action-control: From cognition to behavior*. Springer, Heidelberg, pp. 11–39.
- Almeida, F., Sobral, F., 2008-9. The psychological and structural determinants of technology integration in organizations. *Management Research* 7 (1), 61–74.
- Al-Somali, S.A., Gholami, R., Clegg, B., 2009. An investigation into the acceptance of online banking in Arabia Saudi. *Technovation*, 29 (2), 130–141.
- Amoako-Gyampah, K., & Salam, A. F. (2004). An extension of the technology acceptance model in an ERP implementation environment. *Information & Management*, 41(6), 731–745.

- Au, Y. A., & Kauffman, R. J. 2008. The economics of mobile payments: Understanding stakeholder issues for an emerging financial technology application. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 7, 141–164.
- Bank Negara Malaysia, 2010. Central Bank of Malaysia-Financial Sector Blueprint. 2011–2020. www.bnm.gov.my ISBN: 978-983-9586-47-3
- Barney, J.B., Hansen, M.H., 1994. Trust worthiness as a source of competitive advantage. *Strategic Management Journal* 15, 175–190.
- Bromiley, P., Cummings, L.L., 1995. Transactions costs in organizations with trust. In: Bies, R., Sheppard, B., Lewicki, R. (Eds.), *Research on Negotiation in Organizations*. JAI Press, Greenwich, CT. case of family and cooperative firms. *Technovation* 27 (5), 241–253.
- Cao, M., Zhang, Q., Seydel, J., 2005. B2C e-commerce web site quality: an empirical examination. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 105 (5), 645–661.
- Chen, Y.-H., Barnes, S., 2007. Initial trust and online buyer behavior. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 107 (1), 21–36.
- Dabholkar, P.A., 1994. Incorporating choice into an attitudinal framework: analyzing models of mental comparison processes. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21, 100–118.
- Davis, F. D. 1989. Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), 318–330.
- Davis, F.D. 1989. Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of computer technology, *MIS Quarterly*, 13 (3), 319–40.
- Denzin, N. K. 1978. *Sociological Methods*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Flavian, C., Guinaliu, M., Gurrea, R., 2006. The role played by perceived usability, satisfaction and consumer trust on website loyalty. *Information & Management* 43, 1–14.
- Gefen, D., Karahanna, E., Straub, D., 2003b. Inexperience and experience with online stores: the importance of TAM and trust. *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, 50 (3), 307–321.
- Guriting, P., Ndubisi, N. O. 2006. Borneo online banking: evaluating customer perceptions and behavioral intention, *Management Research News*, 29 (1), 6–15.
- Heintze, T., Bretschneider, S., 2000. Information technology and restructuring in public organizations: does adoption of information technology affect organizational structures, communications, and decision making? *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 10 (4), 801–830.
- Jonathan, B., David, K., & Daniela, R. 1998. Market-based resource control for mobile agents. *Proceedings of Autonomous Agents*, 197–204.
- Klein, R., 2007. Internet based patient physician electronic communication applications: patient acceptance and trust. *E-Service Journal*, 5 (2), 27–51.
- Kniberg, H. 2002. What makes a micropayment solution success. Master's thesis, Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan, Stockholm.
- Kuo, H.K., Hwang, S.L., Wang, E.M.Y. 2004 Evaluation research of information and supporting interface in electronic commerce web sites. *Industrial Management & Data Systems* 104 (9), 712–721.
- Kurnia, S. and Benjamin, L. 2007. Exploring the reasons for a failure of electronic payment systems a case study of an Australian company. *Journal of Research and Practice in Information Technology*, 39 (4), 34–67.
- Lu, J., Yu, C.S., Liu, C., Yao, J., 2003. Technology acceptance model for wireless Internet. *Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy*, 13 (3), 206–222.
- Mallat, N. 2007. Exploring consumer adoption of mobile payments – A qualitative study. *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 16, 413–432.
- Merriam, S. B. and Associates 2002. *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Nguyen, T.U.H., 2009. Information technology adoption in SMEs: an integrated framework. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, 15 (2), 162–186.
- Ondrus, J., & Pigneur, Y. 2006. Towards a holistic analysis of mobile payments: A multiple perspectives approach. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 5, 246–257.
- Pavlou, P.A., Gefen, D., 2004. Building effective online marketplaces with institution-based trust. *Information Systems Research*, 15 (1), 37–59.
- Plouffe, D. R., Hulland, J. S., & Vandenbosch, M. (2001). Research report: Richness versus parsimony in modeling technology adoption decisions-understanding merchant adoption of a smart card-based payment system. *Information Systems Research*, 12 (2), 208–222.
- Rizzoni, A., 1991. Technological innovation and small firms: a taxonomy. *International Small Business Journal* 9 (3), 31–42.
- So, W.C., Wong, D., Sculli, D., 2005. Factors affecting intentions to purchase via the Internet. *Industrial Management & Data Systems* 105 (9), 1225–1244.
- Sun, H., Zhang, P., 2006. The role of moderating factors in user technology acceptance. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies* 64 (2), 53–78.
- Taylor, B. and Barling, J. 2004. Identifying sources and effects of career fatigue and burnout for mental health nurses: a qualitative approach. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 13, 117–125.
- Venkatesh, V., and Davis, F. D. 2003. A theoretical extension of the technology acceptance model: four longitudinal field studies. *Management Science*, 45 (2), 186–204.
- Wixom, B. H., & Todd, P. A. 2005. A theoretical integration of user satisfaction and technology acceptance. *Information Systems Research*, 16 (1), 85–102.
- Yousafzai, S., Pallister, J.G., Foxall, G.R., 2003. A proposed model of e-trust for electronic banking. *Technovation* 23, 847–860.

Tourism

This page intentionally left blank

Tourist stimulus to attend Penang International Dragon Boat Festival

Nurul Nadia Binti Mohamad

Management & Science University, Malaysia

Noor Ismahanim Ismail & Mohd Hafiz Mohd Hanafiah

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This paper study on the visitor motivation to attend Penang International Dragon Boat Festival (PIDBF 2011), paying special attention to the effects of satisfaction and motivation towards post travel behavior (intention to revisit and recommend). The PIDBF can be categorized as sport tourism that becomes growingly popular in Malaysia. Contented visitors may recommend PIDBF to others and may repeat visit the event. Therefore, understanding their motivation and preferences are vital in order to sustain existing visitor and exert a pull on new visitors to attend the PIDBF. The respondents were visitors who visit PIDBF and data gathered using self-administered questionnaire at PIDBF which held at Teluk Bahang Pulau Pinang. This study used descriptive research design with quantitative approach. A total of 204 respondents were involved in this study. The top motivational factor was to experience the culture of the place where the event is held. The study also proved that satisfaction mediate the relationship between motivation and post travel behaviour and played the intervening role in influencing tourists to revisit PIDBF. The overall findings of this study provide valuable information for the government especially the event organizer, local policy maker and also tourism related organization on providing and improving the products, facilities and services offered to the visitors.

Keywords: sport tourism, motivation, satisfaction and post travel behavior.

1 INTRODUCTION

The leisure and tourism industry is one of the leading global economic activities, a multi-billion-dollar industry with 700 million international travellers per year around the world. This fact is supported by the growth in tourism numbers worldwide (WTO, 2000). Recently, one of the growing attraction that can attract people to travel and experience new place is by attending festivals or events. This is supported by (Getz, 1991; Scott, 1996) whose have mentioned that festival and event tourism has been one of the fastest growing sections of the world leisure industry in the past couple of decades. On the subject of events, various researchers give attention on event motivation that approached the subject based on earlier theories of tourist motivation. The most accepted theory - by the event researchers - is the "push" and "pull" factors theory implied by Crompton (1979) and Iso-Ahola, (1982).

Getz (1999) suggested that festivals and special events can be considered as a new wave of alternative tourism, which minimizes negative impacts, contributes to sustainable development, and fosters better host-guest relations. There are several benefits have been identified by the previous researches which could occur for the community hosting the

event, among which are: strengthening of traditions and values; increased community pride and spirit; greater participation in the activities related to the event theme; and adaptation of new social models or cultural forms. Thus, image making for a host region is one of the key attributes of festivals and events. So, festivals can be considered as a potential tool for a community development (Kozak, 2002).

During last decades events have been growing adequately enough to offer a field of study on various subjects, to researchers from all around the world. Economic impacts and motivation are the most discussed topics in the event sector literature. However, there is still the necessity for better understanding attendees' motives and segmenting audiences aiming to achieve effectiveness of marketing strategies and competitiveness of festival's experience (Madzhar, Othman, & Hanafiah, 2010).

Common researched issues such as economic impact and marketing strategies (Bohlin, 2000), research focusing on the motivations of attendees has received lofty recognition. Currently, one of the challenges of sports event organizers and marketers is to increase visitors' interest in sports games by distinguishing effective factors of their attendance. Determination of the level of people's tendency to attend sports events is complicated and pull factors,

push factors and constraints have special influence on their decision.

The economic contribution as well as other influences such as the travel motivation and satisfaction had been an issue to be researched. These ongoing challenges and increasing importance to understand the motivations driving sport travelers among policymaker and event organizer had contributed to the development of numerous empirical researches on consumer motivation to attend sport events. The satisfaction level of the tourist will then leads towards their intention to return behavior. Thus, this 'lack of understanding' on tourist motivation and satisfaction to attend sport event ignited the starting point for further empirical research.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

As tourism is one of the fastest growing industries at present, thus within the tourism industry events are getting more and more popular and important. Events can offer various economical and social benefits for destinations, and for that reason destination managers can and should employ events effectively in a tourism role (Madzhar, Othman & Hanafiah, 2010).

The reasons to conduct event motivation studies were appropriately articulated by Crompton and McKay (1997). They believed that studying festival and event motivation is a key to designing offerings for event attendees, a way to monitor satisfaction and a tool for understanding attendees' decision-making processes.

There are two factors that motivate people to travel which is the "push" and "pull" factors (Uysal & Hagan, 1993 and Uysal & Jurowski, 1994). The "push" factors are those elements that push an individual from home and make him or her want to travel somewhere else.

Crompton (1979), as well as Alegre & Garau (2010) suggested that understanding travel behavior is the most essential or crucial dimension in travel motivations. Usually people will travel to certain destination or attraction based on what the place offered for them which can satisfy their needs. This is directly true whereby Chang, (2006) suggested that a consumer's motivation to travel begins when he or she recognized that there are certain needs in certain destinations may have the ability to serve their needs and wants. This is also similarly with customers' motivation to travel to certain place to attend any event would be because they are thinking that the event particularly will serve certain needs that they have preferred.

Lee, Lee, & Wicks (2004) discovered that satisfaction is considered as consumer judgment about goods and services. It depends on the evaluation of consumer about whether the goods and services meet or exceed their expectation. On the other hand, loyalty is defined as repeating purchase behavior and is characterized in terms of repurchase intentions, word-of-mouth-communication, and recommendations (Lee

et al., 2009). It is determination about customer willingness to buy goods or used the same services over and over again.

This action usually followed if the consumers satisfied with the goods or services. In line with the above statement, Lee, Lee, & Wicks, (2004) showed that creating loyalty depends on achieving customer satisfaction, which is affected by expectations. They further suggested that there is a significant positive correlation between consumers' satisfaction and their future intentions.

In case of tourism products, satisfaction of consumer regarding each destinations and attractions affect their intention to reuse the services or revisit the destination and attraction in future. Similarly with festival, the intention for visitors to return to the same festival depends majorly on the overall satisfaction of their past experience attending the festival or event. Baker and Crompton (2000) said that the total effect of satisfaction of visitors attending a festival has been described as a useful predictor of future behavioral intentions.

The link between satisfaction and post-purchase behavior (intention to revisit and recommend) has been well established, with a number of studies confirming a significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty and retention (Kozak, 2001 & Chang, 2006).

3 METHOD

A descriptive research methodology was used for this study. Sekaran (2011) asserted that a descriptive study is undertaken in order to ascertain and be able to describe the characteristics of the variables of interest in a situation. Therefore descriptive studies thus become essential in many situations because the researcher capable to describe relevant aspects of the phenomena of interest from individual, organizational, industry-oriented or other perspective.

The sample was a convenient sampling, where in terms of population, it consists of 15,091 attendees have been visited Penang International Dragon Boat Festival in 2010. According to Kerjcie and Morgan (1970) and Sekaran (2003), it is suggested that the sample size on 15,091 populations is 375 units. A self-administered questionnaire in English was used to collect data at Penang International Dragon Boat Festival that being held in Teluk Bahang Dam during the two days of event on 11th and 12th June 2011. The data was collected during different times to reduce bias.

The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was tested to measure validity and reliability. Cronbach Alpha was used to measure the reliability coefficient of how well the items in a set are correlated with one and another. Descriptive analysis was used to provide the frequency of demographic information. Lastly, correlation and regression analysis was used to answer the research questions.

4 ANALYSIS

4.1 Push factor

No.	Push factors	Means	S.D
1	By attending a sport event, I get away from daily life stress	5.63	1.139
2	Visiting a sport event is for me a form of relaxation	5.50	1.304
3	Attending a sport event gives me an opportunity to share my sport interest with other people	5.45	1.229
4	Attending a sport event gives me an opportunity to meet new people	5.45	1.272
5	Attending a big sport event is a form of self-exploration for me	5.38	1.332
6	The atmosphere at a sport event makes me wants to visit	5.26	1.297
7	I would like to be part of the festivities around the sport event	5.11	1.297

The highest mean score of push factor is by attending a sport event, I get away from daily life stress ($M = 5.63$) revealed that majority of the respondents feel this factor mostly pushing them to attend Penang International Dragon Boat Festival. The next push factor scored by the respondents is visiting a sport event is for me a form of relaxation ($M = 5.50$). Other than these factors, there were several other push factors that motivated respondents to attend the festival such as attending a sport event gives me an opportunity to meet new people and attending a sport event gives me an opportunity to share my sport interest with other people which shared the same means score of ($M = 5.45$).

The three push factors that getting the low means score were attending a big sport event is a form of self-exploration ($M = 5.38$), would like to experience a sport event ($M = 5.33$), atmosphere at a sport event makes me wants to visit ($M = 5.26$), and I would like to be part of the festivities around the sport event ($M = 5.11$). This result showed the less push factor pushing the respondents is in term of to be part of the festivals around the sport event which score the lowest means score compare to other push factors include in the study.

4.2 Pull Factor

According to the arrangement of the means score, it was reveal that the highest means score for the pulling factors that motivates majority of the respondents to attend Penang International Dragon Boat Festival by is they would like to experience the culture of the place/country where the sport event is held ($M = 5.80$).

It was followed by the next motivational pull factor which is I would like to visit other places besides the sport venues ($M = 5.76$). Attending a sport event has always been a dream for me rated in the third pull factors that motivate respondents with the means score of

Table 1. Mean scores of pull factors.

No.	Pull factors	Means	S.D
1	I would like to experience the culture of the place/country where the sport event is held	5.80	1.216
2	I would like to visit other places besides the sport venues	5.76	1.108
4	To see national team play makes me want to visit a sport event	5.63	1.190
5	The beauty of the game of sport makes me want to visit a big sport event	5.62	1.216
7	I would like to learn something about the destination where the sport event is held.	5.42	1.235
6	I would like to experience a sport event	5.33	1.304
3	Attending a sport event has always been a dream for me	4.92	1.139
8	The sport event is the only reason I travelled towards the destination	4.82	1.631

($M = 5.63$). The next pull factor that motivates visitors to attend the festival is the beauty of the game of sport makes me want to visit a big sport event ($M = 5.62$) which have the fourth highest means score for all pull factors that have been examined followed by I would like to learn something about the destination where the sport event is held being at fifth place with ($M = 5.42$). On the other hand, the pull factors that less motivate the respondent according to the arrangement of means score above are I would like to experience a sport event ($M = 5.33$), attending a sport event has always been a dream for me ($M = 4.92$), and the lowest means score of pull factors is the sport event the only reason I travelled towards the destination ($M = 4.82$).

This finding showed that the pull factor that motivate most respondents to attend PIDB is to experience the culture of the place and country where the sport event was been held and the factor that is less pulling the visitors to attend the event is the sport event is the only reason I travelled towards the destination.

4.3 Regression analysis

As can be explained based on Model 1 ($R^2 = 0.416$, Adj. $R^2 = 0.414$, $F = 198.810$, $p < .001$). The results showed that there is a strong significance relationship between visitors' motivation and post travel behavior.

From the Model 2, the multiple regression analysis on motivation factors with satisfaction as the mediating effect able to explain 58 percent of the observed variation of the post travel behavior. ($R^2 = 0.580$, Adj. $R^2 = 0.576$, $F = 139.062$, $p < .001$). The regression analysis shows a significance difference of R^2 value (Model 1 against Model 2).

Therefore, the results proved that visitors satisfaction mediate the relationship between travel motivation and post travel behavior. The results also show that

Table 2. Results of multiple regression of satisfaction mediate the relationship between motivation and post travel behavior of visitors to attend PIDB.

Predictors	Model 1
<i>Dependent variable: Post travel behavior</i>	
Motivation	0.704
R ²	0.416
Adj. R ²	0.414
F	198.810
Predictors	Model 2
<i>Dependent variable: Post travel behavior</i>	
Motivation	0.762
Mediator: Satisfaction	0.232
R ²	0.580
Adj. R ²	0.576
F	139.062

visitors' satisfaction has significantly played the role in influencing visitors to repeat their visit to PIDB.

4.4 Discussion

Based on the findings, the top motivational factor was the pull factors where the visitors tend to experience the culture of the place or country where the sport event was held and they prefer to visit another place than the sport venue. This was followed by push factors which the visitors feel by attending a sport event; they can get away from their daily life stress as a motivational factor that pushes them to attend PIDBF. This finding of study was supported by Lee, Lee, & Wicks (2004) in their study, who mentioned a majority of the studies pertaining to festival and event motivation have employed travel motivation frameworks which have been theoretically based on the escape-seeking dichotomy and push-pull model.

The study also revealed that majority of the visitor visiting PIDBF feel satisfied as they believed they did the right thing by attending the festival. Moreover, the satisfaction of the visitor attended to PIDBF also can be seen through their feedback in the questionnaires in which the visitors felt glad when they attended the event. Kozak (2002) reported the impact of overall satisfaction levels of visitors based on destination attributes.

When refers to relationship between motivation and satisfaction, the result showed that there is a strong significant relationship between motivation and visitor satisfaction. As the motivational factors were found significantly influence the visitor satisfaction, it can be said that the assumption of there is a positive relationship between motivation and visitor satisfaction strongly supported Bohlin, (2000).

In addition, the satisfaction factors were found significantly influences the visitor post travel behavior.

The outcome also indicates that there is a high probability of visitor revisit PIDBF in the future. This finding was supported by Baker and Crompton (2000) who said that the total effect of satisfaction of visitors attending a festival has been described as a useful predictor of future behavioral intentions.

As the motivation positively influence the visitor to visit PIDBF, beyond doubt it was the most important factor contributing the intention of visitor to return to PIDBF. This finding was supported by Baker & Crompton (2000) that said satisfaction was enhanced by higher perceptions of performance quality which was consistent with the quality of satisfaction and behavioral intentions relationship. Furthermore, the high performance quality encouraged participants to be more loyal, increasing the probability that they would return and that they would spread positive word-of-mouth about the festival.

The most significant part of this study was to examine whether visitor satisfaction mediate the relationship between travel motivation and their post travel behavior. The results proved that satisfaction mediate the relationship between motivation and post travel behavior. Clearly, the results showed that satisfaction played the intervening role in influencing visitor to revisit the event. This verdict was supported by Uysal & Hagan (1994).

5 CONCLUSION

This study exhibits the relationship between visitor motivation and satisfaction to attend Penang International Dragon Boat Festival. Therefore, willingness to recommend and intention to return also rely on the level of satisfaction visitor experienced themselves when attended the event. The findings of this study will enable academics and practitioners especially one who involved in tourism related organization to better understand the recent needs, motivation and level of satisfaction of visitor who attended PIDBF. Such an understanding will facilitate the related organization identify and improved the current event as well as adding up several other promotion in relation to visitors motivation and preferences. The findings revealed the most motivational factors that attract visitors to PIDBF should be taken as an opportunity for related organization to plan more events and promote more activities based on the visitors' motivation and favorites besides watching the event.

REFERENCES

- Alegre, J. and Garau, J. 2010. Tourist satisfaction and dissatisfaction, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37 (1), 52–73.
- Baker, D., & Crompton, J. 2000. Quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions. *Annals of destination loyalty: A structural model. Tourism Management*, 26 (1), 45–56.
- Bohlin, M. 2000. Travelling to events. In L.L. Mossberg (Ed.), *Evaluation of events: Scandinavian experiences* (pp. 13 –

- 29). New York: Cognizant Communication. Burlington: Elsevier Publishing.
- Chang, J. 2006. Segmenting Tourists to Aboriginal Cultural Festivals: An Example in the Rukai Tribal Area, Taiwan. *Tourism Management* 27, 1224–1234.
- Crompton, J. L. 1979. "Motivations for Pleasure Vacation." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 6 (1): 408–24.
- Crompton, J. L., & McKay, S. L. 1997. Motives of visitors attending festival events. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24 (2), 425–439.
- Dann, G. M. S. 1981. "Tourist Motivation: An Appraisal." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 8 (2): 187–219.
- Getz, D. 1991. *Festivals, special events, and tourism*, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Getz, D. 1999. The impacts of mega events on tourism: Strategies for destinations. In (Ed.). *The Impact of Mega Events*, pp. 5–32. Osterson, Sweden: European Tourism Research Institute.
- Iso-Ahola, S. E. 1980. *The Social Psychology of Leisure and Recreation*, Dubuque IA: Wm. C. Brown.
- Kozak, M. 2002. Destination Benchmarking. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29 (2), 497–519.
- Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. 1975. Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607–610.
- Lee, C-K. Lee, Y-K. and Wicks, B.E. 2004. Segmentation of festival motivation by nationality and satisfaction. *Tourism Management* 25 (1): 61–70.
- Madzhar, M, Othman, N., & Hanafiah, M. H. 2010. Tourism Events in Malaysia: A Cost Benefit Analysis, in the Proceeding of *The 5th World Conference for Graduate Research in Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure*, Turkey.
- Scott, D. 1996. A comparison of visitors' motivations to attend three urban festivals. *Festival Management and Event Tourism*, 3, 121–128.
- Sekaran, U. 2003. *Research Methods for Business*. 4th Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Uysal, M., & Jurwoski, C. 1994. Testing the push and pull factors. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 121 (4), 844–846.
- Uysal, M., and L Hagan 1993. Motivation of Pleasure Travel and Tourism. (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Hospitality and Tourism*.
- WTO 2000. *Data Collection and Analysis for Tourism Management, Marketing and Planning*, WTO, Madrid.

This page intentionally left blank

Heritage tourism management in the World Heritage Sites, Malaysia: Legal and planning issues

Siti Sarah Sulaiman, Nurasma Yahaya & Rasyikah Md. Khalid

Faculty of Law, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM),

Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The foundation of heritage tourism is heritage attractions. This paper will highlight two heritage sites in peninsular Malaysia that are of international acclaim namely Melaka and Georgetown Historic Cities. The two heritage sites have been declared as World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) on 7 July 2008. These heritage cities are considered as the sources or supply for heritage tourism. It is irreplaceable yet it can be subjected to damage or destruction due to weather, aging, modernization and even due tourism impact. In order to meet the demands from the increasing numbers of tourists more hotels, food outlets, information counters, kiosks, shops and recreational facilities are being developed. Apart from that uncontrolled activities of tourists can also affect the monument and the ecosystems in the area. Thus, a good policy and management plan should be prepared in order to make sure Melaka and Georgetown will be protected from adverse impact of rapid development thus remaining in the World Heritage List. There are several legislations which have been identified to govern heritage tourism namely the National Heritage Act 2005 which directly related to the conservation of heritage site, the Town and Country Planning Act 1976, the Street Drainage & Building Act 1974, the National Land Code 1965 and the Uniform Buildings By-Laws 1984 is applied. Policies made at the state level will also be discussed. At the end of the paper, setback of the laws, challenges post to the area of heritage tourism and possible improvement will be highlighted.

Keywords: Heritage tourism, legislations, policies, tourists, world heritage site

1 INTRODUCTION

Heritage is defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as 'our legacy from the past, what we live with today and what we pass on to future generations'. Accordingly, heritage is linked to historic remains, buildings, artifacts, monument, cultures and other relevant aspects (Dennis Rodwell, 2007). According to the National Heritage Act 2005, heritage can be classified into tangible heritage and intangible heritage. Tangible heritage includes historical area, monument and building whereas intangible heritage includes any form of expressions, languages, music, songs, dances and other form of arts which are related to the Malaysian community from the past. Apart from that, the National Heritage Act 2005 has also distinguished cultural heritage from natural heritage. Natural heritage refers to natural features of any area in Malaysia which includes national park, mountains, river, sea shore, flora and fauna. Traditionally heritage is linked to the cultural aspect which relates to the past and present of the people in the area. Gradually it has now become part of an industry i.e. tourism industry which generates income, employment and development. Heritage tourism may

easily be described as an opportunity for tourists to trace the historical development of the country they visited and to experience the cultural heritage of its people which is inherited from the past generations by visiting the historical sites and ancient monuments. Tourists can have a chance to blend into the cultural aspect of certain group of people by visiting the well-preserved historical building. However, more accurate definition and concept of heritage tourism has been discussed by many prominent writers of this area. Therefore, it is not the intention of the writer to delve further in that area as this paper will focus on the legal aspect of the management of world heritage sites as the foundation of heritage tourism in Malaysia.

2 THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Melaka and Georgetown has been declared as the World Heritage Sites by UNESCO on 7 July 2008. To be included on the World Heritage List, heritage sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of ten selection criteria. As regards to Melaka and Georgetown, these two cities had fulfilled

three criterion provided in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention which are criteria number ii- to exhibit an important interchange of humans values, over span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; iii- to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared; and iv- to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrate significant stage(s) in human history. Being declared as the World Heritage Sites Malaysia as the 'state party' has to take serious measures to ensure Melaka and Georgetown will remain in the list until the end of time. In order to do so, comprehensive legislations, guidelines and Heritage Conservation Plan must be prepared in order to protect these heritage sites from any challenges.

3 THE CHALLENGES FACING MELAKA AND GEORGETOWN HERITAGE CITIES

These heritage cities are considered as the sources or supply for heritage tourism. It is irreplaceable yet it can be subjected to damage or destruction due to weather, aging, modernization and even tourism impact. In order to meet the demands from the increasing numbers of tourists more hotels, food outlets, information counters, kiosks, shops and recreational facilities is being developed.

According to Article 11 of the World Heritage Convention the World Heritage will be listed as 'in danger' if it is threatened by serious and specific dangers, such as the threat of disappearance caused by accelerated deterioration; large scale public or private projects or rapid urban or tourist development projects; destruction caused by changes in the use or ownership of the land; major alterations due to unknown causes; abandonment for any reason whatsoever; the outbreak or the threat of an armed conflict; calamities and cataclysms; serious fire; earthquakes; landslides; volcanic eruptions; changes in water level; floods and tidal waves. For this reason, Malaysia has a duty to adopt effective and active measures to conserve Melaka and Georgetown in order to remain in the World Heritage list. This responsibility falls on the state government in which the World Heritage Sites is located. Looking into the possible threats described by the Convention, the state government should be concerned with the impact of rapid and large scale development, tourist development, changes in the use or ownership of land as well as abandonment of land. This is due to the fact that these two cities are a strategic place for investors to venture into profitable investment. Moreover, when it has been listed as World Heritage Sites the impact caused by heritage tourism is immeasurable.

Be as it may, the demand from the escalating number of tourists had pushed the hotel operator to construct more hotels and related facilities to accommodate their

needs. More shopping malls, eateries and stalls have been developed in the World Heritage Zone or in the buffer zone. This rapid development will jeopardised the future state of Melaka and Georgetown in the World Heritage List. In managing World Heritage Sites, the state government will face a magnitude of challenges. Timothy & Boyd (2003) has laid down that lack of funds, modernization, environmental pressures, public perceptions and colonial legacy as the challenges to heritage conservation. In Malaysia, other than rapid development public perception has become a real challenge in conserving the heritage. Undoubtedly, property investments for mega project attract the attention of most owners of historical buildings in the city of Georgetown. Some may prefer to transform the architectural design of the building into a modern design. To their dismay, all this cannot be done because their land is situated in the World Heritage zone. It is perceived that in a developing country, the elder generation has less interest in conserving the heritage. (Dallen J. Timothy & Stephen W. Boyd: 2003). The idea of preserving the heritage has been viewed as not progressive and stagnant (Rodgers, 1982; Myles, 1989 cited in Dallen J. Timothy & Stephen W. Boyd 2003). Thus, it is perceived that conservation of heritage is not something to be preferred by the community living in the World Heritage Sites. As a consequence the effectiveness of special area plan prepared by the local planning authority and the Conservation Management Plan of the area will be tested vigorously soon.

As for Melaka, the threat to the historic cities is the rapid development which took place in the world heritage site itself as well as area near to it. It is very unfortunate to see the beauty of A Famosa (St. Paul's Hill) and the memory of the proclamation of Independence on the historic Bandar Hilir's Padang Pahlawan have been destroyed by the development of Dataran Pahlawan Megamall. Indeed, the Megamall does not have a connection or harmonisation with the structure of A Famosa. Prior to the development of Dataran Pahlawan Megamall there was a controversial issue pertaining to the proposal made to erect 110-metre-high tower near the St. Paul's Hill. It is now known as Menara Taming Sari (Melaka Tower). Three sites had been suggested for the location of the tower and all were within the core conservation zone (Bulletin Badan Warisan, Feb-April 2005). On 27th January 2005 the State Government of Melaka announced that the tower will be constructed near the Stadhuis. Although it is outside the central heritage zone, it is still located within the buffer zone (Bulletin Badan Warisan: Feb-April 2005). Ironically, this proposal is carried out despite the fact that Malacca and Penang's joint bid for UNESCO World Heritage Listing. It was only after a remarkable findings of an ancient wall believed to date back to the era of Portugese rule in Malacca (1511-1641) that the tower was shifted to another area away from the historical area (The Star, 2006). Despite all these controversial issue, the State Government of Melaka does not learn a lesson. In another case, the Malacca Historic City

Council had issued a temporary stop work order to the hotel developer to save a row of pre-war building in Jalan Parameswara (The Star, 2012). The piling work on the 17-storey hotel had caused soil movement and affects the old structure of the pre-war building. The affected pre-war shophouses are within the tourists belt and Unesco heritage site buffer zone (The Star, 2012).

The State Government of Melaka should be reminded that Melaka was once rejected as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the late 1980s. Cartier had discussed that the failure to bid for the status of World Heritage Site was due to too much of the original city centre had been destroyed, notably the original waterfront, which following reclamations had been used for office, retail, hotel and housing development and a sea-world amusement park (Worden, 2010). It should also be noted that if the state party does not take necessary measures to protect the heritage site from uncontrolled development it can be listed in the list of world heritage in danger.

Apart from Melaka Historic Cities, Georgetown Historic City also had been hampered with several issues namely uncontrolled development and the breeding of swiftlets in the historic buildings. The development of four hotels which had exceeded the maximum height of 18 metres for building in UNESCO heritage site became the centre of discussion among the stakeholders as it might affect the bid for World Heritage listing (Nuraisyah Chua, 2008). The three projects approved by the former Barisan Nasional government in 2007 are developed by Eastern & Oriental Hotel Sdn Bhd (84 metres), Boustead Holdings Bhd (51 metres) and Asian Global Business Sdn Bhd (51 metres). A fourth project by Low Yat Group (84 metres) was approved under the new Pakatan Rakyat state government on 26 June 2008, 10 days before the UNESCO listing (Nuraisyah Chua, 2008). Relevant to this issue the UNESCO had recently warned that development of high-rise project within and near the heritage enclave could affect George Town's heritage listing (Sharanjit Singh, 2008). Apart from that, rearing swiftlet has also threatened the preservation of heritage building. In order to breed these swiftlets, the structure of the building needs to be designed in a special ways where only holes will be punched on the walls. This will alter the design and façade of the historical building. The swiftlets farming industry within the tourism destination, if not maintained properly will jeopardise the heritage tourism industry. For example bird droppings will not only hazardous to health but also affect the cleanliness of the area.

4 LEGAL MECHANISMS TO CONSERVE WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Prior to National Heritage Act 2005, there is no specific and comprehensive legislation to govern conservation of heritage in Malaysia. The existence of general measures for conservation is only as a peripheral part

of the Town and Country Planning Act 1976 and Antiquities Act 1976 (Abdul Haseeb Ansari & Ismawi Hj. Zen, 2006). For that matter, several shortcomings arises which prompted the government to promulgate a comprehensive and standardized legislation to govern national heritage. Thus, on 1st March 2006, the National Heritage Act 2005 was passed in order to regulate the conservation and preservation of National Heritage, tangible heritage, treasure trove and for any related matters. With the passing of the new Act, the Antiquities Act 1976 and the Treasure Trove Act 1957 will be repealed. Under the new Act, the Commissioner shall establish and maintain a register known as the National Heritage Register which contains the lists of heritage items registered under this Act. This is to ensure that all heritage items that have been gazetted as a National Heritage is well preserved from the element of nuisance. Surprisingly, there are only few historical building located in the World Heritage Sites were listed in the National Heritage Register. The buildings are the Stadhuis, Christ Church, Middleburg Bastion, Kota Melaka, Sri Vinayagar Temple Poyyata Moorthi and Kampung Keling Mosque at Goldsmith Street Melaka, Masjid Kampong Hulu and Church of St. George. Few other historic buildings were listed in the Heritage List Register. Therefore, who has the direct control over the World Heritage Sites?

Blackhall (2005) noted that there is no special control over World Heritage Sites other than legal protection given due to the establishment of conservation area and the preparation of a management plan. Looking into the aspect of planning law, protection of the historical site is an important part of the planning process as it has been part of the National Physical Plan (NPP) in which one of the principles that support the objective of the NPP is to protect national heritage and locations. Since, the term conservation implies a broad meaning, demolishing of the whole historical building or structure in the name of development cannot be compromised. This is because heritage is part of National history that needs to be protected and conserve for future generation reference. There are methods to be used in order to protect historical building without hindering the development. What is significance here is how the local planning authority is able to control the development and insist on a special design of construction to preserve the special character of the area (RMC Duxbury: 2006). In Malaysia the planning system is governed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (TCPA).

According to section 2 of the TCPA 1976 development has been defined as carrying out of any building, engineering, mining, industrial, or other similar operation in, on, over, or under land, the making of any material change in the use of any land or building or any part thereof, or the subdivision or amalgamation of lands. Even though the aim of the World Heritage Convention is to preserve, conserve and restore the World Heritage Sites but development cannot be taken aside in total. Restoration works in order to conserve the element of historical on the building and maintenance

work shall also be considered as development. Thus, in balancing the development activities and conservation of the heritage the Local Planning Authority needs to regulate and control the development conducted in this area. This is to ensure that any future development will not destroy the beauty or aesthetic characteristics of ancient building. Indeed, the local planning authority has a means to protect the ancient buildings through the power given in determining the status of the application for development project on the area or on such building. To gain some sense of the importance related to the power of planning authority in preserving heritage building, it is necessary to examine few important aspects in the planning process.

The important features underlying planning system is a development plan which constitutes structure plan and local plan. It is a yardstick for the decision making process in every city. The preparation of plans by local planning authorities is designed to provide the framework for development within their areas over the timescale of the plan period (Blackhall, 2005). This is achieved by allocating land for particular uses and imposing policies and guidelines to be applied to ensure that development is in accordance with the plan's objectives. Thus, it is the duty of local planning authority to prepare a local plan for the whole of its area as soon as practicable after a structure plan for the State has come into effect in order to help guide development (Ainul Jaria Maidin, 2006). Apart from preparing the structure plan and local plan a State Director or a local planning authority may prepare a special area plan designed for special and detailed treatment by development, improvement, conservation or management for the area (Section 16B of the TCPA).

It should be noted that the plan for the special area shall be prepared in the same manner as the preparation of local plan (section 16B (3) TCPA 1976). The process will go through several steps which begin with the publicity of the preparation of the special area plan and hearings in respect of the draft of the special area plan. Following the hearings session, objections or representations the local planning authority may organize a local inquiry or other hearing. At a final stage the draft special area plan may be approved in whole or part, with or without modification or been rejected (section 15 TCPA 1976). However, the special area plan will only be enforced once it has been gazzetted. One issue of concern pertaining to the preparation of the plan is public participation. Active public participation means a lot of work need to be done and more time is required by the local planning authority in solving the objections or suggestion. It is worried that serious damage to the site will escalate by the time the plan is ready to be implemented. However, if the level of public participation is low that does not mean the public agree with the plan but rather keeping themselves away from something they do not have an interest. For that matter, even if the special area plan is passed in due time it will not reflect the best interest of the public. As a result there is tendency on part of the owner of the property to break the law.

It should be noted that the local authority does not only restrict development activities in the heritage core-zone but also in the buffer zone. Nevertheless, the TCPA 1976 does not provide provision for the creation of buffer zone. The provision for the creation of buffer zone can be found in section 45(2) of the National Heritage Act 2005. It is vital to control development in the area of buffer zone in ensuring harmonisation in terms of architectural design and the culture represented in the building located in the heritage core zone. Apart from that certain development may affect the safety of the structure of historic building especially if it involved major reconstruction. However, it is sad to know that the state government of Penang and Melaka fail to realize the importance of protecting historic buildings located in the buffer zone. This is evident from the incident of Melaka Tower and the Four Hotels in Georgetown mentioned earlier.

There are other legislations which are indirectly involved in maintaining the world heritage site. For example, in order to manage traffic flow, cleanliness, waste management and security of the city other relevant legislations are applicable i.e. Street Drainage & Building Act 1974 (SDBA) and Uniform Buildings By-Laws 1984 (UBBL). SDBA 1974 was passed by the Parliament to make law with regard to street, drainage and building. The UBBL on the hand will describe in detail all provisions contain in the SDBA. For example, UBBL has laid down in the detail the technical plan required in order to protect building from fire. This is very relevant to historic building where the condition of the building is vulnerable and presumably sensitive to fire.

One of the measures taken by the state party to conserve the world heritage site is to prepare a comprehensive laws and guidelines in order to control development. The state party is also subjected to the World Heritage Committee to prepare a Conservation Management Plan. In relations to this Malaysia had submitted a state of Conservation Report on 21 January 2011 which responded to the request made by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd Session in Seville in 2009. This Conservation Management Plan will lead to the development of Special Area plans for each of the two sites. As mentioned above, the preparation of Special Area plan is provided under the TCPA 1976. The plan is a statutory legal document.

On the other hand, the Conservation Management plan is a flexible 6-year plan that will provide guidance for local authorities and owners of property located in the World Heritage sites. The Plan includes an overall vision for the property, management strategies in response to identified challenges, and planning and development control guidance that includes zoning, land use control, heritage building control, view and vista protection, public realm proposals, access and circulation measures, and proposals for improving utility and infrastructure. It also includes details of financial incentives and grants for certain types of work, a matrix of not permissible activities such as swiftlet (small birds) breeding, and the need to protect

vistas and certain specific aspects such as the terracotta roofscapes. The Plan also provides, in annexes, detailed Conservation Guidelines for various types and categories of buildings, based on analyses of what exists and their spatial disposition.

In the previous report, the Committee had identified that the main threat to Melaka and Georgetown, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca is approvals for inappropriate buildings in and around the property. After reviewing the report submitted to the World Heritage Committee on 21 January 2011, the Committee had made a decision and urged the state party i.e. Malaysia to (WHC-11/35.COM/7B.Add):

- a) Progress with the development of Special Areas plan that provides detailed planning constraints for both cities and their buffer zones,
- b) Confirm as reported to the 33rd session of the World Heritage Committee that no approval will be given for developments higher than 18 metres in the buffer zone until such time as the Special Area plans are adopted,
- c) Ensure that all major projects have adequate impact assessments in line with the ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessment for Cultural World Heritage properties and
- d) Set out a specific timetable for achieving the reinforced management system.

The Committee also requested Malaysia to submit to the World Heritage Centre an updated report on the State of conservation of the property, on the development of Special Area plans and on the implementation of the above for examination by the Committee at its 37th session by 1 February 2013. Thus, it is a very daunting task for Malaysia and especially the State government of Melaka and Penang to really implement the Conservation Management plan in order to ensure Melaka and Georgetown Historic Cities remain in the World Heritage List.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Being listed as the World Heritage Sites Georgetown and Melaka city now belongs to the global community. Even though the responsible to take care of the World Heritage Sites is shared by all the participating countries, the greater challenge is place on the shoulder of the state government where the site is located. Possible measures has been taken by the state government in drafting policies, special area plan and management plan to conserve Georgetown and Melaka City as the World Heritage. People are waiting anxiously for the implementation of the Special Area plan and Conservation Heritage Management Plan. In line with it the local planning authority and other agencies should integrate their power to monitor the heritage core zone and the buffer zone and to enforce the development control.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Haseeb Ansari & Ismawi Hj Zen. 2006. Towards a Sustainable Land Use Planning: An Appraisal with Special Reference to Malaysian, *The Malayan Law Journal* vol. 6: 107.
- Ainul Jaria Maidin. 2006. The Local Authority and Administration of Urban Land Use Planning. *The Law Review*, 599–619.
- Bill Hamilton 2007, 'Listing of Building in Scotland – Guidelines for Malaysia' Paper presented at Heritage and Tourism – 3RD Outlook Conference, Kuala Lumpur.
- Blackhall, J.C. 2005. *Planning Law and Practice*. Great Britain: Cavendish Publishing Limited.
- Burra Charters
- Duxbury, RMC. 2006. *Telling and Duxbury's Planning Law and Procedure*. United States: Oxford University Press.
- Hotel Ordered to Halt Works to 'Save' Pre-War Structures. *The Star Online*, 7 January 2012, <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/1/7/nation/10222268&sec=nation>. Accessed on 24 February 2012.
- <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2011/whc11-35com-inf1e.pdf>. accessed on 24 February 2012
- <http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/> viewed on 27 October 2010.
- <http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria> accessed on 2 December 2009.
- <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1223> accessed on 2 December 2009.
- <http://whc.unesco.org/en/nominations/> accessed on 2 December 2009.
- <http://www.igeorgetownpenang.com/opinion/191-heritage-what-we-ought-to-do> accessed on 2 December 2009.
- Lee Yuk Peng, "Ancient Wall Stays, Tower Goes." *The Star Online*, 4 December 2006, <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2006/12/4/nation/16216184&sec=nation> accessed on 24 February 2012.
- Mc Auslan, P. 1980. *Ideologies of Planning Law*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- National Heritage Act 2005
- National Physical Plan
- Nuraisyah C., (2009), *An Analysis of the Laws and Policies Governing the Tourism Industry in Malaysia: A Quest for a Regulatory Framework*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, International Islamic University Malaysia.
- Pickard, Robert 2001. *Policy and Law in Heritage Conservation*. London and New York: Spon Press.
- Rodwell, Dennis. 2007. *Conservation and Sustainability in Historic Cities*, U.K: Blackwell Publishing.
- Ross, Michael. 1991. *Planning and the Heritage Policy and Procedures*. London: E & FN Spoon.
- Saranjit Singh. "Lim Studies Options on High-rise Projects in Georgetown," NST online, 21 November 2008, www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=511881&page=4 accessed on 24 February 2012.
- Street Drainage & Building Act 1974.
- Timothy, Dallen J & Boyd, Stephen W. 2003. *Heritage Tourism*. UK: Prentice Hall.
- Towers!" *Bulletin Badan Warisan*, Feb-April 2005, http://www.badanwarisan.org.my/bulletins/Feb_Apr05.pdf accessed on 24 February 2012.
- Town and Country Planning Act 1976.
- Uniform Buildings By-Laws 1984.
- Worden, N. 2010. National Identity and Heritage Tourism in Melaka. In Michael Hitchcock, Victor T. King & Michael Parnwell (Eds), *Heritage Tourism In Southeast Asia* (pp. 130–146). Denmark: NIAS Press.
- World Heritage Convention.

This page intentionally left blank

Customer experience study on Tidal Bore Festival Sri Aman, Sarawak 2011

Ranee Atlas & Nuraini Putit

Faculty of Hotel & Tourism Management, UiTM Sarawak, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This study reviews the customer experience on *Pesta Benak* or Tidal Bore Festival, annually held in Sri Aman, Sarawak. Visitors profile formulated to develop better understanding to the organizer and tourism planners on the magnitude of the festival. Analysis of auditors' observation on current scenario of the Festival was presented. Spending pattern, experiences and suggestions by the visitors were discussed. Finally, recommendations for improvements were intensely deliberated for future evaluation.

Keywords: tidal bore, festivals, rural tourism, customer experience, Sri Aman

1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

This study is to gauge tidal bore festival, one of Sarawak's most unique tourism products and to position the event in Sarawak Calendar of Events. The tidal bore festival, locally known as *Pesta Benak*, is believed by the local authority and tourism planners could help to boost Sri Aman as a famous tidal bore town not only nationwide but also globally.

Tidal bore or *benak* phenomenon in Malaysia can only be seen at Batang Lupar, Batang Sadong, Batang Samarahan and Batang Saribas in the state of Sarawak. Sri Aman is situated about 194 km by road from Kuching City. The unique phenomenon of tidal bore occurs in Batang Lupar. Batang Lupar flows from the Klinkang Range to South China Sea with river length of 275 km. The tidal bore comes in from the mouth of Batang Lupar River and fills up the river very rapidly in the course of about 10 minutes. The wave crest at Sri Aman is up to 2 to 3 metres high. This is one of approximately 400 rivers and estuaries in the world where this phenomenon happens. There is a timetable at the river which has the time and dates for when the tidal bore will occur, but the really big ones occurs only a couple of times a year.

Pesta Benak (Tidal Bore Festival) in Sri Aman is one of the yearly activities in the Sarawak tourism calendar. The objective of Tidal Bore Festival Sri Aman is to introduce Sri Aman town through tourism and encourage domestic and international tourists to visit Sri Aman. Apart from it, *Pesta Benak* is also to stimulate economic benefits to the local community.

However the general objectives of this study is focusing on the customer experiences during the tidal bore festival 2011 to enhance an improve the organisation of the festival in the future.

The study also attempts to achieve the following objectives: i) to turn local events into potential international tourism product ii) to set an Event Management Standard for Sarawak and eventually an event database that could be promoted worldwide iii) to set a basis for Ministry to give grant and monitor the organization of the event.

Pesta Benak has been going on for number years however it was position in the Sarawak Calendar of Events since 2010. It was since celebrated in larger scale. Because of its potential, the Ministry proposed for this study on customer's experiences so as to gather information on the areas of enhancement and improvement.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Scope of Tidal Bore Festival

Crompton & McKay (1997); van Heerden (2003); Gets (1997); Thrane (2002) stated that in recent years, festivals and special events have become one of the fastest growing types of tourism attractions.

Tidal bore festival is part of the activities of rural tourism, as the product is nature-based, as defined in Malaysia Rural Tourism Master Plan (2001). Rural tourism is defined as 'tourism that provides opportunities to visitors to visit rural villages and rural attractions and to experience the culture and heritage of Malaysia, thereby providing socio-economic benefits for local communities. The locality of Sri Aman fits this criteria; it is 193 kilometers, a three hour drive, from Kuching the capital city of Sarawak. It is a trade center for the timber, oil palm, rubber, and pepper of its mostly agricultural district.

Getz (1997) categorized the festival is categorised as special events, to describe specific rituals, presentations, performance or celebrations that are consciously planned and catered to mark special occasions or achieve particular social, cultural or corporate goals and objectives. However, Ritchie (1984) define it as hallmark events, events that become so identified with the spirit or ethos of a town, city or region that they become synonymous with the name of the place gain widespread recognition and awareness.

2.2 Customer satisfaction on festivals

The literature related to quality and satisfaction in the tourism and recreation field dates back to at least the *Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission* reports of 1962 (Manning 1986). The high level and sustained interest in this topic derives from a widely held belief that the primary managerial criterion for success should be defined in terms of level of satisfaction, Bultena & Klessig (1969) and LaPage (1963). Implicit in this belief is the notion that improvement in performance quality and satisfaction will result in retention or expansion of tourist numbers, more vociferous and active tourism support, and ultimately enhanced profitability and political support.

Baker & Crompton (1999) stated that it seems intuitively logical that there should be a causal link between quality of a tourism supplier's performance, level of consumer satisfaction, and the organization's success. Higher quality of performance and levels of satisfaction are perceived to result in increased loyalty and future visitation, greater tolerance of price increases, and an enhanced reputation. The latter is critical both for attracting new tourists through positive word-of-mouth and media acclaim and, in the case of publicly owned amenities, for enhancing or retaining level of public tax investment in the amenity.

O'Reilly, Lyberger, McCarthy & Seguin, (2008) stated that mega events as 'global properties' as they may have a tremendous impact, which is in general can be found in economic, tourism, physical, social, cultural, psychological, and political aspects of hosting region (Parent, 2008; Ritchie, 1984; Ritchie & Aitken, 1985). On the other hand, Roche (1994) indicated that mega events help to meet the economic and cultural needs and rights of local citizens and if they are successful, long term positive consequences in terms of tourism, industrial relocation, and inward investments can be expected.

On the management of the event, Baker & Crompton (1999) suggested that festival organizers should focus their evaluative resources on assessing both perceived quality of the performance and the satisfaction level of participants. The study findings support the theoretical position that enhanced performance quality leads to stronger positive behavioral intentions, and that visitor satisfaction does add to the explanatory power of quality. Since quality of performance is under control of the tourism provider, measuring its attributes is likely to offer the most

guidance for making changes that would lead to stronger behavioral intentions.

3 INSTRUMENTS

3.1 Data collection process

The data for this study were mainly obtained through face-to-face interview using administered questionnaires designed and provided by Ministry of Tourism and Heritage of Sarawak. As the event occurs once a year, all the visitors to this festival are the population for this study. The sample of the study was taken from any willing visitors that are picked-up at random for voluntary individual face-to face interview.

Seven enumerators/auditors were appointed to conduct the interviews during the Festival. The enumerators' responsibilities are to go to all the places of all the events and to conducted face-to-face interviews with any willing visitors.

The survey instrument used for this study comprises of two parts; the first part of the questionnaires is for the enumerators to obtained data from respondents during the interviews which mainly concentrated on visitors' demographics, their economic impact, experiences and satisfaction towards the event or festival. The second part of the questionnaires is mainly for the enumerators or auditors to put forward their observation of the events they visited.

During the festival, the team approached 815 visitors to be the respondents but only 304 respondents willing and were successfully been interviewed.

3.2 Data analysis

After the data collection, the data from the questionnaires were counted, followed by coding procedures and tabulated. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze the closed ended questions as it is also not time consuming and easy to be understand. To analyze the data collected, the SPSS/PC version 17.0 was used to obtain the descriptive statistics. The open ended response data were analyzed through word counts using Microsoft Excel to determine on the frequencies of word counts mentioned from questions on suggested areas of improvement and the changes could be made to improve the event. Suggestions or comments with the highest repetitions or word counts were presented in the findings section, the *respondents' suggestions*.

3.3 Limitation

The data collection process may include untruthful or inaccurate answers by respondents. This could be due to the need of projecting good image of themselves in front of researchers or they may also feel obligated to answer the questionnaires even when they are in hurry in which would result in untruthful and inaccurate answers.

4 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 *Demographics of respondents*

From the 304 respondents, 53.6 % are male and 46.45% are female with the majority comes from the age group of age group of 30 year and below accounted for 57.9%. The percentages of the respondents are declining for the age groups of above 50 years of age. This indicates that tidal bore festival could attract the younger population as they may have more free time and urges to experience new things in life.

From the data gathered, 54.6 % of the respondents are single, 42.1% are married and 3.3% or 10 persons did not wish to disclose their marital status. The study also shows that 50.3% of the respondents came together with their family, 26.5% came alone or with friends or associates while the remaining 23.4% were unwilling to respond to this question.

The respondents holding a qualification of SPM/MCE or O Level made the largest group accounted for 34.2%. Respondents with SPM/MCE or O Level together with PMR and Lower level made up of 53.9% of the sample. Diploma and Degree holders also made up of quite a substantial presence to a total of 33.7%.

Most of the respondents are local Sarawakians comprising of 90.1% of the sample. 8.2% of the respondents are from others states in Malaysia while only 1.7% or 5 persons are foreigners.

As the festival is held in Sri Aman, respondents from Sri Aman make the biggest group of the visitors accounted for 37.96%, followed by Kuching 31.02% and Betong accounted for 11.68%. Respondents from other Divisions are quiet insignificant where their presence ranges from 0.37% to 4.38%.

4.2 *Knowledge on the festival*

The major sources of the information about the tidal bore festival are radio, friends/family/associates and newspaper. Radio contributed 61.2% friends/family/associates 47.7% and newspaper 28.3%.

Other information dissemination modes such as websites and on-line portal of the Residence Office and others do not contributed much as only few respondents knew the festival through those modes. This could be resulted from the respondents' education levels and most of them do not have internet access at home.

4.3 *Respondents' experience*

This section discusses the respondents' experience during their visit to the Tidal Bore Festival 2011.

The respondents' experiences are divided into:

- i) Festival Attributes
- ii) Areas of improvements
- iii) Recommendation to attend the coming Tidal Bore Festival in 2012

The respondents' experiences are rated in Likert Scale of 10 points with the extreme poor level at the score of one (1) and the excellent level at scale of 10.

Respondents are required to state their level of satisfaction namely on the below areas;

- a) Promotional Materials. In this section, promotional materials refer to the views of respondents towards the events compared to the content of the materials such as brochure, flyers and notices. 83.8% of the respondents had given the rating on ranges from scale 5 to 10. This indicated that respondents are satisfied with the content promotional materials when compare to what they actually seen or experience during the festival.
- b) Advance Notice of the Event. Advance notice of the event refers to the prior notice given or made known to the visitors on the individual events before the particular event is executed during the festival. The study shows that 85.3% of the respondents had given their rating in the ranges of scale 5 to 10. This shows that the respondents are satisfied with the notice given to the events throughout the festival.
- c) Information of the event after their booking of accommodation. 62.4% respondents are satisfied with the updates or feedback on the events. 19.5% indicated that information just marginally surpassed their expectation. This conclusion is backed up by rate given by 24.7% of the respondents in the scale of Poor (2) and Extremely Poor (1).
- d) Hospitality. 90.4% of the respondents felt welcomed or delighted over this festival. This could be backed up by the rating given to Scale from 6 to 9 which scored 52.5% while none of the respondent was totally unhappy (Scale 1-Extremely Poor).
- e) Customers Services. This section discusses the services provided by the organizer during the festival. 91.2% of the respondents are generally satisfied with the services provided by the organizer. However, 30.7% of the respondents rated this attributes as partially meet their satisfaction level as their rating falls on scale 5 of the rating.
- f) Venue. In this section respondents are asked to rate the suitability of the venue of the Tidal Bore Festival. The study shows that 96.2% respondents from the sample agreed that the venue for this festival is suitable. This could be backed up by a high rating of 80.6% given by respondents on the scale from 7 to 10.
- g) Content of the Event. In this section respondents are to express their views on the content of the events throughout the festival, whereby 95.7% of the total respondents had given their rating and are generally happy with the events' content. 82.6% of them had rated it in the scales of 5 to 10.
- h) Support Services. Support Services are the assistance given by the organizer to the visitors such as first aid, directions to the events, parking, toilets, and cleanliness among others.

- i) Generally, the study shows that 85.8% respondent had given their rating on the support services from of scale 5 to 10. This indicates that the respondents are fairly satisfied with the overall support services rendered.
- j) The only concerned is half of the rating of Scale 5 to 10 comes from Scale 5 and 6 where they accounted for 42.9%. Therefore, even though majority of the respondents fairly satisfied with the support services, there are still some rooms for improvements to be looked into.
- k) Safety and Security. The safety and security attributes give the respondents to express their view on the safety and security aspects of the festival. 93.7% of the respondents from the sample felt the sense of feeling safe and secured during the festival. However, the study also finds that 33.5% of the respondents viewed that the level of safety and security just marginally surpassed the required standard, i.e. in the Scale of 5 and 6.

4.4 Respondents' suggestions

The suggested improvement and changes are divided into three categories as below:

- a. Public Facilities. This group of words refers to the facilities that the respondents thought that the organizer should have provided.
The commonly words mentioned by the respondents are parking, seating/views, shades, booth, hotel, Fort Alice and accommodation.
From the study, the biggest concerned of the respondents is the parking followed by seating or views and shades.
- b. Public Health. In this category these are the word related to public health or hygiene which the organizer should be looked into. According the study, the respondents are very concerned about toilet, rubbish or dustbin, cleanliness or hygiene food and safety and security during the festival.
- c. The Event. Comments or suggestions are mainly related to the enhancement of the event in the future. The common words mentioned by respondents are location, timing, event varieties, program and signage.
Overall, the organization of the event is not much of a concern to the respondents but it could be a thought to be noted and to be taken as precautions by the organizer to improve the Festival in the future.

4.5 Word-of-mouth recommendations

This section discusses the willingness of the respondents to make recommendation to anyone to come to the next Tidal Bore Festival. The study shows that 99.67% of the respondents are willing to recommend the event to anyone as this is a unique phenomenon and only can be found in Sri Aman Division.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Researchers' recommendations

Based on the responds gathered through questionnaires distributed during the event and the Audit Team's observation, highlighted several critical areas which need to be improved by stakeholders, namely the local authority and the organizing team.

The suggestions for improvement for Pesta Benak, Sri Aman are as follows:

5.1.1 Hygiene/Cleanliness

The main concerns reported by the respondents are related to hygiene and cleanliness of the festival areas. About forty percent of the respondents (41.64%) highlighted the following issues:

- i. Visitors' manner. Due to the limited toilet facilities, some visitors simply urinate or ease themselves anywhere they can, especially within the Taman Panorama Benak-Fort Alice compound.
- ii. Rubbish bins and Collections. There were lacks of rubbish bins provided in the festival area. It is suggested that more dustbins should be provided at more locations and more frequent collections be implemented.
- iii. Stall operators. There should not be food stalls near the main stage/grandstand. It is suggested that specific area should be allocated for the food stalls and other products.

5.1.2 Public facilities. About thirty percent of the respondents (31.62%) suggested that the following public facilities will need further improvements:

- i. Toilets. Sri Aman Municipal Council should provide more toilet facilities within the town area, especially near the Waterfront area to prevent the area from becoming unnecessary and unhygienic places for nature's call. As an alternative, the Municipal should provide mobile toilets to cater for large number of toilet users.
- ii. Parking spaces. It is suggested that a designated area with good security measure should be identified for the purpose of parking.
- iii. Shade for viewers. More shades for viewers should be built along Taman Panorama Benak so that visitors could enjoy these outdoor activities during rainy days and hot afternoons. It is also suggested that tier stand with/without shade to be built along Waterfront area to cater for more spectators at the same time.
- iv. Food and beverages outlets. The traditional coffee shops in Sri Aman should maintain their originality and traditional styles. However, as one of the objectives of the Festival is to attract visitor or tourists, the services and cleanliness of these coffee shops should be upgraded to add the credential of the festival.

5.1.3 Event management

About twenty five percent of the respondents (24.54%) suggested that some aspects of the event management need to be improved:

- i. Timing. Most of the respondents, especially the locals, complained that the date of Tidal Bore Festival 2011 was not suitable as the *benak* phenomenon from 1st to 4th July 2011 was not at its highest peak of the tidal bore occurrence. Hence, researchers suggested that the festival should be organized during the highest tide of the season.
- ii. Promotion. For Tidal Bore Festival to be recognized as a hallmark event, more exposures should be made through the mass media such as local radio stations, TV channels and newspapers.
- iii. To allow spectators to be better informed about the event, the followings are also suggested including installation of digital signboard or banner with schedule of the programs. Besides, more leaflets should be distributed to spectators which include expected time and location of each event.

5.1.4 Safety (Paramedics)

During the event, paramedics and ambulance were not seen except when the VIPs were around. At times during the availability of the ambulance, the ambulance area was blocked by other vehicles and the paramedic staffs were not seen nearby.

5.1.5 Lodging/Accommodation

62.04% of the respondents reported that they have difficulty to find and book hotel rooms for the event therefore, it is suggested that more hotels to be built in Sri Aman to cater for higher demand during festival.

5.1.6 Other suggestions

The researchers also suggested that the organizer of the Tidal Bore Festival should engage more aggressive promotion by working closely with the local and international mass media, social networking such as *Facebook* and *Twitters* and private sectors; such as travel agencies, tour operators, hotels and inns and other related businesses.

As the local crowd were very impressed with the performance by the international surfers, the researchers believed that this attraction should be maintained and as a stepping stone to create a niche market segment into Sri Aman through the word-of-mouth by the international surfers spreading the news to other surfing enthusiasts around the world. Thus, Tidal Bore festival Sri Aman could be positioned as the venue for popular tidal bore surfing in the world.

6 CONCLUSION

Tidal Bore festival in Sri Aman, Malaysia is a very unique rural tourism event that should be continuously promoted in Sarawak Calendar of Event. The event itself has proved its ability to be an attraction to the

local people from the surrounding area. Hence, at the same time, the uniqueness of the event may create a centre of attraction for potential tourists from other areas in Sarawak.

The study found that majority of the visitors at the festival was satisfied about the organization of the event though there are slight concern on the safety issues, hygiene and cleanliness and accommodation factors. Satisfied visitors to the festival said they will come back for the future event and they would recommend to their friends and families to go to the festival.

At the point of this survey is conducted, the festival seems not be able to attract much international tourists mainly due to lack of promotion, facilities and amenities in the locality. However, given sometimes and more efforts as suggested in the findings and recommendations sections, tidal bore festival in Sri Aman would be able to raise its profile as one of the major tourist attractions in the state of Sarawak and may position itself as classic event in Malaysia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research has been funded by Ministry of Tourism Sarawak.

REFERENCES

- Aikawa, Y. 2002. Recognition of agrilife and community support. In T. Miyazaki(Ed.), *Recommendations for agrilife* (33–56). Tokyo: Ie no Hikari Kyokai.
- Baker & Crompton. 2000. Quality, satisfaction and behavioural intention, *Annals of Tourism Research* 27(4): 785–804.
- Briedenhann & Wickens. 2004. Tourism routes as a tools for the economic development of rural areas – vibrant hope for impossible dream? *Tourism Management* 27: 71–79.
- Bultena & Klessig. 1969. Satisfaction in camping: A conceptualization and guide to social research. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 1: 348–364.
- Butcher. 2003. *The moralization of tourism as sun, sand, . . . and saving the world*, New York, Routledge.
- Crompton & McKay. 1997. Motives of visitors attending festival events. *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(2): 425–439.
- Crompton J. 1999. Measuring economic impact, Working paper, <http://rptsweb.tamu.edu/faculty/crompton.htm>
- de Kadt. 1979a. Motives of visitors attending festival events. *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(2): 425–439.
- Getz. 1997. Event management and event tourism, *Cognizant Communication*, New York.
- Gu & Ryan. 2009. Tourism in China: Destination, Cultures and Communities, *Routledge Advances in Tourism*, Routledge.
- He. 2005. On the Development of Rural Tourism in China's Urban Suburbs: A Case Study on the Evolution of Nongjiale in Chengdu, *Tourism Tribune*, (2005) June.
- Hu. 2008. Rural tourism in China, *Tourism Management*, 32 (6): 1438–41, Elsevier Ltd.
- LaPage (1963). Some Sociological Aspects of Forest Recreation, *Journal of Forestry*, 61 (1) (1963), pp. 32–36.

- Manning. 1986. *Studies in Outdoor Recreation: A Review and Synthesis of the Social Science Literature in Outdoor Recreation*, Oregon State University Press, Corvallis.
- Mitchell & Hall. 2005. Rural tourism as sustainable business: key themes and issues, in D. Hall, I. Kirkpatrick and M. Mitchell (eds), *Rural Tourism and Sustainable Business*, *Channel View*, Clevedon, 3–14.
- National Rural Tourism Master Plan, Ministry of Culture Arts and Tourism UNDP, 2001.
- O'Reilly, Lyberger, McCarthy & Seguin. 2008. Mega-special-event promotions and intent to purchase: a longitudinal analysis of the Super Bowl. *Journal of Sport Management*, 22 (4): 392–409.
- Oppermann, Martin, ed. 1997. *Pacific Rim Tourism*. CAB International. New York.
- Owen, J.G. 2005. Estimating the cost O'Reilly, Lyberger, McCarthy & Seguin (2008). Internalizing ambush marketing: the Olympic brand and country of origin, *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship* 6(4), 216–29.
- Peters. 1969 *International Tourism: The Economics and Development of the International Tourist Trade*. London: Hutchinson.
- Pevetz. 1991. Agriculture and Tourism in Austria, *Tourism Recreation Research* 1991 Vol. 16 No. 1 pp. 57–60.
- Ritchie. 1984. Assessing the impacts of hallmark events: Conceptual and research issues. *Journal of Travel Research* 23(1): 2–11.
- Ritchie & Aitken. 1985. Olympulse II: evolving resident attitudes toward the 1988 Olympic Winter Games. *Journal of Travel Research*, 23(1), 28–33.
- Roche. 1994. Mega-events and urban policy. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 21, 1–19.
- Sarawak Tourism Master Plan Study, State of Sarawak, 1993.
- Shao. 2007. Developing rural tourism and promoting the construction of new countryside, *Qiushi Magazine*, 1 (2007), pp. 42–44.
- Smith. 1989. *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*, 2nd ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Standeven & Deknop. 1999. *Sport Tourism*. Illinois: Human Kinetics Publishers
- Terkenli. 2002. Landscape of tourism: towards a global cultural economy of space? *Tourism Geographic* 3(3): 227–254.
- Thrane. 2002. Jazz festival visitors and their expenditures: Linking spending patterns to musical interest, *Journal of Travel Research* 40: 281–286.
- Ueno, S. 2005. Policies for creating sustainable regions – From a viewpoint of social capital. In S. Yamanaka and S. Ueno (Eds.), *Destruction and survival of mountain regions*, *Kyushu Daigaku Shuppansha*. pp. 93–124, Fukuoka.
- Van Heerde. 2003. Liminality, transformation and communities Afrikaans identities as viewed through the lens of South African arts festivals: 1996–2006, *Stellenbosch University*.
- Wang. 2006. *Rural Community Participation in Tourism Development: Cases from Hainan Province, China*. *University of Waterloo*. School of Planning.

Local community participation in sustainable tourism planning of Malaysian protected areas

Arni Abdul Gani, Khairil Wahidin Awang, Zaiton Samdin & Abdullah Mohd
University Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Local community participation has been acknowledged by many researchers as key factors towards achieving sustainable development in protected areas. However, recreation and tourism planning especially in protected areas; often exist in seclusion from the elements that constitute social, environmental and economic aspects of the area. Thus, conflicts may arise between park management and the community such as conflict between different user groups and competing usage of the same scarce resource which eventually lead to much serious problems such as environmental degradation. Community participation in decision making is one approach to establish a sense of belonging that is important for general well-being and support sustainable development. This could bring positive outcome and active participation would enable park management and the authorities to develop new attractions in the park and offer more sustainable forms of recreation and tourism which suit the people. However, the ability to maintain a healthy environment and economy and to pursue a participatory democracy requires effective management of public involvement. In addition, it also requires understanding not only the conditions that may have the potential to create conflicts but most importantly is to comprehend what are the conditions that can promote a cooperative relationship among the local people and the park management and authorities. This paper outlines the human dimensions of local peoples' participation and also discusses on the approaches towards promoting effective involvement of local community in the decision making process in planning for tourism and recreation in protected areas.

Keywords: human dimensions, local community participation, sustainable tourism, protected areas, Transactive planning.

1 OVERVIEW OF THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABILITY

The concept of 'sustainability' has been widely adopted by governments around the world especially after the publication of the Brundtland Report in 1987. The concept of sustainability can be traced back for more than 30 years ago when sustainability was adopted as the key themes in United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972. A universal agreement was called upon by WCED and led to the establishment of UNCED in 1989. UNCED is responsible to elaborate conservation strategies, provide control measures for environmental degradation and promote sustainable development (Abidin, 1999). The Earth Summit conference established by UNCED later adopted 'Agenda 21', a work plan for countries in relation to sustainable development. World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This definition remains the most widely accepted and circulated definition of sustainable development despite some debates in

regards to its interpretation and detailed implementation (Landorf, 2009). It was argued by the Commission that environment and development must be addressed together as they are interdependent (Gibson, et al., 2005). Environment as the foundation of human lives must be sustained in order to ensure the livelihoods of human being. Development therefore, must aim at balancing between sustaining people as well as sustaining the environment.

Agenda 21 which was the major product of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) urges governments to improve and re-orientate pricing and subsidy policies, diversify economies through tourism, provide mechanisms to preserve threatened areas and promote environmentally sound leisure and tourism activities (Mowforth & Munt, 2003). This cross-national agreement endorsed by 179 countries agreed to work together towards sustainable development where safeguarding the resources for future generations are a major concern (ibid, 2003). This statement is taken to mean that any kind of development, consideration of the impacts of the development is a priority. Development must gaze at the possibilities of future generations to utilize the same resources. For example,

any development must take measures to prevent or control adverse impacts on resources or over-exploitation of resources either natural, human or culture. Kuhn (2007) argued that sustainable development is concerned with management practices designed to exploit resources in such a manner that allows equitable development for various groupings of people in the present, while protecting the resource base for use by future generations. He further discussed that sustainable development may be described both as a concept and a discourse, which the concept has originally emerged from environmental sciences and community development, but now become quite pervasive within contemporary discourse.

2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS

Sustainable tourism is defined as tourism that is developed and managed in such a way that all tourism activity – which in some way focuses on heritage resources (be it natural or cultural) – can continue indefinitely (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996). In a recent development, a revised conceptual definition has been made by WTO in order to give better reflect on the issues of sustainability in tourism. It puts emphasis on the practices and the need to apply sustainable principles at every level.

Planning for tourism, recreation and protected areas often occurs within a context of uncertainty where the goals of development and protection often contested and multiple interests compete for not only scarce resources but also for the political power influencing their disposition (McCool & Patterson, 2000). Planning must not just ponder on technicalities or scientific but must involve social and political action. This implies that planning must include evaluation and selection of suitable resources and must be able to identify and manage potential conflicts between users (Reid, 2003). Global changes also play a role in influencing the planning of these areas for matters such as perceptions of democracy, preferences for intimate public participation, changes in society, universal desire for effective plans and concerns about sustainability of natural resource actions (Kraus & Curtis, 2000; McCool, et al., 2000). Thus, this call for planning processes to be based on dialogue and social learning (Friedmann, 1973; Stankey, et al., 1999). Local communities must participate in the decision making process since in most cases these are the people which are affected the most.

3 LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN PROTECTED AREAS' PLANNING

The concept of local community participation can be loosely described as the involvement of local people in the process that relates to them. As stated by Awangku Hassanal (2009) the word participation

implies how and to what extent people are able to share their views, take part in an activity, project, program, decision-making, policy-making and so on. Community participation has been studied in various fields such as health, environment, governance, rural and urban development (Boyce & Lysack, 2012). The concept and application of community participation has been a central to many discussions especially concerning its theory and its applicability in the real world. Participation can occur in different shapes and forms. According to (Singhal, 2001), participation can be divided into six modes; co-option, compliance, consultation, cooperation, co-learning and collective action. The degrees of involvement for each mode range from as token representative to local people setting their own agenda in the process.

Community participation can have significant impacts on projects and programs. This is because it can make it more humane, more effective and more sustainable (Chambers, 1999). This is especially true in ecosystem sustainability as citizens or local community has the important functions in achieving the key elements of sustainable development (McCoy, et al., 1994). However, despite the known importance of community participation in tourism development, active participation is often hard to materialize.

3.1 *Barriers to local community participation*

Implementing effective local community participation has been a challenge due to numerous reasons. A recent study by Dogra & Gupta (2012) examined the barriers to community participation in Sudhmahadev, a tourist destination located in Jammu and Kashmir in India. They found that the high cost of implementation, limited capacity of local people and attitudes of professionals are some of the reasons that hinder effective participation. In addition, local community in the area claimed that some of their demands with regards to the development of the tourist destination were not heard by the concerned authorities. This kind of approach is very classic to many developing countries, especially in a top-down political system where policy decisions are made at top government level, the local community will have to adapt to the changes made to the environment around them. Other barriers to community participation include community's lack of information and knowledge (Cole, 2006) and conflicting goals among the stakeholders (McCool, 2009). Aside from that, in many marginal communities, especially where there has been a long history of colonization and/or authoritarian rule, communities lack the confidence to take part in the decision making (Cole, 2006; Timothy, 1999).

This agrees with Wang, et al., (2005) who stated that local community lack of political will and afraid of the contacts with government officials were reasons behind lacking in participation. Local communities often not ready to participate in the surrounding tourism development and waited for the government to make decisions for them. It was understandable

since participatory decision making was not part of the community culture therefore they did not see the importance of it and certainly not concern about the imbalance in decision making power. In order to instill balance in the decision making process as well as to ensure true participation by the local community, protected areas planning system will have to change.

3.2 *The Transactive planning approach*

Literature has suggested that planning and management of protected areas is in desperate need for a different approach to tackle the impending problems and conflicts occurs. Therefore, it is suggested that the principles of Transactive planning be adopted in this matter. Transactive Planning was proposed by Friedman (1973). The fundamental approach focuses on the target group from goal setting to various steps in planning. The basic philosophy of this planning approach is the inclusion of the people in the decision making of the planning for whom the plan is being produced (McAvoy, et al., 1991). Transactive planning works by forming a small group of participants who shares their experiences and knowledge with the planner. This will require face to face communication and dialogue which eventually will provide a setting for the participants to share and use the knowledge. The process will bring together the professional planners and people who are most affected by the planning decisions, where they will discuss on the focus of the planning and the expected outcomes.

The Transactive planning model is based on communicative rationality and characterized by dialogue, mutual learning, flexibility and recognition of many forms of knowledge. It actually allows stakeholders to develop mutual understanding of interests, share problem definitions, create ownership in the plan, nurture trust, share agreement on the types and use of knowledge and ultimately build relationships (Stankey, et al., 1999).

4 PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT IN MALAYSIA SCENARIO

In Peninsular Malaysia, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) is the body responsible for the management of national parks and wildlife reserves. Whereas, in Sabah, the parks are under the jurisdiction of Sabah Parks and Forest Department of Sarawak is the one responsible for managing parks in Sarawak. DWNP is responsible for the planning and implementation of various activities which contribute to the long-term conservation of protected areas and at the same time mitigating the conflicts between human and the environment. In total, there are about 38 identified protected areas managed by DWNP which cover an approximate total area of 752,550 ha (DWNP, 2010). 25 of these identified areas are classified as forest reserves. In the Malaysian Vision 2020 statement, there was a strong statement stressing

the need to protect natural resources while pursuing economic development and that the land must not be polluted for its own sake and for its economic advancement (Abidin, 1999). This statement basically entails that for whatever matter that development is needed for economic viability of an area, maintaining the environment and ecology should be an important consideration as to ensure long term sustainability. Malaysian has put efforts to implement sustainable development with the adoption of Total Planning Doctrine, National Physical Plan and developing "Urban Indicators" by the Town and Country Planning Department (Dola & Dolbani, 2006). These plans guide local practitioners in proper and acceptable ways to plan and manage development. In addition, local authorities in some states in Malaysia are also adopting the principles outlined in Agenda 21 to promote sustainable development in their jurisdictional areas.

4.1 *Public participation in Malaysia*

On the other hand, with regard to public participation issues in Malaysia, Sharina, et. al (2011) indicated that the issue with participation in resource management are very crucial. It is believed that local community participation is lacking due to insufficient education and learning on conservation efforts. Conservation based efforts required support from the local community for success and this cannot be achieved if local communities' refuse to participate. She further pointed out that not enough researches have been conducted to explore the potential for collaboration between local community and the authorities especially in conservation moves in Malaysia. Most of the time, the extent and effectiveness of this participation are not known. Hairul (2008) investigation on the local community participation in tourism development in Melaka city also indicated the same findings. There was no serious involvement of the local communities in the early development of the city. It was only beginning of 2000 when culture and heritage of Melaka started to get recognition that government through their agencies started to build relationship with the communities. Even so, it was found that local communities still have vague ideas about the overall goals of tourism development (ibid, p. 103).

The examples of case studies above indicated that the issue in local community participation is not addressed accordingly. Participation is merely politically or economically oriented which will deprive the mission to realizing sustainable development. Considerable discussions in the past have focused on the role of science in determining sustainability such as providing information on costs of decisions, trade-off between costs and so on however, science cannot decide between what is right and what is wrong (Moisey & McCool, 2008). Local community participation is important in sustainability however despite this admission, their local knowledge and traditional values often not been taken into consideration in sustainable decisions (ibid, p. 288). To create an effective

management of public involvement and eventually creating a meaningful and successful local community participation, it is critical to understand not only the reasons for conflict but also the conditions that might promote better cooperation with the local community and this can only be achieved when the stakeholders and natural resource managers have an understanding on the nature and theory of public involvement including the human dimensions of participation (McCoy, et al., 1994).

5 HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

It is imperative in planning and management of the natural environment to ensure that the social science data be linked to biological and physical science information if the plan is to recognize the complex, interactive role that humans play in natural systems (Bright, et al., 2003). The knowledge obtained through the linkages of information would provide a greater understanding for the managers on the extensiveness of human interaction with the natural world. It is fairly understood by many people that the successfulness of protected areas management relies heavily on the partnership between the agency and local community. Good collaboration actions can only be established through better understanding of the needs and wants of each party. Sharing of roles and power is crucial and thus this requires input from the locals in decision making. However, even though public participation has always been the subject of interest, its application in reality is often being a little more than rhetoric.

5.1 *Social dimensions*

A sociology dimension in protected areas planning and management can be further understood by looking at three different perspectives. According to Flora (2000), these perspectives are context, process and impacts. Sociology looks at *context* where this relates to policies where management is embedded, the rules of each institution that is partner in management, does each rules compliment or conflict with each other and so on. The context can be further understood with the inclusion of the dominant religious groups' beliefs, dominant political groups' views and opinions. These opinions and views often came from organized communities of interest for example any society or association existed within the community apart from the common social characteristics such as age, gender, education level and occupational distribution of the population. Sociology also looks at *process* which refers to interactions among groups of people. This implies interactions among the people in the groups and also the interactions of management and the groups. An example of this is how an interaction can be beneficial towards successful cooperation between the groups and management? *Impacts* on the other hand, relates to how behavior changes

as a result of something. For example, how a user's behavior change after him or her usage of the resource. Social dimensions are important as it refers to individual skills, dedication, experience and eventually will result in behavior (Cottrell, et al., 2005). Participation in collective groups such as local community activities is described as one of the domains of social capital (Forrest & Kearns, 2001) and believed were related closely to one's sense of community (Dempsey, et al., 2009).

Socioeconomic dimension on the other hand relates to factors such as occupation, income, age, education status and so on. These factors can have significant effects towards how people views and opinions on something. As indicated by McCoy, et al., (1994), the aspirations that people have on something such as occupational and economic is referred to interests. An interest is the bottom line in developing good communications; therefore the economic dimension is particularly important in order to capture the human dimensions of participation.

5.2 *Institutional dimensions*

In discussing institutions as one of the dimensions, it is important to review the concept of institutional in social science. Traditionally, institutional is understood as organizations where studies usually look at institutions influence issues such as political decisions, political relationship or how it determines the economic structure and economic behavior (Spangenberg, et al., 2002). On the other hand, sociology takes a much different approach towards conceptualizing the ideas of institutional dimension. It looks at institutions from the point of view of how it impacts and affects social relationship and behaviors (ibid, p. 69).

Since institutions can be defined as a system of rules governing interaction between its member (Cottrell, et al., 2005), therefore the institutional dimension would reflect the idea on how participation is being managed, mediated or strengthen by the management.

5.3 *Cultural dimensions*

Cultural part of participation would address peoples' beliefs, norms and attitudes. Particularly for local communities who live within protected areas, these areas are part of their everyday life and practice of culture. According to de Man (2003), culture is of particular relevance for the use of information in problem solving. This is because culture shapes what people think ought to be and secondly, the amount of what solutions and remedies are acceptable in a given problem-situation depends to a considerable extent on cultural values (ibid, p.24).

This is taken to mean that culture hold strong influence in how people view some solutions to certain problems and also guide how people determines information needs to solve the problems.

6 CONCLUSION

Human dimensions factors are now considered valid in examining the success of parks and protected areas. According to Charles & Wilson (2009), planning and management of protected areas such as marine park require that attention must be given towards examining not only the oceanographic or biophysical factors but also on social, economic and institutional considerations. The creation of parks and protected areas itself lies in the context of societal and/or community objectives, which inherently reflect human aspirations and values (Charles, et al., 2009). Therefore, when considering the objectives of establishing protected areas, biological and ecological goals must go along with human-oriented goals such as the promotion of effective partnership that will contribute towards enhance lifestyle for the locals. Public participation must also allow for sharing of knowledge and information and that extrinsic information been provided to the local so they could participate effectively with enough knowledge and understanding of the subject matters to them. Local community participation is important in sustainability however despite this admission, their local knowledge and traditional values often not being taken into consideration in sustainable decisions (Moisey, et al., 2008).

The current research is motivated by the notion that stakeholders such as park management and planners must take the initiatives to know what values local community holds towards the concept of public participation. Like what have been mentioned earlier, natural environment such as parks and protected areas are developed not only with biological and ecological aims but also include human-oriented considerations which must address in planning and management as well. In addition, literatures have asserted that collaboration between the stakeholders is necessary to address these concerns. For that reason, this research also intended to identify the possibilities to adapt the principles of Transactive planning into a local scenario in an attempt to promote collaboration between the management and local community. The findings may help to shed some understandings towards establishing an effective public participation in protected areas planning in Malaysian protected areas.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, Z. Z. 1999. *The identification of criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of ecotourism in Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia: a delphi consensus*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, West Virginia University, West Virginia.
- Awangku Hassanal, B. P. B. 2009. *Success of ecotourism sites and local community participation in Sabah*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Victoria University, Wellington.
- Boyce, W., & Lysack, C. 2012. Community participation: Uncoverings its meanings in CBR. Retrieved 4 February, 2012, from http://www.aifo.it/english/resources/online/apdrj/selread100/comm_participation_boyce_ly sack.pdf
- Bright, A. D., Cordell, H. K., Anne, P., & Tarrant, M. A. 2003. *A human dimensions framework: Guidelines for conducting social assessments*. Gen. Tech. Rep. SRS-65. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Research Station.
- Ceballos-Lascurain, H. 1996. Tourism, ecotourism and protected areas: the state of nature-based tourism. Retrieved 6 April 2011, from http://books.google.com.my/books?id=8WGBtSYsNIwC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false
- Charles, A., & Wilson, L. 2009. Human dimensions of marine protected areas. *ICES Journal of Marine Science*, 66(1), 6-15.
- Cole, S. 2006. Information and Empowerment: The Keys to Achieving Sustainable Tourism. [Article]. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 14(6), 629-644.
- Cottrell, S. P., Vaske, J. J., & Shen, F. 2005. *Predictors of sustainable tourism: Resident perceptions of tourism in Holland and China*. Paper presented at the 2005 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium, Bolton Landing, Bolton, NY.
- de Man, W. H. E. 2003. Cultural and institutional conditions for using geographic information: Access and participation. *Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA)*, 15(1), 29-34.
- Dempsey, N., Bramley, G., Power, S., & Brown, C. 2009. The social dimension of sustainable development: Defining urban social sustainability. *Sustainable development*, 19(2011), 289-300.
- Dola, K., & Dolbani, M. 2006. Public participation in planning for sustainable development: operational questions and issues. *ALAM CIPTA, Intl. Journal on Sustainable Tropical Design Research & Practice*, 1(1), 1-8.
- DWNP. 2010. List of Protected Areas managed by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks. Retrieved 27 February, 2011, from <http://www.wildlife.gov.my/index.php>
- Flora, C. B. 2000. Measuring the social dimensions of managing natural resources. In D. C. Fulton, K. C. Nelson & D. W. Lime (Eds.), *Human dimensions of natural resource management: Emerging issues and practical applications*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota, Department of forest resource.
- Forrest, R., & Kearns, A. 2001. Social cohesion, social capital and the neighbourhood. *Urban Studies*, 38, 2125-2143.
- Friedmann, J. 1973. *Retracking America: A Theory of Transactive Planning*. New York: Doubleday.
- Gibson, R. B., Hassan, S., Holtz, S., Tansey, J., & Whitelaw, G. 2005. *Sustainability Assessment*. London: Earthscan.
- Hairul, N. I. 2008. View on local community and urban tourism development in Melaka City: A case of a city in the developing country. *Jurnal Alam Bina*, 13(4), 95-105.
- Kraus, R. G., & Curtis, J. E. 2000. *Creative Management in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services* (6th ed.). United States: McGraw Hill.
- Kuhn, L. 2007. Sustainable Tourism as Emergent Discourse. *World Futures: The Journal of General Evolution*, 63(3/4), 286-297.
- Landorf, C. 2009. Managing for sustainable tourism: a review of six cultural World Heritage Sites. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 17(1), 53-70.
- McAvoy, L. H., Schatz, C., & Lime, D. W. 1991. Cooperation in Resource Management: A Model Planning Process for Promoting Partnerships between Resource Managers and Private Service Providers. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 9(4), 42-58.
- McCool, S. F. 2009. Constructing partnerships for protected area tourism planning in an era of change and messiness. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 17(2), 133-148.

- McCool, S. F., & Patterson, M. 2000. Trends in recreation, tourism and protected area planning. In W. R. Gartner & D. W. Lime (Eds.), *Outdoor Recreation Trends* (pp. 111–119). Wallingford, UK: Cabi Publishing.
- McCoy, K. L., Krumpel, E. E., & Cowles, P. D. 1994. The principles and processes of public involvement: A state-of-the-art synthesis for agencies venturing into ecosystem management. Retrieved 6 January 2012, from <http://classweb.gmu.edu/erodger1/prls%20531/McCoy.pdf>
- Moisey, R. N., & McCool, S. F. 2008. Sustainable tourism in the 21st century: Lessons from the past, challenges to address. In S. F. McCool & R. N. Moisey (Eds.), *Tourism, recreation and sustainability: Linking culture and the environment*. UK: Cabi.
- Mowforth, M., & Munt, I. 2003. *Tourism and Sustainability: Development and New Tourism in the Third World*. London: Routledge.
- Reid, D. G. 2003. *Tourism, Globalization and Development: Responsible Tourism Planning*. London: Pluto Press.
- Sharina, A. H., Hood, S., & Mustafa, O. 2011. Engaging the local community in participatory resource management through learning: the experience from Langkawi Island, Malaysia. *Kajian Malaysia*, 29(1), 125–139.
- Singhal, A. 2001. *Facilitating community participation through communication*. New York: UNICEF.
- Spangenberg, J. H., Pfahl, S., & Deller, K. 2002. Towards indicators for institutional sustainability: lessons from an analysis of Agenda 21. *Ecological Indicators*, 2(2002), 61–77.
- Stankey, G. H., McCool, S. F., Clark, R. N., & Brown, P. J. 1999. Institutional and organizational challenges to managing natural resources for recreation: a social learning model. In T. Burton & E. Jackson (Eds.), *Leisure Studies at the Millennium* (pp. 435–450). State College, Pennsylvania: Venture Publishing.
- Timothy, D. 1999. Participatory planning: A view of tourism in Indonesia. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2), 371–391.
- WCED. 1987. *Our common future*. World Commission on Environment and Development. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

An exploratory study on the determinants of repeat visitation to Melaka among Melaka's university students

Stany Wee Lian Fong, Tan Meiyi, Tan Pei Kian, Yeo Sook Fern & Woo Vincent
Faculty of Business and Law, Multimedia University, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Tourism is a traveling activity of an individual and away from his or her own environment. Various studies have been done on examining the intention of destination visit, but however there are still limited studies on the intention to revisit especially in Asia. Repeat visitation or revisit is a natural circumstance in mature tourism destination and it serves as an important indicator in tourism industry as a country's economy can be improved with an increase in repeat visit rate. Tourism serves as an important contribution industry to Malaysia economy, with significant receipts of RM56.5 billion in year 2010 and RM53.4 billion in 2009. The reason Melaka is chosen because it is seen as one of the premier tourist destination in Malaysia and it has been recognized as historical heritage by UNESCO. The number of tourist arrivals to Melaka has rise from 6 million in 2007 to 7.2 million in 2009. These figures show that Melaka is fit to play a role as benchmark to all tourism destinations in Malaysia. Therefore, this study focuses on determining the influence of prior experience, promotion, authenticity learning, and perceived value on the intention to revisit to Melaka. 168 survey responses were collected from non-Malaccans university students which pursuing their study in Melaka by using convenience sampling method. It is found that prior experience ($\beta = 0.269$, $p < 0.05$), authenticity learning ($\beta = 0.023$, $p < 0.05$), and perceived value ($\beta = 0.314$, $p < 0.05$) significantly influence intention to revisit. The findings of this study provide an insight to the tourism management on how to predict and improve the tourists' intention to revisit to a particular destination.

Keywords: Repeat visitation, revisit, tourism, Melaka

1 INTRODUCTION

The competition in international tourisms have become rigid with new destinations emerge and the increase numbers of destination being recognized by heritage sites by UNESCO. One of the ways for mature tourism destinations to gain the strength to compete is through repeat visitation. Revisit is a natural circumstance in mature tourism destination whereby it serves as an important indicator in tourism industry. A country's economy can be improved with an increase in repeat visit rate (Alegre and Cladera, 2009). Repeat visitors are an established market which provides positive word-of-mouth reference to family and friends (Reid and Reid, 1993; Lau and McKercher, 2004). Terminology of Tourist Area Life Cycle explains that a destination's decline will arise when the tourist products are not updated and repositioned, and this will happen when the destination has attained its stagnation stage (Butler, 1980). In order to enhance repeat visitations to a destination, it is important to recognize the determinants of the intention to revisit so that these variables can be studied and improved.

This paper studies circumstances in one of the district or state in Malaysia, a South East Asia country in which tourism activities serve as an important

contribution to its economy. Tourism Malaysia had recorded a receipt of RM 53.4 billion and an arrival of 23.6 million visitors in year 2009, and a receiving of RM56.5 billion with 24.6 million visitors in year 2010. In Malaysia, Melaka is seen as one of the premier tourism destination with the number of tourist arrivals to Melaka had risen from 6 million in 2007 to 7.2 million in 2009 (Jantan, 2010). It is also being recognized as historical heritage by UNESCO. Therefore this shows that Melaka is eligible to represent as benchmark to tourism destinations in Malaysia. Therefore the main objective of this study is to examine the relationship of these variables on the intention to revisit to the selected city, Melaka by focusing on non-Malaccans university students who are pursuing their study in Melaka.

2 DETERMINANTS OF REPEAT VISITATION

Many of the studies on the intention to repeat purchases, or repeat visitation have focused on the influences that define this intention. Alegre and Cladera (2009) mentioned that the factor that is often recommended is a satisfactory prior experience. In marketing

literature, prior experience is explained as the knowledge or information that consumers obtain after experiencing something, and positive prior experience has a positive influence on post purchase behavior (Cronin and Taylor, 1992). People will most likely choose not to revisit again unless that particular destination gives an unforgettable experience to them (Woodside and Lysonski, 1989).

Prevailing theory explains that satisfactory prior experience will lead to word-of-mouth recommendations or even an intention to visit to a destination (Brady and Robertson, 2001). Studies done by Alegre and Cladera (2006), Um et. al., (2006), Yoon and Uysal (2005) and Petrick (2004a) show that tourist satisfaction and prior experience has a positive influence on tourists' return visit to a destination which can be explained that tourist might revisit to a destination because it is seen as less risky (Oppermann, 1998). Therefore, this leads to the establishment of the first proposed hypothesis for this study to assist Melaka in deciding whether to or not to focus on prior experience to enhance their repeat visit rate:

Ha1: There is a relationship between prior experience and intention to revisit to Melaka among Melaka's university students.

Promotion is widely used in tourism industry and it is found persuasive in encouraging existing and prospective tourists to visit a destination (Heath and Wall, 1992). Promotional strategy plays an important role as one of the key marketing mix in growing the number of visitors. In marketing literature, Micro Model of Consumer Responses explains that promotion can influence the formation of CAB (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) among consumers or tourists in this study (Lutz, 1991; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). The model assume that consumers pass through a conscious mental thinking stage (cognitive), unconscious emotional stage (affective) before they take an action (behavioral). Promotion is effective in influencing the affective stage whereby the incentives given to tourists will help to create interest and desire to take an action, which is to revisit.

Tourist characteristics such as income level and age will influence tourists on how to spend for their travels (Qu and Lam, 1997) and Song et. al. (2003) added that cost of travel appears to be one of the important influences towards Hong Kong's tourism demand. This shows that promotional programs are important to serve as a trigger for these tourists to repeat their visit to destination that they had visited. Therefore, this leads to the establishment of the second proposed hypothesis for this study to assist Melaka to examine whether promotion is effective in enhancing tourists' repeat visitation:

Ha2: There is a relationship between promotion and intention to revisit to Melaka among Melaka's university students.

Travelers are showing increase interest in educational experience while vacationing. Learning has

turned out to be one of the several main concerns in the motivation to travel (Waite, 2000) with tourists seek to experience, learn, and absorb the destination population's lifestyle, heritage, arts, industries, and leisure pursuits. Boyd (2001) stated that there is a close association between learning and authenticity and the methods of learning among the tourists include museums, visitor centers, on-site displays, on-site literature, and even information pamphlets. Thus, one of the main purposes of repeat visits is to enjoy the atmosphere and environment of the destination (Freytag, 2007). It is important for mature tourism destination such as Melaka to examine the influence of authenticity learning on the intention to revisit:

Ha3: There is a relationship between authenticity learning and intention to revisit to Melaka among Melaka's university students.

A tourist's perception towards a destination determines the successfulness or failure of the particular destination's tourism activities (Formica, 2002; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000). Tourists, who perceive positively on a destination, serve as "information channels" that indirectly connect all their friends, relatives, and other potential travelers to a destination (Reid and Reid, 1993). These indirect connections play important role in reducing uncertainty to tourists (Oppermann, 1998) and increase the perception of tourists towards the value of a destination. Moncroe (1990) stated that a trade-off appears in between the cost of traveling and the benefits that tourists gained through their visitations. Therefore the fourth hypothesis is developed to help Melaka Tourism to examine the influence of perceived value on tourists' intention to revisit:

Ha4: There is a relationship between perceived value and intention to revisit to Melaka among Melaka's university students

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Focus group was conducted among undergraduate and postgraduate students with appropriate guidance of relevant literature to identify the four main independent variables of this study: prior experience, promotion, authenticity learning, and perceived value. These independent variables were then being further discussed to determine its influence on repeat visitation to the selected tourism destination, Melaka. After that, descriptive research was carried out to obtain data for further analysis and to explain the relationships and influences of the four independent variables on the intention to revisit. A total of 168 students were intercepted in universities in Melaka to participate in this study as all of the students fulfill the condition of 'visited to Melaka at least once' and able to represent the entire population of Melaka visitors on related characteristics to exact extend of information for this study.

Table 1. Variables grand mean descriptive statistics.

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Prior experience	4.45	0.78
Promotion	4.08	1.05
Authenticity learning	4.43	0.69
Perceived value	4.41	0.76

4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The variables were measured based on multi-item scales where each variable consists of more than 5 items. All the items then combined to measure the 4 independent variables in a consistent manner. The 6-point Likert ranging from strong disagree (point-1) to strongly agree (point-6) was applied to avoid neutral opinion given by respondents. Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations for all the 4 independent variables in this study. The variable with the highest mean is prior experience which is 4.45, followed by authenticity learning with 4.43, perceived value with 4.41, and promotion with 4.08. The results (means more than neutral point of 3.5) show that most of the respondents have perceiving positively on the prior experience, promotion, authenticity learning, and the value of tourism in Melaka.

5 HYPOTHESES TESTING AND PREDICTION PATRON INTENTION

The dependent variable intention to revisit was regressed on all the independent variables and it was found that all four independent variables fulfill the independence assumption which these variables were statistically independent and uncorrelated with one another. The probability level was set at p(0.05) indicating 95% confidence in explaining the dependent variable.

Stepwise multiple regression method was applied from SPSS software to narrow down the set to a smaller number of statistically significant variables. Only three significant variables were entered in the analysis: prior experience, authenticity learning, and perceived value. On the other hand, the promotion variable was eliminated due to the significant value was more than 0.05 probability level. Therefore hypothesis Ha2 was found not supported by the result and it concluded that there is no relationship between promotion and intention to revisit to Melaka among Melaka’s university students. According to Table 3, the F value is 59.64 with a significant value of 0.000. The F test is found significant and it shows that the linear relationship does exist. Therefore further regression analysis will not be abandoned. The R square reveals how well the straight model fits the scatter of points, and the higher the R square value the better is the straight line fits to the elliptical scatter points. Thus, the 0.522 R square value is considered moderate, and it shows that 52.2% of

Table 2. Model summary.

R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
0.722	0.522	0.513	0.69041

Table 3. ANOVA.

T	Sums of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	85.287	3	28.429	59.641	.000
Residual	78.174	164	.477		
Total	163.460	167			

Table 4. Coefficients.

	Unstandardized beta	Standardized beta	Sig	Correlation
(Constant)	-0.218		.553	
Prior experience	0.342	.269	.001	.629
Authenticity learning	0.317	.222	.011	.633
Perceived value	0.412	.314	.001	.674

the overall factors that might influence the intention to revisit to Melaka are explained by the prior experience, authenticity learning, and perceived value variables.

Hypotheses Ha1, Ha3, and Ha4 were found supported with the result in Table 4 shows that significant values for perceived value (p=0.01), prior experience (p=0.01) and authenticity learning (p=0.11) are all lower than the probability level which was set at p (0.05). Hence this explains that there are relationships between the independent variables (perceived value, prior experience, and promotion) with the dependent variable- intention to revisit to Melaka among Melaka’s university students. Perceived value (β=0.314, p<0.05) emerged as the most important determinant on the intention to revisit with the largest absolute value of standardized beta coefficient. Besides that, correlations for all variables are found to be above 0.6, and this explains that all independent variables are having strong and positive correlation with the dependent variable. A concise predictive model is found with the values for constant (dependent variable) is -0.218, perceived value’s beta 0.412, prior experience’s beta 0.342, and authenticity learning’s beta 0.317. Thus the regression equation is found to be:

$$\text{Intention to revisit} = -0.218 + 0.412 (\text{perceived value}) + 0.342 (\text{prior experience}) + 0.317 (\text{authenticity learning})$$

6 MARKETING DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Prior experience is found significantly influencing Melaka university students' intention to revisit to Melaka. The result is found supported by Sara et al. (2009), Brady and Robertson (2001) which can be explained as positive experiences contribute to a satisfaction level which then plays significant roles in motivating tourists to revisit to a destination. According to the result of this study, it is advised that the management of tourism destination to focus not only on the tangibles but also on intangible variables. According to Alegre and Cladera (2009), decision makers are encouraged to put more efforts in improving and updating the "product on offer" just to increase satisfaction levels. However, besides focusing on these tangibles, tourists' satisfaction relies heavily on a number of variables such as hospitality factors and the quality of the environment (Alegre and Cladera, 2009), the level of safety and comfort, services, and the environment provided by the destination (Essam and Jacqueline, 2005). In the context of revisit, the intangibles appear to be playing a more important role comparing to the tangibles. A tourist which visited a destination is assumed that he is having sufficient information and knowledge on the destination and the main purposes of his or her repeat visits is explained to re-enjoy the atmosphere and environment of the destination (Freytag, 2007; Poria et al., 2006). These positive prior experiences given by the intangible variables are serving as intrinsic cues to tourists, and causing them to feel comfortable and see it as less risky (Oppermann, 1998) to choose these destinations to revisit.

The result of this research also shows that authenticity learning significantly influencing Melaka university students' intention to revisit to Melaka. Linda and Beverly (n.d) stated that tourists' revisits to a destination are mainly caused by the reason of learning experience which helps in personal growth. In the context of consumer behavior, decision made for choosing a destination for visitation can be explained by the two Learning Theories: Cognitive Theory and Stimulus Response Theory. Richard et al. (1997) explained that a destination is chosen for Perceived value is found to be the most important predictor to intention to revisit among Melaka university students. Reid and Reid (1993) explained that positive perception on the value of a particular tourism destination will serve as "information channels" that indirectly deliver the information to potential travelers to a destination around them. These positive values assist in reducing uncertainty to tourists (Oppermann, 1998) and increase the chances of choosing these visited 'positive-value' destinations to revisit. For those destinations which are perceived negatively by the tourists, the visits can be considered purely as economic sacrifice and these destinations will be immediately eliminated from the list of alternatives of destination to revisit. Therefore, the decision makers for tourism destination are strongly

encouraged to enhance the values offered by their tourism destinations. The benefits that the tourists gained through their visitation must be always higher than the costs that they paid which is being interpreted by most of the marketing literatures as 'value of money'. In the context of consumer behavior, perception towards a particular product or destination can be explained by the process of an individual places his or her own meanings to stimuli that received through the five senses of humans. This means that the perceptual process begins with sensory input. Thus, the decision makers are advised to focus on improving the tourists' experiences on visuals, sounds, odors, tastes, and textures of destination, with conditions that the improvement must meet the absolute threshold- the lowest level of input to be detected by sensory receptors of tourists. These improvements will then being served as cues to tourists to judge the quality and to create confidence on a particular destination.

However, promotion variable is eliminated from the regression analysis due to the significant value is more than 0.05 probability level. This shows that promotion does not have significant influences on the intention to revisit to a particular tourism destination. The result is found conflicting with most of the marketing literatures that stated promotion has direct influence on repeat visit. However, this result can be explained by Mohamed (2007) which stated that promotion does have influence on an intention to visit but not revisit. Promotion will only be effective on revisit if it is supported by the quality of the destination such as the level of service. Consumers are changing as now they are better informed. Internet enables them to search for information and do not just rely on information provided through advertisements. Statements from Lin and Lin (n.d) also supported this result by stating that consumers spending and repeat visits do not have significant relationship with promotional elements such as sales promotion. Sales promotion is only a temporary incentive given to consumers to induce subscriptions, which Lin and Lin (n.d) described as good only for first trial consumers but not repeat consumers. Therefore, promotion in terms of advertising and sales promotion are found ineffective in influencing tourists' intention to revisit to a particular destination.

REFERENCES

- Alegre J. and M. Cladera 2006. Repeat Visitation in Mature Sun and Sand Holiday Destination. *Journal of travel Research*, 44(3): 288-97.
- Alegre J and M. Cladera 2009. Analysing the effect of satisfaction and previous visits on tourist intentions to return. *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 43, No. 5/6, 2009.
- Boyd S. 2001. Cultural and heritage tourism in Canada: Opportunities, principles and challenges. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 2002, pp. 211-233
- Brady, M.K. and Robertson, C.J. 2001. Searching for a consensus on the antecedent role of service quality and satisfaction: an exploratory cross-national study. *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 51, No. 1, pp. 53-60

- Butler, R. W. 1980. The Concept of a Tourist Area Cycle of Evolution: *Implications for Management of Resources*. Canadian Geographer 24:5–12
- Cronin, J.J. Jr and Taylor, S.A. 1992. Measuring service quality: a reexamination and extension. *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 56, No. 3, pp. 55–68
- Eagly, A.H., and Chaiken, S. 1993. *The Psychology of Attitudes*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers
- Essam E. Ibrahim, Jacqueline Gill. 2005. A positioning strategy for a tourist destination, based on analysis of customers' Perceptions and satisfactions. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2005, pp. 172–188
- Formica, S. 2002. Measuring destination attractiveness: a proposed framework. *Journal of American Academy of Business*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 350–5
- Freytag, T 2007. Stadttourismus in europäischen Grossstädten: Eine Hierarchie der Standorte und aktuelle Entwicklungen der U bernachtungszahlen, *DISP*, 169, 2, 56–67
- Mohamed, Ghada Abdalla 2007. Egypt's Image as a Tourist Destination: A Perspective of Foreign Tourists. *Tourism: An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism*. Volume 3, Number 1, Spring 2008, pp. 36–65
- Heath, E., Wall, G. 1992. *Marketing Tourism Destinations: A strategic Planning Approach*, Canada: John Wiley and Sons.
- Kozak, M., and M. Rimmington. 2000. Tourist Satisfaction with Mallorca, Spain, as an Off-season Holiday Destination. *Journal of Travel Research* 38:260–269.
- Lau, A. and McKercher, B. 2004. Exploration versus acquisition: a comparison of first-time and repeat visitors. *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 42, No. 3, pp. 279–85.
- Lin, Y., Lin, C. n.d. A Empirical Study of Sales Promotion and Consumption Patterns in the Department Store Setting. Retrieved from <http://www.tut-fashion.com/manager/form/dissertation/file/20080909234507.PDF>
- Linda and Beverley n.d. Enhancing the Wine Tourism Experience: the Customers' Viewpoint.
- Lutz, R.J. 1991. The Role of Attitude Theory in Marketing. In *Perspectives in Consumer Behavior* (4th ed.). Kassanjian and Robertson (Eds.), pp. 317–339. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Monroe, K. 1990. *Pricing: Making Profitable Decisions*. McGraw Hill, New York, NY.
- Petrick, J.F. 2004a. Are loyal visitors desired visitors?, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 25 No. 4, pp. 463–70.
- Poria Y., Richard Butler, David Airey 2003. The Core of Heritage Tourism, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 238–254.
- Poria Y., Reichel A., Biran A. 2006. Heritage Site Management Motivations and Expectations. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 33, No. 1, pp. 162–178, 2006.
- Qu, H., & Lam, S. 1997. A travel demand model for Mainland Chinese tourists to Hong Kong. *Tourism Management*, 18(8), 593–597.
- Reid, L. and Reid, S. 1993. Communicating tourism supplier services: building repeat visitor relationships. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, Vol. 2, Nos 2/3, pp. 3–19.
- Richard P, Guerin and McGugan 1997. Visitor learning at a heritage attraction: a case study of Discovery as a media product. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 5–23, 1998.
- Song, H., Wong, K. K. F., & Chon, K. K. S. 2003. Modelling and forecasting the demand for Hong Kong tourism, *International Tourism of Hospitality Management*, 22, 435–451.
- Um, S., Chon, K., & Ro. Y. 2006. Antecedents of revisit intention. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(4), 1141–1158.
- Waitt, G. 2000. Consuming Heritage: Perceived Historical Authenticity. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27:835–862.
- Woodside, A., & Lysonski, A. 1989. A general model of travel destination choice. *Journal of Travel Research*, 27, 8–14.
- Yoon, Y. and Uysal, M. 2005. An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: a structural model. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 45–56
- Young, M. 1999. The Social Construction of Tourist Places. *Australian Geographer*, 30 (3): 373–389.
- Yusof Jantan. 2010. Nam News Network: Malaysia: Melaka State Targets 8 Million Tourist Arrival This Year. From <http://news.brunei.fm/2010/03/21/malaysia-melaka-state-targets-8-million-tourist-arrivals-this-year/>

This page intentionally left blank

Product development and sustainable rural tourism: The case of Kilim Geopark, Langkawi

Mastura Jaafar, Azizan Marzuki & Norjanah Mohd Bakri
School of Housing, Building and Planning, Universiti Sains Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Environment-related products and activities in the tourism industry are popular among visitors to Malaysia. Island tourism is highly dependent on local environment. Providing tourists with products that offer them a real feeling about the local environment is one of the important factors for tourism to succeed. To be sustainable, tourism-product development must meet the customers' needs. To contribute to the growing body of knowledge on sustainable tourism, it would be useful to explore on the ecotourism-related products and activities offered by Kilim Geopark in Langkawi, Malaysia. A wise use of the destination's cultural and natural resources will attract tourists and ensure the industry's long-term profitability. Langkawi has been acknowledged as Geopark site by UNESCO since 2007 and Kilim Geopark is one of Langkawi's attractions. By using a qualitative approach, this paper discuss on the ecotourism product development offered by local community in Kilim.

Keywords: Product development, sustainability and eco-tourism.

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism and particularly ecotourism in developing countries is enriched with natural and cultural capital and often be touted as a sustainable source of revenue for indigenous and rural communities (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004; Chambers, 2000; Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Ponting, 2001; Schilcher, 2007). Tourism commonly helps to bring developing countries and even local communities into the global economy (Azarya, 2004; Hall, 1998; Russell and Stabile, 2003; Schilcher, 2007; Wood, 1997). Fundamentally, many literatures reveal that ecotourism is a growing segment of tourism (Meric and Hunt, 1998; Wight, 2001) which contributes to local's environment, social and economic.

Ecotourism is usually linked with natural resources and environment conservation. In fact, ecotourism, nature tourism, and sustainable tourism are often used interchangeably, even though these are distinct forms of tourism (Nepal, 2002). For example, the term ecotourism is not as widely used in Europe as elsewhere in the world whereby the term sustainable tourism is preferred, and is applied by the EU (Blangey and Vautier, 2001). Prior to that, ecotourism defined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1993) and endorsed by Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism in Malaysia (MOCAT) can be underscored as 'environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature, that promotes conservation,

has low visitor impact and provides the beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations' (MOCAT, 2000). Malaysia is known to have a wide range of natural flora and fauna as it is situated in the tropical rainforest climate (Kamri, 2011). According to the census conducted in 2002, it was estimated that the nature-based tourism was the fastest growing segment of tourism in Malaysia with 35% growth per year and constituting 10% of tourism in Malaysia (WTTC, 2002).

Ecotourism, as a component of sustainable tourism, has caught the attention of many professionals and community leaders throughout the world (Mohd-Dahan et al., 2010). In addition, ecotourism can be regarded as a holistic experience-based product that has clear ecological, cultural and geographical identity, often in wilderness settings and pristine areas, offering a sense of closeness to nature (Holden and Sparrowhawk, 2002) and local communities (Ayala, 1996). Somehow, Backhaus (2003) affirms that Malaysia has a great potential in promoting nature tourism and ecotourism. Indeed, the Seventh Malaysian Plan is designed to boost the country's tourism industry by popularizing the country's considerable natural attractions (Sadi and Bartels, 1997).

In June 2007, Langkawi Island has been recognized as UNESCO Global Geoparks Network by UNESCO. "Blueprint Langkawi" is an initiative taken by LADA to develop Langkawi Island with the target to be listed as the top 10 popular world island destination in 2015. This island is targeted to be emerged as the main attraction for high-end tourism development in Malaysia.

By offering the best product and infrastructure, the high end tourist destination will generate high return to society. The re-branding of Langkawi as 'Geopark Island' has been the main attraction to be exploited by the government. Blueprint Langkawi states, overall LADA targeted to reach 3.8 billion number of tourist by 2015.

The whole 99 islands of Langkawi represent Langkawi Geopark. Langkawi is a group of islands that showcases the oldest rock formation in the region with a unique and various form of granite. The 99 magical islands in Langkawi are divided into 3 conservation areas that are:-

- a) Machinchang Cambria Geoforest Park
- b) Kilim Karst Geoforest Park
- c) Dayang Bunting Marble Geoforest Park

According to Abdul Ghani (2010), Langkawi Island is the first geopark in Malaysia and Southeast Asia and the first 99 island geopark. In its modern history, Langkawi has been developed primarily for tourism. Towards achieving the top rank of global geoparks, Langkawi Geopark has seen great progress in term of physical infrastructure development, networking, and collaboration. Activity programs and promotional materials have been developed to popularize Langkawi.

One of the popular geopark destinations in Langkawi is Kilim Geopark. This geopark is popular for its mangrove forest. The development of Kilim as geopark attraction has increased its maximum capacity. The coming of tourist reached 6 million in the year 2011 and this is a sudden increase from the previous years. It is a question whether the local infrastructure and people can accommodate to the development or not because if the development is too much, it will destroy the natural environment. In Blueprint Langkawi (2011), the government already posed their concern on the issue of sustainability in Kilim. Among the LADA's concern is to ensure the responsibility of the local people and tourist where they have to be sensitive and follow the regulation. The main concern of the government is to ensure long term of tourism development can be benefited by local people. In relation to the above discussion, the objective of this paper is to discuss the geopark attraction and satisfaction level of tourist visiting Kilim.

2 GEOPARK ATTRACTION

With tourism development, the local people have golden opportunities to offer services or sell products (Dickman, 1992; Rogerson, 2004) to either local or foreign tourists (Othman and Rosli, 2011). To associate, Kotler (1984) relates tourism products to all activities that involve marketing. On the other hand, Medlik and Middleton (1973) define "tourism products" as all service and interest activities related to tourism. Obviously, the scenario is similar and also happened in the sector of ecotourism. In this case,

tourism products include the service offered to visitors (experiential consumption), local food production, traditional crafts and other small / medium enterprises. These criteria are also in consistent with the classification made by Kim and Baum (2007) that delineates service and experience as products offered in ecotourism industry. This situation gives indirect economic enhancement towards local residents in rural areas.

According to Keever (2010), Geopark are those special places across the Earth that not only preserve our geo-heritage but also use it for the sustainable development of local communities. A more recent understanding of the idea and vision of geopark has opened the window for a more innovative interpretation of the meaning of geopark, which include a development tool or branding of the area, taking into consideration of balancing between nature-cultural conservation, geo-tourism and local community well-being. Within the conservation target, the emphasis is given not only to protect geo-heritage sites, but it encourages the biodiversity and cultural heritage to be conserved in an integrated manner. Most importantly, local community is becoming more engaged and participating in the development of geopark, thus able to take the opportunity to enhance their economic activities (Ibrahim Komoo, 2010)

Geotourism comprises the geological elements of 'form and process' combined with the components of tourism such as attractions, accommodation, tours, activities, interpretation and planning & management (Dowling, 2010). The introduction of geotourism as a special tourism product has also triggered the popularized of knowledge or education-based tourism which promotes higher income economy and lower impacts to natural resources. Thus, the governance relationships should get all the stakeholders involve in planning, directing, coordinating and organizing strategies, policies, activities and programmes concerning the usage and conservation of heritage resources in the geopark (Chan et al., 2010).

3 METHODOLOGY

Focus group interview session has been conducted in the month of March 2012 in Kilim. The respondents involved are the top management of Koperasi Komuniti Kg Kilim Langkawi Berhad (KKKLB) and few members who consist of the boat owner and businessman who rent the business premises. The interview session took over for 2 hours and it has been attended by few researchers. The session has been tape recorded and transcribed. Then the content analysis conducted for the purpose of analyzing the data.

4 ANALYSIS

4.1 *Background of Kilim*

Originally developed as a fishing village, majority of the community here earn a living as fisherman. The

first community association in Kilim was initiated by fisherman which known as fishing association since 1998. According to the interviewee, the involvement of local community especially fisherman in tourism started in 1998-1999. During that time, boating services to tourist only been offered by individual boat owner. *"It was very difficult for the local community to accept the reality that the mangrove forest can be turned to be something valuable for community"*, comment the headman of Kilim. Furthermore, the initiative has not been given a full support due to communication difficulties facing by the boat owner or boatman and lack of promotion.

The improvement of services offered can be seen after Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) effectively promoting Kilim in the year 2000s. LADA which is under the Ministry of Finance exist with a mission to develop Langkawi as a popular tourism sport. With the help from LADA, Kilim Cooperative Society known as Koperasi Komuniti Kg Kilim Langkawi Berhad (KKKLB) has been established to conduct business activities with certain income. By then, local communities started to take advantage from the tourism development and many boat owners started to operate as boat businessman. The building for the KKKLB operation has been donated by LADA together with the jetty facility and few business premises. This building was surrendered and is currently under the management of KKKLB.

4.2 Eco-tourism product development

The main interest of tourists visiting Kilim is to enjoy the speed boat, rather than enjoying the beauty of nature. *"Normally tourist will only follow our ready package such as visiting the fish cage, bat cave, eagles feeding and visiting the mangrove forest. For example tourist from Thailand, they do not appreciate nature and they does not like bat cave because of the bad smell, while tourist from Middle East is more concern about their privacy and will be more satisfied if they can take the fastest speed boat"* Said one boat operator. *"Tourists from Middle East prefer privacy and they do not like to mix with others. They are the most demanding customer because they can afford to pay the service. Normally they will take the boat only for two people and they want to experience taking the fastest speed boat. However the headman expresses his concern by mentioning that "This is in contrast to our principal where we are more concern about the environment and would like to see minimum erosion"*.

The respondents' are in view that most of tourist does not appreciate nature. According to the headman, we are supposed to take care of the nature as for the next UNESCO's assessment. *"Previously, we have received a complaint during the assessment on the uncontrolled speedboat which can damage the mangrove forest"* said the head of KKKLB. Besides that they are also concern about erosion problems which affected by over capacity of people and tourism activities along the river.

Nevertheless the economic benefit to the local people needs to be enhanced. In planning, there are many new attractions will be introduced in Kilim. The future tourism product and activities has been proposed to LADA. *"In future they will be a new building and infrastructure in Kilim. Many new places of attraction will be open such as a new area for sun bathing, watching monitor lizard and other few packages. But in order to implement this, we will need to offer them more than two hours boating trip but at the same time, sustainability of these areas will be our main concern"* said one of the committee member of KKKLB. Besides that KKKLB has put an initiative to develop new attraction such as homestay business that will be provided with the cooperation from LADA. This is to get people to stay longer and spend their money in Kilim.

Having ecotourism activities is very much related to sustainability issue. According to the headman, we are supposed to take care of the nature as for our next UNESCO's assessment. However they are many physical issues such as the erosion problems due to over capacity of people and the depth of the river. According to the KKKLB committee, *"Earlier, we have already discussed this matter with LADA and Marine Department. However they cannot stop the speedboat activity. Forestry department is sympathized about the damages done on the mangrove forest. One day, maybe we need to restrict the entry whereby only boat with special permit can enter the mangrove route"*. Their concern is very much related to next four years' assessment done by UNESCO. *"If we do not protect the mangrove, there would be no more mangrove forest due to too many speed boats"* but again he admitted that the responsibility to protect the forest falls under individual's responsibility.

5 DISCUSSION

Ecotourism based product and activity attractions have been very popular among local and foreign tourist visiting Kilim. The tourism product development of Kilim is a part of effort taken by local community and LADA. The strength of natural resources combines with geological attraction help to flourish Kilim as an important tourist destination in Langkawi. Started in the late 1990s, today, the local community association has been given a mandate by LADA to manage the building premises and jetty infrastructure in Kilim. Until now, Kilim river has been popularly acknowledged with its boating activities. However, from the interview, it shows that product development in Kilim Geopark has the potential to be further explored and developed. More geo-tourism activities will be introduced in future to support the growth of tourism development such as introducing more interesting venue, accommodation facility and offering additional new tourism activities.

Currently, the main product development offered in Kilim is based on natural resources such as experience mangroves attractions eagle feeding and visiting fish

cage, and bat cave. But different tourist has different perceptions and preference. Besides having to compete with a few famous attraction of Langkawi that are cable car at Machincang Geopark and duty free shopping, the community sees an improvement needs to be done in Kilim. The tourist's preference need to be studied and the different choices of product could be offered for those who less interested in boating services.

The majority of main targeted tourist was from Middle East countries. Many of them for example from Bahrain, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia prefer to spend their time traveling across Sg. Kilim using private rented boat. They can afford to pay more for their own convenience and satisfaction. Even their presences are significantly contributed to higher income of boat operators but they are less concern on environment.

The influx number of tourists also helps in generating income to the local people who involve in small scale businesses such as food, handy craft and transport services. However, the level of carrying capacity needs an intention. Besides an intention given in attracting more tourist, the issue on geo-park preservation has been seriously consider in ensuring sustainable tourism. The move to protect the environment is among the major concern of the head of Kilim cooperative society and LADA.

However it has been noticed that the current ecotourism product development has brought an erosion problem and give a negative impact on the sustainability of mangrove forest. This situation calls for awareness of all people at all levels to seriously thinking about sustainability of tourism development. LADA (2011) has clearly indicated the government's determination and effort in maintaining the status given by UNESCO. Various plans have been drawn up and several laws have been enacted in order to ensure Langkawi could be among the 10 best islands in the world by 2015.

6 CONCLUSION

Ecotourism has been recognized as one of the significant tourism product development in Malaysia. The beauty of natural resources can provide a positive vehicle to increase the economy of local community. Kilim Geopark is famous with historical heritage aspect which is the oldest rock formations in the world. Besides that, many other activities have been planned by the LADA and local community to fully commercialize Kilim. However the concern on sustainability should not be ignored. Awareness on the importance of sustainability should be emphasised if Kilim Geopark needs to be continuously maintained as a Geopark world heritage.

REFERENCES

Abdul Ghani, K. 2010. *Strategic development of Langkawi Geopark. The 4th International UNESCO Conference on Geoparks 2010, Langkawi, Malaysia.*

- Azarya, V. 2004. Globalization and international tourism in developing countries: Marginality as a commercial commodity. *Current Sociology*, 52(6), pp. 949–967.
- Ayala, H. 1996. Resort ecotourism: A paradigm for the 21st century. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 37(5), pp. 46–53.
- Backhaus, N. 2003. Non-place jungle: The construction of authenticity in national parks of Malaysia. *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 31(89), pp. 151–160.
- Blangey, S. and Vautier, S. 2001. Europe. In D. B. Weaver (ed.), *The encyclopedia of ecotourism*, Oxon, UK: CAB International, pp. 155–171.
- Briedenhann, J. and Wickens, E. 2004. Tourism routes as a tool for the economic development of rural areas – vibrant hope or impossible dream? *Tourism Management*, 25(1), 71–79.
- Chan Geraldine, Sarah Aziz, Rahimah Abdul Aziz, Halimaton Saadiah Hashim, Ong Puay Liu, Ibrahim Komoo & Sharina Abdul Halim 2010. *Networks And Governance: The Case Of Langkawi Global Geopark (LGG)*. The 4th International UNESCO Conference on Geopark, Langkawi, Malaysia.
- Ceballos-Lascurain, H. 1993. *Ecotourism as a World-wide Phenomenon*. In K. Lindberg and E. Hawkins (eds.), *Ecotourism: A Guide for Planners and Managers*. Vermont, USA, The Ecotourism Society, pp. 12–14.
- Chambers, E. 2000. *Native tours: The anthropology of travel and tourism. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.*
- Dickman, S. 1992. *Tourism: An Introductory Text*. Edward Arnold, London.
- Dowling, R.K. 2010. *Tourism And Geopark*. The 4th International Unesco Conference On Geoparks, Langkawi, Malaysia. Edith Cowan University, 270 Joondalup Drive, Western Australia, Australia,
- Hall, C. M. 1998. Making the pacific: Globalization, modernity and myth. In G. Ringer (ed.) *Destinations: Cultural landscapes of tourism* (pp. 140–153). London: Routledge.
- Holden, A. and Sparrowhawk, J. 2002. Understanding the motivations of ecotourists: The case of trekkers in Annapurna, Nepal. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 4, pp. 435–446.
- Ibrahim Komoo, 2010. *Geopark and Regional Sustainable Development*. The 4th International Unesco Conference On Geoparks, Langkawi, Malaysia. Institute for Environment and Development (LESTARI), Uni. Kebangsaan, Malaysia.
- Kamri, T. 2011. Stated preference technique for national parks in Malaysia. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, 4, pp. 45–52.
- Keever, P. J.M.C. 2010. *Communicating geoheritage: an essential tool to build a string geopark brand. The 4th International UNESCO Conference on Geoparks 2010, Langkawi, Malaysia*. Marble Arch Caves European & Global Geopark, Geological Survey of Northern Ireland, Colby House, Stranmillis Court, Belfast, BT9 5BS, Ireland
- Kim, J. L. C. and Baum, T. 2007. Ecotourists' perception of ecotourism experience in Lower Kinabatangan, Sabah, Malaysia. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 15(5), pp. 574–590.
- Kotler, P. 1984. *Marketing management: Analysis, planning, and control*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- LADA- Local Development Authority 2011. *Blueprint Pelancongan Langkawi 2011-2015*. Retrieved from <http://www.lada.gov.my/v2/en/information/langkawi-blueprint>
- Meric, H. J. and Hunt, J. 1998. Ecotourists' motivational and demographic characteristics: A case of North Carolina travellers. *Journal of Travel Research*, 36(4), pp. 57–61.

- Medlik, S. and Middleton, V. T. C. 1973. *The tourist product and its marketing implications*. *International Tourism Quarterly*, 3, pp. 28–35.
- Mohd-Dahan, H., Ahmad, N. and Ho, C. S. F. 2010. Crisis management at Taman Negara National Park, Kuala Tahan, Pahang, Malaysia. *International Journal of Trade, Economics and Finance*, 1(1), pp. 24–27.
- Mowforth, M. and Munt, M. 1998. *Tourism and sustainability: New tourism in the third world*. London: Routledge.
- MOCAT. 2000. *National Ecotourism Plan*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism: Volume 1–5.
- Nepal, S. K. 2002. *Mountain ecotourism: Global perspective on challenges and opportunities (Theme A)*.
- Othman, P. and Rosli, M. M. 2011. The impact of tourism on small business performance: Empirical evidence from Malaysian islands. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(1), pp. 11–21.
- Ponting, J. 2001. *Managing the Mentawais: An examination of sustainable tourism management and the surfing tourism industry in the Mentawai Archipelago, Indonesia*. Master's thesis, University of Technology, Sydney.
- Rogerson, C. M. 2004. Transforming the South Africa tourism industry: The emerging black-owned bed and breakfast economy, *GeoJournal*, 60, pp. 273–281.
- Russell, D. and Stabile, J. 2003. *Ecotourism in practice: Trekking the highlands of Makira Island, Solomon Islands*. In D. Harrison (ed.), *Pacific island tourism* (pp. 38–57). New York: Cognizant Communication Corporation.
- Sadi, M. A. and Bartels, F. L. 1997. The rise of Malaysia's tourism industry: Implications for Singapore. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 38 (5), pp. 88–95.
- Schilcher, D. 2007. Growth versus equity: The continuum of pro-poor tourism and neoliberal governance. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 10(2&3), pp. 166–193.
- Wood, R. E. 1997. *Tourism and the state: Ethnic options and constructions of otherness*. In M. Picard and R.E. Woods (eds.), *Tourism, ethnicity and the state in Asian and Pacific societies* (pp. 1–34). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Wight, P. A. 2001. *Ecotourists: Not a homogenous market segment*. In D. B. Weaver (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Ecotourism* (pp. 37–62). New York: CAB International.
- WTTC – World Travel & Tourism Council 2002. *Malaysia: The impact of travel and tourism on jobs and the economy*. Retrieved from www.wttc.org/bin/pdf/original_pdf_file/malaysia2002.pdf on 14 November 2011.

This page intentionally left blank

Preliminary study on sustainable community development through the homestay programme

Sarina Mohamad Nor, Khairil Wahidin Awang, Normaz Wana Ismail & Alias Radam
Faculty of Economics and Management, Universiti Putra Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The tourism sector in Malaysia has reached a growth rate of 30 per cent annually. As a well-known ecotourism destination in the region, the homestay programme has become increasingly important for the development of community-based tourism. In Malaysia, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development have been promoting the homestay programme to enhance the quality of living of local hosts. The focus of this study is to explore the compatibility of homestay programmes with sustainable community development.

Keywords: ecotourism; community-based tourism; sustainable community development; homestay; unregistered homestay operators

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become increasingly important to local communities who participate in homestay programmes. As stated by the Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia (MOTOUR), the tourism sector is the second largest contributor to national income after manufacturing. The growth in this sector is evident in the increasing number of tourist's arrival of 24.7 million and tourist receipts of RM 58.3 billion in 2011 (Tourism Malaysia, 2012). Tourism industry is one of the 12 New Key Economics Areas (NKEA) listed in the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP). According to the Tourism Transformation Plan 2020, the industry targets 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion (USD\$48 billion) in tourism receipts by 2020. Hence the highly competitive environment in tourism sector needs enhancement in competitive advantage to ensure its sustainability. This paper is based on a preliminary study on sustainable community development through the homestay programme. We interviewed officers from governing authorities and several homestay operators. Local residents who operate homestay facilities are required to register with the Ministry of Tourism (MOTOUR). Unfortunately, there are many unregistered homestay operators who may not be following the stipulated guidelines and procedures. Sample data of interviews include two homestay managers from Selangor, one of which is not registered with the ministry. Thus, the main objective of this study is to establish some database pertaining to the number and kind of activities run by selected homestay programme and its challenges, in relation to the sustainability of community development.

2 HOMESTAY AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The definition of sustainable community development parallels with the definition of sustainable development by Jeffrey and Luloff (1999). Community development is a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation. Meanwhile, sustainable communities meet the economic needs of their residents, enhance and protect the environment and promote development in local communities. According to the United Nations Environment Education Programme (UNEP), a sustainable tourism development should optimize the use of environmental resources while preserving the natural heritage and biodiversity. It is important to respect and maintain the local cultural integrity of the host community through conserving the living cultural heritage.

This may ensure sustainable and equitable economic operation, employment opportunities and social services to local community while contributing to poverty alleviation. Similarly, Wood (2002) notes that a well-designed tourism programme should incorporate conservation of biodiversity that sustains the well-being of local people, interpretation or learning experience, responsible action on part of tourist, delivery to primarily small group by small scale business, conservation of non-renewable resources and focus on local participation, ownership and business opportunities particularly for rural populations.

In Malaysia, the villages that participate in homestay programmes are located in rural areas and some programmes have been established for more than 16

Table 1. Homestay total income and tourist arrivals in Malaysia.

Year	Income	Tourists arrival	
		Domestic	Foreign
2011	15,736,277.60	195,324	59,657
2010	12,407,227.90	147,346	49,126
2009	10,920,877.90	130,038	31,523
2008	6,393,676.63	68,416	23,117
2007	4,923,433.30	45,354	20,361
2006	2,065,980.34	21,795	10,038

Source: Industry Development Division, MOTOUR (2012).

years. Homestay programmes remain a slow-growth market even though various incentives are offered to the homestay operators by the government, Ismail (2010). Many of these homestay establishments find it difficult to sustain. Small and rural communities are often viewed as dependent, weak and lacking in resources to help themselves (Gossling, Hansson, Horstmeier and Saggel, 2002). Local communities who view tourism development as not benefiting them always play minimum role and have less incentive to participate, Gezici (2006).

Previous studies done on homestay programmes in Malaysia focus more on measuring the satisfaction level for tourists with regards to the services provided by homestay operators (Ismail, 2010; Amran, 2004; Fazliana, 2004; Julaili, 2001). Others examined the performance of homestay programmes (Jabil, Siti Asma', Munir and Sharmini, 2011; Ismail, 2010; Yahaya, 2004) and local community participation (Ismail, 2010; Kalsom et al., 2006). However, there is little research relating to sustainability community development through homestay programmes.

3 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

3.1 Homestays in Malaysia

The tourism industry in Malaysia records an annual growth rate of 30 per cent. In 2011, total income generated has increased by 26.8 per cent to RM15,736,277.60 since 2010. The number of tourist arrivals has also increased by 29.8 per cent to 254,981 from the previous year. Total income and tourist arrivals for the last six years are shown in Table 1.

To diversify the tourism facilities as alternative accommodation for tourists, the Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia introduced the Homestay Programme in 1988, which was officially launched at Desa Murni, Kerbau, Temerloh, Pahang in 1995. The Homestay Programme is under the Rural Tourism Master Plan, with the objective to encourage the rural community to participate in the tourism sector. Currently, more than 3,211 homestay operators in Malaysia are registered and approved by the Ministry of Tourism. As shown in Table 2, the total number of 150 homestay coordinators

Table 2. Number of registered homestay coordinators and operators in Malaysia.

Year	No. of coordinators	No. of operators
2011	150	3211
2010	139	3005
2009	141	3283
2008	146	3034
2007	135	2533
2006	116	1939

Source: Industry Development Division, MOTOUR (2012).

Table 3. Number of participants for the basic homestay course.

Year	No. of series	No. of participant
2011	6	221
2009	7	203
2008	14	591
2007	11	477

Source: INFRA (2012).

Note: Data for 2010 is not available.

in 2011 is a 7.9 per cent increase from 139 homestay coordinators in 2010. Homestay coordinators refer to the total number of homestay establishments in Malaysia, whereas homestay operators are local hosts participating in homestay programmes. Unfortunately, there are many homestay operators who are not registered and operate their homestay facilities without following the guidelines and procedures stipulated by the ministry. To date, there are an estimated 900 unlicensed homes or budget hotels using the homestay status in the country (MOTOUR, 2012).

Registered homestay operators must fulfil the registration requirements, such as a minimum of 10 homes per homestay, accessibility in terms of transportation and communication, act-and-think tourism attitude, optimum levels of cleanliness and safety, and community activities that involve traditional games and introduction to local culture. Besides, the operators also must attend a basic homestay course and participate in a practical homestay experience. Having fulfilled these conditions, the operators' homestay will be inspected every three years for compliance with regulations. Inspections will be supervised by the Ministry of Tourism with the cooperation of various authorities such as the Health Ministry, Tourism Malaysia, State Homestay Association, and the respective Residents' Committee. Basic homestay course is jointly organised by the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development and the Institute for Rural Advancement (INFRA). Table 3 shows the total number of participants who attended the basic homestay course from 2007 to 2011.

Homestay operators have to adhere to a set of strict guidelines to ensure that visitors get a real experience

Table 4. Number of homestay operators in Selangor in 2011.

No.	Homestay	No. of operators	No. of rooms
1	Air Manis	17	34
2	Banghuris	87	118
3	Bouganvilles	9	15
4	Sg. Haji Dorani	31	55
5	Kanchong Darat	38	50
6	Kg. Kundang	19	28
7	Kg. Batu Laut	19	19
8	Seri Kayangan	21	27
9	Sg. Lang Tengah	19	25
10	Papitusulem	32	55
11	Sepintas	20	20
12	Batu 23	37	50
13	Sg. Sireh	54	64
14	Kg. Endah	27	50
15	Sg. Tinggi	28	50
	Total	458	660

Source: Industry Development Division, MOTOUR (2012).

of living in the local culture. All homestay operators must occupy the premises and cannot rent out a house to tourists using the homestay status. For the registered homestay operators, the ministry will provide Homestay Malaysia trademark logos. The ministry holds the copyright to the logo and prevent others, especially unregistered homestay operators, from using it.

3.2 Homestays in Selangor

Tourists are drawn to visit homestays in Selangor for its culture and heritage experience. Most homestays are operated by small-scale farmers and villagers, assisted and monitored by the state government, the Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Malaysia and Tourism Selangor Sdn Bhd. Until 2011, 15 homestays with 458 operators are registered with the Ministry of Tourism as indicated in Table 4 above.

According to Selangor Tourism Association (2011), more than 100 homestay establishments in Selangor are unregistered homestays and operating without any endorsement from the Ministry of Tourism. According to Ministry of Tourism, in 2011 Selangor homestays received 35,319 tourist arrivals and generated income shows a increase by 23.57 per cent, or RM2,243,926.00. Compared to the previous year, the generated income RM1,715,110.00 in homestay revenue as shown in Table 5.

3.3 Challenges

There is a substantial lack of public understanding on the homestay concept. According to an unregistered homestay operator, "... This is an opportunity to do business... There is good demand and it gives high returns although we provide no cultural related activity" (Respondent 5). The concept of "Homestay" is not about accommodation. Homestay programmes

Table 5. Number of tourists and total generated income from homestays in Selangor.

Homestay	2010		2011	
	Tourist arrivals	Generated income (RM)	Tourist arrivals	Generated income (RM)
Air Manis	2,482	207,593	3,648	463,158
Banghuris	7,899	449,280	6,128	431,800
Bouganvilles	378	30,670	1,726	102,689
Sg. Haji Dorani	7,464	380,474	5,331	270,907
Kanchong Darat	170	3,390	1,753	64,200
Kg. Kundang	220	27,700	1,230	196,920
Kg. Batu Laut	100	4,200	60	4,820
Seri Kayangan	47	850	924	30,341
Sg. Lang Tengah	573	26,610	921	31,611
Papitusulem	764	28,500	710	51,864
Sepintas	76	4,360	132	9,880
Batu 23	1,542	77,915	1,742	58,731
Sg. Sireh	7,746	409,343	8,480	254,721
Kg. Endah	2,165	51,950	2,363	256,234
Sg. Tinggi	240	12,275	171	16,050
Total	31,866	1,715,110	35,319	2,243,926

Source: Selangor Regional Office, MOTOUR (2012).

offer tourists an opportunity to experience the beautiful simplicity of life in a traditional village, which allow tourists to engage in the daily activities with a Malaysian family, learn about the lifestyle and culture of the people.

Unfortunately, there are parties who manipulate the word "Homestay" and operate unregistered alternative accommodation services to tourists without following the guideline and procedures stipulated by the ministry. Advertisement in front of individually-owned premises misled tourists to choose the accommodation with the anticipation of a full homestay programme. An officer from the Tourism Selangor Office said, "... Tourists have complained of having been cheated in Homestay Programmes... Some did not fulfil the criteria as promoted in the package and the tourists were disappointed with the quality of service at homestay premises" (Respondent 2). Unfortunately, according to an officer from the Ministry of Tourism, "... Currently, we do not have specific laws for the ministry to act against the unregistered homestay operators... there is no law to compel them to register with the ministry" (Respondent 1). Lack of monitoring from the ministry and state government may lead to poor homestay management.

The issue of incompliance by unregistered homestay operators lead to little community development in the local area. As mentioned by a registered homestay operator (Respondent 6), "We are disappointed with the big numbers of unregistered homestays, because of them our small income are affected and so our

good names . . .". For the registered homestay operators, they have a committee account into which money received from the tourists will be credited. This committee will duly pay to each operator a certain amount that cover the expenditure cost and some profit in hosting. Profits from homestay programme are not only used to upgrade the homestay facilities but also for the promotion purposes. Small profit and competition with the increasing number of unregistered homestays has further demotivated registered operators to upgrade their facilities and compromised the quality of service as perceived by tourists. According to Yahaya (2004), average monthly income received by a registered homestay is around RM600 to RM800, whereas Respondent 5 claimed that an unregistered homestay may earn between RM1,200 to RM2,000 per month.

4 CONCLUSION

To understand the compatibility of homestay programme with sustainability community development, the first thing that needs to be address is their challenges towards sustainability. Sustainable community development in homestay could not be achieved if there is no visible enforcement by the MOTOUR and the local authorities in curbing the increasing number of unregistered homestay. Finding from the present study support the statement by Gezici (2006), when the local community view less benefit from tourism development, they will reluctant in giving full commitment. Some successful homestay operators have invested a substantial amount of capital and resources to upgrade their services. They also strive to comply with strict operating guidelines set by the Ministry of Tourism. Unfortunately due to the many individually-owned residential homes that have been turned into homestay establishments by unregistered operators lead some registered homestay become demotivated. Moreover, their operation have negatively affected the income of registered homestay operators and give adversely affect the good image of tourism in Malaysia. Unregistered homestay operators only provide regular accommodation for tourists, similar to the services offered by hotels, and without any recreational activities. Tourists have been confused by the actual definition of homestay programmes. Some unregistered operators may give bad impressions that may affect the good name of registered homestay operators.

Furthermore, according to the United Nations, community development is a 'process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation'. However due to the big number in unregistered homestay operators have been caused some registered homestay operator become less enthusiasm in delivering good quality of service to the tourist. As the results there have many complaints from the tourist who not satisfy with the quality services that they perceived.

Thus, the enthusiastic of local community involvement is necessary to enhance or to further develop sustainable community development. Self-development to motivate local community is needed in order to create awareness of the socio-economic benefits of homestay and to fight ignorance of the negative social and economic impact of unregistered homestay operator.

REFERENCES

- Amran. H. 2004. *The Evolution OfThe Homestay Programme In Malaysia: Performance, Sustainability And Challenges*. Paper presented at the ASEAN Seminar on Homestay, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, organized by the Ministry of Tourism.
- Fazliana, Pazin. 2004. *Penilaian Pengalaman dan Tahap Puas Hati Pelancong Terhadap Program Homestay: Kajian kes Kampung Desa Murni, Kerdu, Temerloh, Pahang*. Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Skudai, Johor.
- Gezici F. 2006. *Components of Sustainability: Two Cases From Turkey*. Annals of Tourism Research 33: 442–455.
- Gossling S, Hansson CB, Horstmeier O & Saggel SS. 2002. *Ecological Footprint Analysis as a Tool To Assess Tourism Sustainability*. Ecological Economics 43: 199–211.
- Hall MS & Boyd S (eds). 2005. *Nature-based Tourism in Peripheral Areas: Development or Disaster? Channel View Publications*: Buffalo, NY.
- Hillery M, Nancarrow B, Griffin G & Smeets D. 2001. *Tourist Perception of Environmental Impact*. Annals of Tourism Research 28: 853–867.
- Industry Development Division, MOTOUR. 2012. *Homestay Statistics 2011*.
- Institute for Rural Advancement (INFRA). 2012. *Number of Participants for the Basic Homestay Course*.
- Ismail, Y. 2010. *Program Homestay dan Kesannya Ke Atas Pembangunan Komuniti Desa di Negeri Selangor*. Tesis Ijazah Doktor Falsafah. Universiti Putra Malaysia. Serdang, Selangor.
- Jabil Mapjabil, Siti Asma' Mohd Rosdi, Munir Shuib & Sharmini Abdullah. 2011. *Pembangunan Program Homestay di Wilayah Utara Semenanjung Malaysia: Profil, Produk Dan Prospek*: Malaysian Journal of Society and Space 7, issue 2: 45–54.
- Jeffrey C. Bridger & A.E. Luloff. 1999. *Towards An Interactional Approach To Sustainable Community Development*: Journal of Rural Studies 15: 377–387.
- Julaili Ngah. 2001. *Adaptation and Socialisation Process of Foreign Tourists in the Homestay Programme: Case study of Kampung Desa Murni, Pahang*. Unpublished thesis. Department of Anthropology and Sociology. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Kalsom Kayat & Nor Ashikin Mohd Nor. 2006. *Penglibatan Ahli Komuniti Dalam Program Pembangunan Komuniti: Satu Kajian Ke Atas Program Homestay di Kedah*. Akademika 67, 77–102.
- Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism Malaysia. 1995. *Directory of Homestay Kuala Lumpur: MOCAT*.
- Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia. 2011. *Tourism Article: Register with ministry, homestay outlets told* February 9, 2011.
- Mohammed Shunnaq, William A. Schwab & Margaret F. Reid. 2008. *Community Development Using a Sustainable Tourism Strategy: a Case Study of the Jordan River Valley Tourist way*. International Journal of Tourism Research 10: 1–14.

- Performance Management and Development Unit (PEMANDU). 2010. *Economic Transformation Programme: A Road Map for Malaysia*. PM's Official Publication, Kuala Lumpur.
- Selangor Tourism Association. 2011. *Establishment of Selangor Bogus Homestay* from <http://seltourism.wordpress.com/> retrieved on 14 February 2012.
- Tourism Malaysia from http://www.tourism.gov.my/facts_figures/ retrieved on 14 February 2012.
- Tourism Selangor Sdn Bhd. 2012. *Homestay Statistics 2009*.
- United Nations Environment Education Programme (UNEP). 2010. *World Environment Day 2010* from <http://www.unep.org/wed/2010> retrieved on 14 February 2012.
- Wood ME. 2002. *Ecotourism: Principles, Practices and Policies for Sustainability*. United Nations Environment Programme: Paris, France.
- Yahaya Ibrahim. 2004. *Homestay Programme in Malaysia*. ASEAN Journal on Hospitality and Tourism. January: 3(1), 65–75.

This page intentionally left blank

The cultural observations of volunteers during an amateur international sporting event

Eoin Joseph Trolan

Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Division of International Sport and Leisure, Korea

ABSTRACT: This study focused on a select number of local volunteers at a sporting event to examine their interaction with foreign visitors. The results found many volunteers had positive reactions to foreign visitors though there were some cultural misunderstandings which highlighted the need to have a good training program and to understand why people want to volunteer.

Keywords: volunteers, event, and culture

1 INTRODUCTION

Many societies utilize volunteering as the bedrock of community action and service. Organizations both profit and non-profit depend on volunteers as a vehicle for sustainability and non-economic significance (Raymond & Hall, 2008). Today, the number of people volunteering is steadily rising and the reasons for volunteering differ for many of those who volunteer (Chelladurai, 2003). Volunteering has long been upheld as an avenue for giving back to the community by helping other people, to fulfill community service, to socialize with others or to feel needed and for furthering ones marketing ability (Handy, Cnaan, Brudney, Ascoli, Mejis & Ranade, 2000). This paper will examine another reason for volunteering, specifically at sporting events – cultural exchange. The idea of volunteering at sport events for cultural exchange is a new area within the sport management discipline but it is an area that can offer great benefit to organizations who manage international sport events. Volunteering at international sport events, both large and small gives an opportunity for local communities to experience exchanges with foreign visitors and athletes. In this paper, through qualitative interviews, the researcher will highlight positive and negative reactions that local volunteers experienced with the interaction between spectators and participants at The Asian Gaelic Games (AGG), an International amateur sporting event.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Motivations to volunteer*

Motivations to volunteer are as diverse as the volunteers themselves. According to Chelladurai (2003)

people's reasons for volunteering include the need to help others, create friendships, and a concern for the community. Likewise, Hall, Lasby, Gumulka, and Tyron (2006) mentioned that many people become involved in volunteering to improve their resumes or job opportunities. Winniford, Carpenter, and Grider (1995) found that many college students in the United States volunteered to help others and to develop their own character. In relation to sport, the motivations to volunteer include social needs, such as a feeling of belonging, particularly with other fans of a certain team or event. For example, many people volunteer at soccer games or volleyball games to be "part" of that organization. Sport organizations offer volunteers the chance to meet people from all around the globe. Volunteers at mega events such as the Olympics and FIFA World Cup interact with people of many different nationalities and gain a greater global understanding through cultural exchanges.

2.2 *Cultural exchange*

The idea of cultural exchange is a topic of importance to those in power in Korea (Yim, 2002). According to Rogers (2006), cultural exchange is the exchange of language, symbols, and artifacts and involves the interaction between two or more people from different backgrounds. This exchange may lead to negative or positive interactions between people. For example, the English language is widely spoken in many countries and thus many native speakers of English presume other individuals even in non-English speaking countries will speak English. This can lead to many roadblocks in cultural exchanges based on miscommunication (Raymond & Hall, 2008). At international sporting events, the primary language spoken by those

in charge is English and thus hosting international events in a non-native speaking English country can lead to potential concerns such as volunteer interactions with fans needing information. This potential problem area can lead to negative cultural exchanges based on poor language interaction.

2.3 *Sport events*

In sport, volunteers are a key component of human resources for events from the Olympic Games to small community events. According to The United States Census, over 40% of men and 50% of women and of these people over 20% volunteered at sport events. Korea has hosted many major sporting events during the past few decades and has received high marks for efficiency and attitude toward hosting such games. Most recently, Korea hosted the 2011 International Association of Athletic Federations (IAAF) in Daegu. These games both in national and international press were acclaimed as being highly successful organizationally and at recruiting volunteers (Korea Herald, 2011). Though volunteering at sport events is not as common as much in Korea as in Western based societies, the Daegu organizing committee worked diligently to recruit and train volunteers. While the overall response to the volunteers was positive at the Daegu Games, there were some negative responses to the volunteers. Thousands of foreign visitors descended to Daegu and thanks to the numerous volunteers, both experienced and inexperienced, the event was successful despite a few mis-understandings (Cummings, 2011).

Despite the fact that volunteering in Korea is not as ingrained in the communities as it is in many western cultures, it is an area that can give people the opportunity to participate, meet foreign visitors and reduce cultural misunderstandings. Potentially, these events provide volunteers with their first opportunity to interact with those from other parts of the world.

2.4 *Asian gaelic games*

Gaelic sports are a traditionally Irish game, which for centuries was played only by native Irish. Recently, the game has been transplanted in foreign lands by immigrants and has taken a strong foothold in Asia. The games in Asia are played by many different nationalities and local individuals. The event examined was the Asian Gaelic Games (AGG) and this event was coordinated by the Asian Gulf Board (AGB), a voluntary organization that holds several tournaments throughout Asia each year. One of the main objectives of the AGB is to use sport to increase cultural awareness of Irish culture with local populations. This has been a success and there are now teams from Mongolia to Dubai, and participants from over 26 countries. In 2011, the AGG was held in Korea for the first time with over 600 participants from 20 countries and over 400 spectators in attendance.

3 METHODOLOGY

In line with previous research attempting to understand the reasons and benefits for volunteering, a qualitative methodology was utilized for a deeper understanding (McIntosh, 1998). The present study examined the cultural observations of local volunteers with international participants at a sport event. The study employed interviews with the volunteers after the event concluded and observation during the event itself. The researcher interviewed 10 out of a total of 30 university student volunteers (seven men and three women). It would have been impractical to interview all 30 volunteers and so the researcher believed that interviewing seven men and three women gave a comprehensive sample for the study.

The interviews were semi-formal and this allowed the researcher to add extra questions when necessary to garner more information (Reynolds & Guttman, 1988). Each interview lasted between 30 and 40 minutes. The researcher also maintained a field notes as a participant observer in order to accurately describe the interactions between the volunteers and participants. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed for the volunteers to examine for accuracy. The author examined both the interviews and notes and identified important themes that highlighted the positive and negative cultural exchanges during the sport event.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 *Volunteers' experience*

The interviews highlighted several interesting themes. There were four main recurring themes – three positive and one negative. The themes included 1) passion for sport, 2) local food and drink, 3) need for hospitality, and 4) rowdiness. The first theme, passion for sport was surprising for the local volunteers. Many volunteers had never interacted with foreigners and during the event the volunteers were surprised at their passion for the sport. Gaelic football is an amateur sport and the volunteers enjoyed talking with the participants about why they played the sport and where they travelled from to play. Many had come from all over Asia and the volunteers learned about not only Irish sport and Irish culture. The second theme was local food and drink. Volunteers had not expected the participants to enjoy the local food or have knowledge of the food. Despite the volunteers' preconceived notions, they were very shocked that the participants knew of several Korea dishes and the volunteers enjoyed talking to the participants about the different types of Korean food and drinks. The volunteers took pleasure in the fact that the participants had tasted local foods and happily explained what local foods were famous. This was important to the volunteers who took pride in Korean culture and cuisine. The third theme was helping others in order to promote Korea. The promotion of Korea is

important to many Koreans and this is especially true within sport. Therefore, the volunteers throughout the tournament attempted to be extremely helpful to the participants and spectators to not only host a successful tournament but to leave a positive impression on those who visited Korea.

Despite some volunteers lacking fluent English and being nervous interacting with foreigners for the first time, they maintained a professional manner throughout the games. Promoting Korea as a sporting destination was important to the volunteers and they tried their best to always be courteous and provide information on the local sporting teams and community history.

The final theme was a negative theme and that was foreigners were very boisterous and tended to drink too much alcohol. As this was an amateur sporting event and the culmination of eight months of practice and planning, many participants and spectators view it as a social event as well as a sport event. This is one factor that many of the volunteers did not understand. Sport events in Western societies are times when people get together to eat food and drink beer. It is at time part of the fabric of sport events, rightly or wrongly. Yet, in Korea, sport events are mainly focused on the actual game itself and not the experience of the event. This led to many volunteers being very surprised by the 'rowdy' behavior of the participants and spectators. The volunteers were shocked and dismayed that they would drink at a sporting event.

4.2 Limitations

This study had several limitations. First the event lasted only three days so the researcher had limited observations of the volunteers. With more time and organization, more observations could have been completed. Second, a more thorough understanding of the volunteers would have been to interview all of the volunteers, unfortunately, time constraints limited this option. A final limitation was a lack of interviews after the event with the participants.

4.3 Managerial implications

The study found that many individuals had never volunteered before because of time constraints or a lack of opportunities and had rarely interacted with foreign individuals. This is an issue for those in charge of volunteer management. One of the main managerial points is that it is important managers to focus on the need understand why people volunteer. In this instance, people volunteered to gain culture awareness or meet foreign people. Therefore, managers need to be able to provide training so volunteers are not overly nervous and are aware of cultural differences. Additionally, managers need to be able to recruit the correct volunteers. Many participants trust what volunteers say when meeting them and therefore, having volunteers who are confident and comfortable in

meeting foreigners is very important for an overall good impression of the organization.

5 CONCLUSION

The event in this study was an amateur sport event and the participants play Gaelic games for the enjoyment rather than any financial rewards. This creates a unique sport participant because they attend events not only to play sport but to meet friends from other countries in a social context. The volunteers' limited interaction with foreigners could have led to many cultural misunderstandings, yet, despite some misgivings between the local and visiting individuals, the volunteers had a positive overall feeling towards the visitors and the local community received positive marks from the foreign visitors. The local volunteers had the opportunity to highlight and show the many positive aspects of Korean society to first time visitors. The thought of cultural exchange through sport was not the main reason why the volunteers participated in the tournament but it was one of the main points that was focused on during the event. For them, many aspects of interacting with foreign visitors and positive cultural exchanges would not have happened without the event. Their willingness to volunteer in the future increased due to the positive reaction between the volunteers and participants and spectators. The positives outweighed the negatives concerning cultural exchanges and volunteering at these events can encourage positive cultural exchanges and encourage pride in the local community.

REFERENCES

- Chelladurai, P. 2003. *Human Resource Management*. Champaign: IL, Human Kinetics.
- Cummings, B. 2011. Language problems and reggae in Daegu. Retrieved February 15, from: http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/sport/Language-problems-and-reggae-in-Daegu_9543020
- Hall, M., Lasby, D., Gumulka, G., and Tyron, C. 2006. *Caring Canadians, involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2004 Canada survey of giving, volunteering, and participating*. Toronto Statistics Canada.
- Handy, F., Cnaan, R., Brudney, J., Ascoli, U., Mejis, L., and Ranade, S. 2000. Public perception of "who is a volunteer": An examination of the net-cost approach from a cross-cultural perspective. *Voluntas*, 11(1), 45–65.
- Korean Herald. 2011. Volunteers gear up for 2011 Daegu Champs. Retrieved February 15, from: <http://www.koreaherald.com/sports/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20110824000698>
- McIntosh, A.J. 1998. Mixing methods: Putting the tourist at the forefront of tourism research. *Tourism Analysis*, 3(2), 121–127.
- Raymond & Hall, 2008. The development of cross-cultural (mis) understanding through volunteer tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 16(5), 530–543.
- Reynolds, T. and Gutman, J. 1988. Laddering theory, method, analysis and interpretation. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 2/3, 11–29.

- Rogers, R.A. 2006. From cultural exchange to transculturation: A Review and reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation. *Communication Theory*, 16, 474–503.
- Winniford, J., Carpenter, D., and Grider, C. 1995. An analysis of the traits and motivations of college students involved in service organizations. *Journal of College Student Development*, 36(1), 27–38.
- Yim, HS. 2002. Cultural identity and cultural policy in South Korea. *The International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 8(1), 37–48.
- Volunteering in the United States. Retrieved February 16, 2012, from US Census Bureau: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/volun.nr0.htm>

Important attributes that affect tourist's decision to visit Penang as a medical tourism destination

Ng Kok Meng & Esther Siau Tianhuei

School of Hospitality, Tourism and Culinary Arts, KDU College Penang, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Defined by Global Spa Summit LLC 2011 as the travelling of people to another location to receive treatments for their diseases, or other conditions, medical tourism is fast gaining momentum in the world of tourism in Malaysia especially in Penang Island. Surprisingly, it involves citizens of highly developed countries travelling to less developed areas due to several factors. Therefore, this study aims to identify the attributes of Penang Island as a medical tourism destination hence influencing medical tourist's decision. A sample of 258 international medical tourists was randomly selected in different hospitals and data obtained are then tabulated and process using the application of a data analysis package, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

Keywords: International medical tourists, healthcare and facilities, medical treatments, Penang Island

1 INTRODUCTION

Globalization and rising healthcare costs have droved many medical patients to receive treatments in Third World countries that are providing healthcare for much cheaper costs compared to their native countries. According to Health-Tourism.com, the medical healthcare cost in Thailand for Dental procedures is relatively lower by 70 to 77 percent while other procedures average at 20 to 50 percent lower thus driving increasing number of medical tourists to flock into Thailand for medical healthcare. Not limited to Thailand, India also receives medical tourists from all over the world, from Westerners to Asian to African. This phenomenon has risen to the attention of many developing countries in Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe thus giving them an open window for adopting a high-growth industry namely medical tourism as is mentioned in Journal of Medical Tourism (2009) titled "The New Medical Tourism Market".

Kulkarni (2008) stated that medical tourism is a form of tourism that involves people travelling to another country in order to receive treatments for their medical conditions. Grabbing an opportunity, Malaysia has also adopted medical tourism and Penang Island has been chosen as its primary medical tourism hub. As a matter of fact, in the year 2009, Penang has garnered a steady growth of 15% in medical tourism receipts, bringing in up to two-thirds of the RM 250 million profits from medical tourism globally. Besides, the statistics provided by "Penang Medical Tourism Increases in Revenue" reveals that Penang obtained increased revenue from medical tourism in

the year 2010 from RM 162 million in 2009 to RM 230 million in 2010 while number of medical tourists from Indonesia has increased from 202 000 patients in 2009 to a total of 250 000 patients in 2010. Not forgetting also the hospitals that contributed to promoting medical tourism in Penang Island. There are a total of seven private hospitals namely Gleneagles Medical Center, Hospital Lam Wah Ee, Island Hospital, Hospital Lam Wah Ee, Loh Guan Lye Specialists Center, Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital and Penang Adventist Hospital.

As reported by CBC News (June 18, 2004) article titled "Medical Tourism: Need Surgery Will Travel" stated that all medical tourists have different individual reasons for seeking treatments abroad. Many researchers revealed that the factors for medical tourist's decision is to search for lower cost of healthcare, for higher quality medical facilities and technologies, ease of communication among patient and medical practitioners and to have shorter queue time for their medical treatments. All of which highlights the attributes of each medical tourism destination at different levels. For instance, the attributes of Singapore as a medical tourism destination differs from that of India. This is because Singapore's attributes are its high quality medical and healthcare infrastructures, treatments and world class facilities as well as ease of communication while India's main attributes is it's relatively cheaper costs of medical healthcare.

Catering to mostly Asian medical tourists, Malaysia as a whole has been on the fast track to being one of the fastest growing medical tourism destinations in Asia. According to the Association of Private Hospital of

Malaysia (APHM) as reported on theStar online news, Indonesians are the main medical tourists coming to Malaysia because of the higher quality of medical care provided while Singaporeans and Japanese are the second and third highest number of medical tourists to Malaysia due to the lower costs of medical procedures as well as for quality of healthcare services provided. Therefore, this study attempts to answer the question on what are the main attributes of Penang Island that plays a vital role in influencing the decision making factor of international medical tourists.

This study aims to provide a descriptive study on what are the main attributes of Penang Island that influences the decision of international medical tourists in choosing Penang Island as a medical tourism destination. Many different parties including the government sector of Penang Island will benefit from the result obtained. Hence, contributes to more improvement and development to Penang Island for the benefits of medical tourism.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was undertaken in July 2011 to January 2012 amongst international medical tourists in Penang Island. It is designed to find out the important attributes of Penang Island as a medical tourism destination that affects international medical tourist's decision. A sample of 258 respondents consisting mainly of international medical tourists was selected using simple random sampling method at the designated hospitals in Penang Island. These hospitals are Gleneagles Medical Center, Hospital Lam Wah Ee, Island Hospital, Loh Guan Lye Specialist Center, Mount Miriam Hospital, Pantai Hospital Mutiara and Penang Adventist Hospital. Questionnaires were employed to obtain data and contain questions that are mainly closed ended questions (Reid, R. D, 2009). Besides, the level of importance scale attributes was measured on a 5 point Likert Scale whereby 5 indicates the highest level of importance and 1 indicating the lowest importance. Data compiled from the questionnaires are then processed and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

3 FINDINGS

Out of a total of 258 sampled, 190 responded to the questionnaires.

The result obtained as shown in Table 1 most prominently showed that the main attributes that medical tourists consider when choosing a medical tourism destination are Technology and Quality Standards (mean score 4.28) as well as Costs (mean score 4.07). These results proved that high standard technology and qualified medical services provided as well as relatively lower costs with favorable exchange rates are important factors that influence the decision of medical tourists by providing confidence and affordability.

Table 1. Important general attributes that medical tourists consider when choosing a destination for medical tourism.

Attributes	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Standard Deviation
Technology and quality standards	4.28	0.055	0.758
Costs	4.07	0.069	0.951
Shorter queue time	3.84	0.073	1.013
Communication and languages used	3.74	0.076	1.045
Tourism Infrastructures	3.66	0.083	1.137
Geographical Location	3.64	0.079	1.093

Moreover, majority of respondents also mentioned that they would consider the factor of having Shorter Queue Time (mean score 3.84) at the medical tourism destination as an influencing factor. In fact, some of the respondent commented that they had experienced being placed in the treatment queue list in their native country whereby the duration of waiting would sometimes extend up to 2 to 3 weeks. Following that, the majority of respondent also stressed the importance of the ease of communication and languages used at the medical tourism destination as proven with the mean score obtained of 3.74. This proves that understanding and ease of communication among medical practitioners and medical tourists are an important factor to consider hence avoiding any unnecessary medical accidents. Furthermore, the result obtained showed that a small number of respondents would take into consideration the factor of tourism infrastructures and geographical location of the medical tourism destination as proven with the mean score of 3.66 and 3.64 respectively. The reason being that the respondents felt the need to have convenience of infrastructures such as accommodations, transports and etc as well as a geographical location with suitable weather and temperature as their medical tourism destination.

As the research focuses on Penang Island, the questionnaire survey was also designed to understand its attributes that influences the medical tourists' decisions. Hence, the results obtained were demonstrated in Table 2 whereby the most important attribute for medical tourists to consider is Technology and Quality Standards whereby the mean score obtained is a total of 4.32. This in turn substantiate that Penang Island's medical technology and quality standard is at par with other developed countries which help built confidence among medical tourists, similar to discussion on similar topic in the literature review. Moreover, the second most important attributes to be considered by medical tourists is Costs of medical treatment obtained whereby the result showed a mean score of 4.24. This is said as the most prominent reasons that motivates people to travel in search of medical is to seek lower and more affordable costs of

Table 2. Important attributes of penang island as a medical tourism destination that influence the decision of medical tourists.

Attributes	Mean	Standard Error of Mean	Standard Deviation
Technology and quality standards	4.32	0.052	0.718
Costs	4.24	0.056	0.766
Communication and languages used	4.10	0.064	0.888
Geographical location	4.08	0.066	0.908
Tourism infrastructures	3.95	0.067	0.924
Shorter queue time	3.85	0.073	1.002

medical treatment. Furthermore, the third most important attributes of Penang Island to be considered is communication and languages used (mean score 4.10). As most respondents are Indonesian medical tourists, the language that is most commonly used by these medical tourists is Malay which is commonly spoken and is in fact the national language of Malaysia, hence allowing for better communication between medical tourists and medical practitioners. Besides, the result obtained also depicts that the geographical location (mean score 4.08) of Penang Island, an island in the northwestern coast of Peninsular Malaysia is also an important attributes that influences the decision of medical tourists. Lastly, a number of respondents would take into consideration the attributes of Penang Island which is tourism infrastructures (mean score 3.95) and shorter queue time (mean score 3.85) in making the decision for a medical tourism destination. Notably, Penang Island is a prime tourism location hence the tourism infrastructures are well developed and varied in choice which helps bring confidence for medical tourists around the world.

4 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Since its initial introduction, medical tourism in Penang has blossomed and attracted many foreign medical tourists seeking treatment in the various medical care facilities and private hospitals in Penang. Hence, to maintain the continuous interest and patronage from these foreign medical tourists, it is therefore important to acknowledge the important attributes of Penang as a primary medical tourism destination in Malaysia that influences the decision of medical tourists. In fact, State Tourism Development Committee Chairman Mr. Danny Law Heng

Kiang mentioned that Penang aims to bring in medical tourists from neighboring countries like China, Vietnam and Indochina with different tactics such as the lifting of levies for Indonesians, new flight schedule and route of airlines companies and etc.

According to the results obtained, it is clear that the medical tourists are attracted to the high quality medical services provided accompanied with affordable prices in Penang. Plus point for Penang is that majority of the hospitals in Penang were accredited either by the Malaysian Medical Quality of Health (MSQH), Malaysian Ministry of Health, International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or Joint Commissions International (JCI). Connell (2006) further asserted that the ability to create confidence among medical tourists that the healthcare in a particular place is of a safe quality is very rare. Therefore, to combat such doubt, many hospitals are seeking certification and accreditation in hopes of gaining confidence. Moreover, the results obtained also showed that medical tourists considers Penang as their prime medical tourism destination because of two other attributes of Penang which is the ease of communication and languages used by the medical practitioners as well as the geographical location of Penang. With that, the result can serves as a guideline for the future development of medical tourism industry in Penang.

REFERENCES

- American Society of Registered Nurses (2009), The New Medical Tourism Market, *Journal of Medical Tourism*, ISSN 2151-0474, [Online], <http://www.asrn.org/journal-medical-tourism/681-the-new-medical-tourism-market.html>, last visited 11/11/2011
- CBC News Online, June 18, 2004, *Medical Tourism: Need Surgery, will travel* [Online] <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/healthcare/medicaltourism.html>, last visited 11/11/2011 <http://www.health-tourism.com/malaysia-medical-tourism/> (last visited 11/11/2011)
- John Connell (2006), *The rise of medical tourism in Asia, Medical Tourism: Sea, Sun, Sand and . . . surgery*, 3: 1095-1096
- Penang State Tourism Official Website (2009), *Features Penang Medical Tourism in Prime Time News, Penang Medical Tourism Increases in Revenue*, [Online], CNBC, <http://www.visitpenang.gov.my/portal3/medical-tourism.html>, last visited 11/11/2011
- Robert D. Reid, David C. Bojanic (2009), *Hospitality Marketing Management*, Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons
- Sonali Kulkarni (2008) *Medical Tourism in India*, Jaipur, India: Global Media
- Star,the, February 14, 2009, *Malaysian Medical Tourism Growing* [Online], <http://biz.thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/2/14/business/3245091&sec=business>, last visited 11/11/2011

This page intentionally left blank

The effect of tourism experience on elderly with chronic pain

S. Alizadeh-Fard

Department of Psychology, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran

M.K. Sarpoolaky

Tehran University of Medical Science, Tehran, Iran

ABSTRACT: Chronic pain is a common problem in the elderly. The prevalence of pain indicates that among the Iranian older population who are living in nursing homes, at any specific time, at least 72.8% experience pain. Researches have demonstrated that tourism has the positive effect on quality of life and happiness. According to the survey, the strongest tourism impacts are found to be linked with emotional wellbeing. This research was to investigate the effect of tourism on elderly with chronic pain. Thirty residents with persistent pain of 4 nursing homes in Tehran (Iran) were selected. All subjects gave their demographic details and pain status following the McGill Pain Questionnaire, and randomly allocated in three groups: First group that traveled to a city in Iran (Shiraz) for one week, second group that traveled to Turkey as a foreign country for one week and the third one as control group. The value of pain questionnaire one week after journey was compared with basic level. The results of covariance analysis showed a significant difference between groups and reduction in pain questionnaire scores of first and second group compared with control group. There is no significant difference between first and second groups. The results showed that respondents strongly agree that tourism has many effects on perception of pain. Hence, the findings help to understanding relationship between tourism impacts and level of quality of life with support for tourism development. The findings of this investigation can assist health professional for improving care by implication of tourism development strategies on chronic pain in elderly people.

Keywords: chronic pain, elderly, tourism.

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is often viewed as an expression of human behavior (Kim 2002). Harrill & Potts (2003) believed that "tourism is an invisible industry, encompassing transportation, loading, and entertainment. Tourism is the set of ideas, theories, or ideologies for being a tourist, and that it is the behavior of people in tourist roles, when these ideas are put into practice (Przeclawski 1986). Tourism come in many shapes and forms such as social, cultural, economic and environmental (Godfrey & Clarke 2000). Tourism has been a source of social-economic change in many developing countries. According to the World Tourism Organization (2009), tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries and is one of the global engines of development. Tourism is a multi sector, and as a means of economic, social and cultural exchange, it has many aspects and types (Mowforth & Munt 2003). The tourism industry is an important economic activity involving different groups of community: men, women, children and also old people.

Recently, there have been certain changes in the nature of the world tourism. Demographic changes and social evolution play a particularly significant role

in the evolution of international tourism (Vellas & Becherel 1995)

Upon entering the 21st century, one of the most significant demographic changes in developed country is the aging of the population.

More generally defined, old age consists of ages nearing or surpassing the average life span of human beings, and thus the end of the human life cycle. Euphemisms and terms for older people include seniors or elderly. Old age cannot be defined exactly because it does not have the same meaning in all societies. In this study, older people are defined as people aged 65 or over. The proportion of the Iranian population aged over 65 years old is growing rapidly. While in 1986, 3.04% of the Iranian population were 65 years and older, this percentage has increased to 4.4% in 2004 (Asghari et al. 2006).

Demographic shifts, in particular, may influence the level and nature of tourism. Demographic change will combine with growing wealth to man that the old will be increasingly targeted by the tourism and travel industry (Witt et al. 1991).

Increased life expectancy because of better public health and better transport facility are enabling many older people to achieve a much higher. Compared with

the preceding generation, this generation of older people stays more mobile for longer (Banister & Bowling 2004). For example they are making more frequent and complex journeys in old age. So understanding their travel demand is important. Awareness of these population trends should lead to an increased concern regarding the problems common among older adults.

Ageing has increased the burden of chronic disorders and the frequency of multi morbidity. Although there are no systematic studies on the prevalence of pain among the older people in Iran, existing data from western societies indicate that persistent pain is a major health problem in the elderly. In the industrialized world, 25% of people of 65-69 years old and 50% of 80-84 years olds are affected by two or more chronic health conditions simultaneously, and present complex symptoms (Asghari et al. 2006). Chronic pain threatens the quality of life for many seniors who are often coping with other physical conditions, activity limitations, and cognitive changes.

Pain is a multidimensional phenomenon with physical, psychological, social and spiritual components. The International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) defines pain as an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage or described in terms of such damage by people that experiences pain, and considered chronic if persists the normal time of healing usually for more than 3 months (IASP, 1994).

It is widely recognized that chronic pain is associated with depressive disorders, psychological distress, and impairment of interpersonal relationships (Fishbain et al. 1997). Pain is one of the most important problems that considerably impair autonomy and independence in daily living activities of elderly people (Jakobsson et al. 2004).

A recent study conducted by Zannocchi et al. (2008) showed that chronic pain in the elderly has a strong affective component and its intensity influences older patients' mood, nutrition, sleep and quality of life.

Now, if their ability and health decreased by increasing the age, so question remains about the effectiveness of travel and tourism in elderly. In the other word, their health status will be better after traveling or will get worst. For answering this question, in the present research, the effect of tourism experience on elderly with chronic pain was studied.

2 METHOD

2.1 Design

A quasi-experimental research design and nonrandomized sampling were used to select the participants although the experimental and control groups randomly allocated.

2.2 Participants

The study population consisted of males and females aged 65 and more years. Sample was selected using non probabilistic and accidental method and consisted

of 50 older people that resident in 4 private nursing home of Tehran (capital of IRAN) during 2010. Nursing homes in Iran are either funded by government or the private sector.

Inclusion criteria were: aged 65 or more, living in the nursing home, ability and capacity to traveling, space and time oriented, absence of psychiatric disorders and accept to participate in the study.

All participants were first asked about the presence of chronic pain. 30 confirm chronic pain which became the final sample.

2.3 Instruments

The instruments chosen for the study were divided in two parts: I. socio-demographic variables; II. clinical variables.

2.3.1 Socio-demographical variables

We assessed age, gender, marital status and Educational status.

2.3.2 Clinical variables

The McGill Pain Questionnaire was used to measure the pain intensity. The McGill Pain Questionnaire can be used to evaluate a person experiencing significant pain. It can be used to monitor the pain over time and to determine the effectiveness of any intervention.

It was developed at by Dr. Melzack at McGill University in Montreal Canada and has been translated into several languages. The McGill Pain Questionnaire (MPQ) consists primarily of 3 major classes of word descriptors—sensory (10set), affective (5set) and Pain Miscellaneous (4set). It also contains an intensity scale and other items to evaluate and determine the properties of pain that are used by patients to specify subjective pain experience.

The questionnaire was designed to provide quantitative measures of clinical pain that can be treated statistically. The results of studies indicate that the Persian version of the MPQ is a reliable and valid instrument for the measurement of pain in Persian speaking patients (Ebrahimi-Nejad et al. 2004).

3 PROCEDURES

3.1 Ethics

We asked authorization for the present study to the presidents of nursing homes. Before data collection we also asked the participants for consent to participate in the study. We provide written and oral information for explaining the aims of the study to elderly people and their family. We clearly stated that participation was voluntary and that confidentiality was assured. Thereafter participants gave their informed consent.

3.2 Data collection and statistical procedures

The program was developed in three steps. First one, all participants reported their socio-demographic data and pain intensity. Face to face interviews were carried

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the subjects participated in the study (n = 30).

Characteristics	First group	Second group	Control group
Age: Mean(SD)	72.80(4.77)	72.90(5.42)	73.90(5.04)
Male	7	4	6
Female	3	6	4
Married	0	2	1
Divorced/ widowed	10	8	9
Educated	7	4	8
Uneducated	3	6	2

out by a medical student, using a questionnaire for collection of information on demographic and pain condition (see instruments).

In the second step, all subjects randomly allocated in three groups: First group that traveled to a city in Iran (Shiraz) for one week, second group that traveled to Turkey as a foreign country for one week and the third one as control group who stayed at home.

In last step, all participants reported pain intensity again one week after journey and the value of pain questionnaire was compared with basic level.

The first hypothesis of this study was reduction in pain questionnaire scores of first and second group is more than control group. And the second hypothesis was a significant difference between first and second groups.

Data were submitted to quantitative analysis using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 for Windows. In addition of descriptive statistics, we used Kolmogorov-Smirnoff to test data normality distribution and Leven to test variance equality across groups. The covariance analysis was used as inferential statistics.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Sample characteristics and homogeneity in groups

The general characteristics were homogeneous in the three groups. The demographic variables of the two experimental and control groups are presented in Table 1. Each group comprised 10 subjects. The mean age of the 30 subjects was 73.20 ± 4.93 years. All of them were married but only 10% (n = 3) of were lived with their partners. The number of men and women was almost equal (17 men and 13 women). Finally about 63% of the subjects were educated. (table1)

4.2 Findings

The results of hypotheses testing are presented in tables 2 and 3. Firstly, the score of The McGill Pain Questionnaire significantly changed in the experimental groups after participation in tourism program. This

Table 2. Comparison of pre test and post test score in groups.

Groups	Pre test		Post test	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
First group	38.20	4.10	26.12	8.15
Second group	39.60	8.69	28.30	9.01
Control group	41.40	6.97	41.42	7.12

Table 3. Analysis of covariance for the effect of tourism experience on elderly with chronic pain.

Source	Sum of squares	F	sig	Partial Eta
Gender	2.287	0.075	0.787	0.003
Age	12.736	0.416	0.526	0.019
Marital status	0.257	0.008	0.928	0.000
Education	15.820	0.516	0.480	0.023
Pre test	1021.639	33.336	0.000	0.602
Groups	473.082	7.718	0.003	0.412

score in the first experimental group who traveled to Shiraz changed from a pre-test score of 38.20 to a post-test score of 26.12, representing a change of 12.8 and score in the second experimental group who traveled to Turkey changed from a pre-test score of 39.60 to a post-test score of 28.30, representing a change of 11.30, whereas the change was only 0.02 in the control group.

The effects of experimental plan were examined with analysis of covariance and results are presented in Table 3. In this analysis post-test scores were used as dependent variable and experimental groups as independent variable. Covariate variables were pretest, age, gender, marital status and education status.

As shown in table 3 the difference between the scores of age, gender, marital status and education status variables are not significant and only the difference between the scores in pre-test ($P < 0.000$) and group membership ($P < 0.003$) are significant. The Eta coefficient is 0.41 which indicates that 41 percent increase in the scores is due to group membership as independent variable.

The magnitude of difference or the effect of tourism plan is the variance of scores pertaining to group membership.

The results of the One-way ANOVA, presented in Table 4, showed that there was no significant differences between groups in pre-test but after the tourism plan, results showed that there was significant difference ($F = 10.430$, $P < 0.000$) among them in post-test.

The differences between groups were compared by Tukey HSD follow-up test. Findings determined that there is no significant difference between first and second groups but the score of control group is significantly different. Hence, hypothesis 2 is not confirmed.

Table 4. One-way ANOVA for comparing pre-test and post-test scores in groups.

	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	F	sig
Pre test:	Between groups	51.467	2	0.547	0.585
	Within groups	1270.400	27		
	Total	321.867	29		
Post test:	Between groups	1380.200	2	10.430	0.000
	Within groups	1786.500	27		
	Total	3166.700	29		

5 DISCUSSION

The results from this study indicate that the reduction in pain questionnaire scores of first and second group is more than control group. Hence, hypothesis 1 is confirmed.

The relationship between tourism and pain reduction entails a close relationship between inconvenience and happiness, between quality of life and wealth, the dialectic of being at the objective pain conditions and their perception of a better individual subjective conditions.

Chronic pain is a multidimensional phenomenon with importance on psychological, social and spiritual components. Studies showed that chronic pain in elderly is associated with depressive disorders, psychological distress, and impairment of interpersonal relationships (Blazer 2003).

Rest at home, in the normal life in a uniform composition concerns with the maintenance of everyday, cause inconveniences, depression and disaster. The behavior of learned helplessness describes the increasingly passive behavior of old people. Depression in old age has been associated with passive life and daily hassles were continued.

On the other hand, Pain has been a sensation which can cause a decrease in an individual's general well-being, overwhelm the individual, and interact with many aspects of daily living and life quality. Literature revealed many health-related studies that focused on quality of life (King et al. 1997). Medical and psychological interventions used to treat pain can also impact quality of life.

Researchers have appeared to substitute this term for various terms intended to describe an individual health. Gill and Feinstein (1994) defined quality of life as the reflection of the way that patients' perceive and react to their health status and to non medical aspects of their lives. Gill and Feinstein (1994) stated that overall quality of life included not only health-related factors but also non-health-related elements, such as jobs, family, friends, and life circumstances.

The positive effect of tourism on quality of life and depression is well understood by carried out in various forms: rest, relaxation, recreation, favors development of warm relations, close people, knowledge development, aesthetic feelings, opportunities to socialized

and meet new people. All of these forms provide a more active and supportive condition. Therefore, tourism has beneficial effects on the life satisfaction, happiness, self-esteem and depression of older adults and decreased perception of pain and increased perception of being able to cope. It is playing as a pain management program or an intervention for chronic pain.

Also the results from this study indicate that the reduction in pain questionnaire scores of first and second group is not significantly different. Hence, hypothesis 2 is not confirmed.

The procedures provided two kind of tourism opportunity: traveling to a city in Iran (Shiraz) and to Turkey as a foreign country. Although there are many places of tourist interest in both and it offers exciting destination to the people visiting the place, but Shiraz was familiar to subjects and they had similar appearance, language, custom and culture with residents, whereas they were different with Turkish residents. We supposed these differences made traveling to Turkey more excited and stimulated. Subsequently Turkey's tourists have more beneficial effects on coping with pain. But this supposition is not confirmed. It seems many older people seek relaxing, quiet and more passive holidays that include time with friends instead of interested in cultural experiences and seek growth and enrichment from travel.

Therefore, the travel and tourism industry need to be conscious of and provide for, the special needs of senior travelers in this market.

6 CONCLUSION

The findings of this research through covariance analysis showed a significant difference between groups and reduction in pain questionnaire scores of first and second group compared with control group. There is no significant difference between first and second groups. The results strongly agreed that tourism has many effects on perception of pain. Hence, the findings help to understanding relationship between tourism impacts and level of quality of life with support for tourism development. In the other word, although the ability and health decreased by increasing the age nonetheless travel and tourism in elderly is effectiveness and their health status will be better after traveling. The findings of this investigation can assist health professional for improving care by implication of tourism development strategies on chronic pain in elderly people.

REFERENCES

- Asghari, A., Ghaderi, N. & Ashory, A. 2006. The prevalence of pain among residents of nursing homes and the impact of pain on their mood and quality of Life. *Archives of Iranian Medicine* 9(4): 368-373.
- Banister, D. & Bowling, A. 2004. Quality of life for the elderly: the transport dimension. *Transport Policy* 11(2): 105-115.

- Blazer, D. G. 2003. Depression in Late Life: Review and Commentary. *Journal of Gerontology* 58(3): 249–265.
- Ebrahimi-Nejad, G., Ebrahimi-Nejad, A., Kohan, S. & Bahrampour, A. 2004. The evaluation of pain in neurosurgical patients before and after operation in Kerman Shahid Bahonar hospital according to the McGill Pain Questionnaire. *Journal of Kerman University of Medical Sciences* 11(2):119–125.
- Fishbain, D. A., Cutler, R., Rosomoff, H. L. & Rosomoff, R. S. 1997. Chronic pain associated depression: antecedent or consequence of chronic pain? A review. *Clinical Journal of Pain* 13:116–137.
- Gill, T. M. & Feinstein, A. R. 1994. A critical appraisal of the quality of quality-of-life measurements. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 272, 619–626.
- Godfrey, K. & Clarke, J. 2000. *The tourism development handbook: A practical approach to planning and marketing*. London: Continuum.
- Harrill, R. & Potts, T. D. 2003. Tourism Planning in Historic Districts. *Journal of American Planning Association* 69 (3): 233–44.
- International Association for the Study of Pain. 1994. *Pain definitions*. Retrieved March 16, 2009 from <http://www.iasp-pain.org>.
- Jakobsson, U., Hallberg, I. R. & Westergreen, A. 2004. Pain management in elderly person who require assistance with activities of daily living: a comparison of those living at home with those in special accommodations. *European Journal of Pain* 8: 335–344.
- Kim, K. 2002. *The effects of tourism impacts upon quality of life residents in the community*. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.
- King, C. R., Haberman, M., Berry, D. L., Bush, N., Butler, L., Dow, K. H., et al. 1997. Quality of life and the cancer experience: The state-of-the-knowledge. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 24(1), 27–41.
- Mowforth, M. & Munt, I. 2003. *Tourism and Sustainability (2nd edn)*. London: Routledge.
- Przeclawski, K. 1986. *Humanistic foundation of tourism*. Warsaw: Poland: Institute of Tourism.
- Vellas, F. & Becherel, L. 1995. *International Tourism*. London: MacMillan Press Ltd.
- Witt, S. F. & at al. 1991. *The Management of International Tourism*. London: Unwin Hyman.
- World Tourism Organization. 2009. *Indicators of sustainable development for tourism destination: A guidebook*. Retrieved April 3, 2009 from http://www.unwto.org/pub/doc/UNWTO_pub_cat_08_en.pdf
- Weiner, D. K., Peterson, B., Ladd, K., McConnell, E. & Keefe, F. J. 1999. Pain in nursing home residents: an exploration of prevalence, staff perspectives, and practical aspects of management. *Clinical Journal of Pain* 15: 92 – 101.
- Zanocchi, M., Maero, B., Nicola, E., Martinelli, E., Luppino, A., Gonella, M., Gariglio, F., Fissore, L., Bardelli, B., Obialero, R. & Molaschi, M. 2008. Chronic pain in a sample of nursing home residents: prevalence, characteristics, influence on quality of life. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics* 47 (1): 121–128.

This page intentionally left blank

Destination competitiveness, tourism performance and resident's quality of life

Zaliha Zainuddin, Putra Hilmy & Ammar Ghafar
Tourism Malaysia

Mohd Salehuddin Mohd Zahari & Salleh Mohd Radzi
University Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Tourism destination around the world is competing with each other owing to the increasing global mobility of the tourists. In this sense, competitiveness in tourism denotes a destination that is compatible, attractive, and able to increase tourism expenditure and provide tourists with satisfying memorable experiences. It also enhancing the well-being of destination and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generation. Destination competitiveness is the ability of one destination to create and integrate its market position and share or improves the destination through time. It is believed that "the enhanced competitiveness of the destination should lead directly to a sustainable improvement in the Quality of Life (QOL) of these same residents". The desire to improve the quality of life in resident is an important focus of attention for planners. Researchers from diverse fields have expressed an interest in defining, investigating, and measuring QOL using different perspective. Unfortunately, in Langkawi Island, study on measuring on the destination and tourism performance and its implications towards QOL of its residents has yet to be conducted. Therefore, it is important to study and document on Langkawi as the impacts of the competitiveness and to sustain the industry internationally and domestically. This paper conceptually discusses the above matters for the future planners, stakeholders and policy-makers of Langkawi Island, Malaysia.

Keywords: Destination competitiveness, tourism performance, tourism impact, Quality of Life impact, Social Impact, Economic Impact

1 INTRODUCTION

Many scholars claim that competitive destination is one which brings about the greatest success not only in developing a particular destination but increase in tourists' arrival or receipt, market share, and that is, the greatest well-being for its residents on a sustainable basis (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003). In line with this notion, Malaysia government through Ministry of Tourism is continually proactive in promoting the nation by using all the available tourism resources in making this country as competitive destination. Attractions like shopping with duty-free prices, conventional tourism like diving, flora, fauna, cultural, heritage and now step- up promotion for gastronomic, eco-business tourism, sports, Meeting, Incentive, Convention and Exhibition (MICE) tourism and many others while committed in preserving Mother Earth for future generations well-being are some the initiative undertaking.

In 2010, tourism has been allocated RM 899 million (US\$ 267.4 million) and this funding has increased the

revenue for local in capitalizing the economy (NKRA's report 2010) 36 million of tourist arrival and 168 billion in revenue are set by the government in with the 2020 Vision for tourism industry (NKRA's report 2010). In making competitive destinations, some of the popular islands are also included. Langkawi besides Penang, Tioman since the inclusion of it as a prospective competitive tourist destination in 1975 is one of the popular destinations aggressively developed. It was first declared as a tax-free island in order to draw more visitors to shop and spend besides appreciating the exotic beauty of the island (LADA Annual Report 2010). The rapid investments by the federal government and private sector can still be seen in making Langkawi at least compatible with Phuket and Bali Island.

Not only that, in positioning Langkawi as an international tourist destination Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) is local govern agency were formed responsible for expanding and supporting tourism development in Langkawi by encourage and carry out the economic restructuring of lower-productivity

to higher productivity sectors. LADA is also responsible to create attractive opportunities for foreign investors using the existing available tourism products and resources. This government body is operated based on social, economic and physical development of Langkawi in line with the Malaysian government policies as well as preserving the natural resources and establish conducive environment.

The above mentioned efforts are evidences that Langkawi is experiencing significant changes on the supply side of tourism, as well as in demand trends or significantly turned this Island into a popular destination and a shopping heaven for local and foreign tourists. The rapid expansion of both international and domestic tourism however increased the need for a comprehensive view of the social, economic, cultural, environmental and political issues, processes and problems related to tourism development and understand its dynamics and impacts. In other words, the attributes that contribute Langkawi as competitive tourism destination and the relationship between destination competitiveness and tourism performance is rather vague.

Further, the relationship between tourism performance on the local economic and socio-cultural impacts are hardly discussed and explained in academic literature. Ritchie and Crouch (2003) conceptually proposed the model of the relationship between destination competitiveness, tourism performance and tourism impact but have yet not extensively tested them. In fact, the view on the issues raised from industry players namely travel agencies, lodging, hoteliers, event organizers, government agencies, tourists and residents are widely obtained. This is therefore warrant empirical investigation.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Destination competitiveness*

Subsequently, the various models of destination competitiveness, the different attempts at measuring tourism competitiveness and developing destination competitiveness strategies will be critically reviewed. First, the notion of competitiveness and how it relates to a tourism destination will be examined. Social and economic implications from the perspectives of Langkawi's resident will also be investigated through the adaptation of other researchers' works. Destination competitiveness is similarly defined by Hassan (2000) as the ability of one destination to create and integrate value-added goods that maintain its resources while also carry on its own market position concerning those of competitors. The most detailed work on overall tourism competitiveness was undertaken by Ritchie and Crouch (2000, 2003). They contend that to be competitive, a destinations development of tourism must be sustainable, not just economically, ecologically, but socially, culturally and politically.

2.2 *Destination resources and attributes*

To achieve competitive advantage for its tourism industry, any destination must ensure that its overall attractiveness and the tourism experience must be superior to that of the many alternative destinations open to potential visitors. According to Dwyer et al. (2004), the key success factors in determining destination competitiveness can be classified under eight main headings: Endowed Resources (natural/heritage); Created Resources; Supporting Resources; Destination Management (Government/Industry); Situational Conditions and Demand. In an earlier model, Ritchie and Crouch (2003) developed similar factors, but categorized them into five general industry levels as well as mainstream tourism destination attractiveness attributes including: Supporting Factors and Resources; Core Resources and Attractors; Destination Planning and Policy. In addition to this, scholars also identified a destination's resources as universally important factors in determining its competitiveness (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Dwyer et al., 2004; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Wilde & Cox, 2008; Buhalis, 2000; Hassan, 2000; Mihalic, 2000 and Kozak & Rimmington, 1999).

2.3 *Destination competitiveness measurement approaches*

The measurement of tourism competitiveness has attracted many researchers indentation as they are vital factors for the success of tourism destinations (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Kozak & Remington, 1998, 1999; Mihalic, 2000; Dwyer et al., 2000). A model of competitiveness particularly on the tourism sector is based on product and service offered (Murphy et al., 2000). According to Dwyer et al., (2004), there is no single or unique unit indicators that can exploit and apply to all destinations at all times. However, there are two kinds of variables used which are objectively measured variables such as visitor numbers, market share and subjectively measured variables such as image, climate and so on. Kozak & Remington (1999) used both measures in surveying perceptions and opinions of visitors such as friendliness of local citizens, shopping facilities and others in measuring the competitiveness of one destination. Poon (1993) suggested four main principles for the destinations to be competitive namely; strongly sustaining environment, making tourism a leading sector, strengthening the distribution channels in the market and building a dynamic private sector.

The approach used by Crouch & Ritchie's (1999) to measure the destination competitiveness is one among the recent efforts to conceive an approach that combines the elements of tourism and industry competitiveness. Their approach is the extended study from the pioneering ones such as that of Pearce's (1997) method of competitive destination analysis. This approach enlarges mainstream focusing principally on image and/or attractiveness of destination

(Hu & Ritchie 1993). By adding these additional factors, Crouch and Ritchie (1999) propose an approach which is more inclusive than mainstream approach to destination attractive analysis. Moreover, they also used the approach proposed by Porter (1995) as a basic source for explaining the indicators of competitiveness of destination.

Given the enormous potential of tourism as a catalyst for its future economic and social development, the following research questions are formulated:

1. What are the different factors that determine successful tourism performance of a destination?
2. What are the nature and extent of these factors?
3. Which of these factors are critical success factors for Langkawi?
4. How do these factors of destination competitiveness interrelate with Langkawi's economic and social development goals?
5. What existing tourism and social development indices can be used to monitor the progress towards destination competitiveness of Langkawi?

2.4 *Tourism impacts*

Tourism is an industry with enormous economic impacts. It is also an industry that has many environmental and social consequences. A thorough understanding of each components of the tourism phenomenon is essential so that those involved in planning, management and policy determination have a basis for decision-making. The early research in this area focused on identifying the various perceived impacts on tourism development (Liu, Sheldon & Var, 1987; Perdue, Long & Allen, 1987; Ross, 1992, Sheldon & Var, 1984). Generally residents recognized the positive economic impacts of tourism development, but were concerned with potentially negative social impacts such as traffic congestion, crime, public safety issues, and pollution. In order for tourism to contribute to the economic, social, and environmental development of Langkawi, its tourism industry should perform better than other destinations in producing and delivering goods and services important to the satisfaction of the various travel markets. It is imperative that achieving tourism competitiveness and improving tourism performance should translate to more economic and social benefits to tourism providers, developers and local residents of Langkawi.

2.4.1 *Economic Impact (EI)*

Tourism can create jobs, provide foreign exchange, produce return on investment for emerging economics, bring technology, an improve living standards. Every study of resident perception of tourism impacts has included questions concerning economic factors. The studies demonstrate that residents feel tourism helps the economy (Ritchie, 1988) that tourism increases the standard of living of host residents, and that tourism helps the host community and country earns foreign exchange (Ahmed & Krohn, 1992). Also, tourism helps generate employment (e.g., Ahmed & Krohn,

1992; Backman & Backman, 1997; Milman & Pizam, 1987; Var & Kim, 1990) and increase revenue to local business (Backman & Backman, 1997) and shopping facilities (Backman & Backman, 1997). Services of all kinds are established and offered to tourists, who in turn also serve local residents, and tourism generates the impetus to improve and further develop community infrastructure and community service.

2.4.2 *Social Impact (SI)*

Tourism increases traffic congestion and crowdedness in the public area, and brings social problems. Tourism also contributes to social ills such as begging, gambling, drug trafficking, and prostitution, as well as the uprooting of traditional society, and causes deterioration of the traditional culture and customs of host countries (Ahmed & Krohn, 1992). Tourism contributes to an undesirable increase in the consumption of alcohol, increased traffic congestion, and overcrowding because of visitors (Backman & Backman, 1997).

Smith's study (1992), supported the view that tourism development brought prostitution, drug abuse linked to many tourist deaths, sex related disease and injuries, and police corruption. Other researchers who have examined resident attitudes towards crime and tourism development also found little perceived relationship between crime and tourism overall (Allen et al., 1993).

In collecting the information on the impact of tourism performance on local residents economy and social, the instrument will be used and all the items with minor modification will be adapted from Cummins (1997) and Kim. (2002). All three instruments will be using Five point Likert scales. Worth mentioning that, in understanding the Tourism Performance (TP), the secondary information on tourist arrival, tourist receipt and length of stay will be obtained from MTPB Annual Report and LADA Annual report. Dual-language set of questionnaires will be tailored made for industry players, tourists and residents.

Three different groups will be surveyed. For the first set of the instrument, permission from identified industry players with minimum 5 years experienced will be first obtained before distributing the questionnaire. Upon their agreement, researchers will personally distribute the questionnaire. The second and third instruments will involve tourists and residents. The potential respondents will be approached to participate in the surveyed. The popular spots among the international and local tourists will be part of the of the survey location. Similar to the residents, places like Kuah, Pantai Cenang, Padang Matsirat and many others definitely will part of it and the time of data collection processes will be later determined.

2.5 *Tourism and resident's quality of life*

Edgell and Haenisch (1995) assert "international tourism in the twenty-first century will be a major vehicle for fulfilling the aspirations of mankind in

its quest for a higher quality of life, a part of which will be facilitating more authentic social relationships between individuals". Crouch and Ritchie (1999) believe that "the enhanced competitiveness of the destinations should lead directly to a sustainable improvement in the quality of life of these same residents". The desire to improve the quality of life in a particular destination or particular group is an important focus of attention for planners (Massam, 2002).

3 CONCLUSION

In Malaysia, there is quite limited number of empirical studies on Langkawi as the competitive destination. The framework developed will identify the most important attributes of destinations competitiveness for the country destination and in this case is Langkawi Island, Malaysia and illustrates the interrelationships and interaction between the processes and outcomes of tourism factors on one hand, and its performance that lead to tourism impacts on the other hands. Existing destination competitiveness models do not reflect these interrelationships and interactions between destination competitiveness, performance and impacts. Since little research has focused on destination competitiveness in the context of Langkawi, this could provide new insights about how destination competitiveness could be achieved or improved by destinations with similar level of tourism and social development as an emerging destination market in Malaysia. A tourism competitiveness framework and a method to evaluate progress towards achieving tourism competitiveness in the context of prevailing economic and social impacts of this area of study may be able to provide Langkawi Island, Malaysia with a conscious way of developing a profitable and sustainable tourism industry. It is hoped that this study will be contributing an understanding and insights about destination competitiveness based on social-economic implication and its residents' QOL.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, Z.U., & Krohn, F.B., 1992. Understanding the unique consumer behavior of Japanese tourists. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 1 (3) (1992), pp. 73–86.

Allen, D., Shore, L., & Griffith, R. (2003). The role of perceived organizational support and supportive human resource practices in turnover process. *Journal of Management*, 29 (1), 99–118.

Australian tourism destination', *Proceedings of the Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA) European Chapter Conference-Competition in Tourism: Business and Destination Perspectives, Helsinki, Finland*, pp. 467–478.

Backman, K.F., & Backman, S.J., 1997. An examination of the impacts of tourism in a gateway community. In H.L. Meadow (Ed.) *Development in Quality of Life Studies*, Vol. 1 (pp. 6) Blacksburg, Virginia: International Society for Quality of Life Studies.

Buhalis, D. (2000), 'Marketing the competitive destination of the future' *Tourism Management*, 21, 97–116.

Crouch, G. I., & Ritchie, J. R. B. (1999), 'Tourism, competitiveness, and societal prosperity' *Journal of Business Research*, 44, 137–152.

Cummins, R.A., (1997). The domain of life satisfaction: an attempt to order chaos. *Social Indicator Research*, 38, 303–328.

Dwyer, L., & Kim, C. (2003), 'Destination Competitiveness: determinants and indicators' *Current Issues in Tourism*, 6 (5), 369–414.

Dwyer, L., Mistilis, N., Forsyth, P., & Rao, P. (2001), 'International price competitiveness of Australia's MICE industry' *The International Journal of Tourism Research*, 3 (2), 123–139.

Dwyer, L., R. Mellor, Z. Livaic, D. Edwards and C. Kim (2004). 'Attributes of Destination Competitiveness: A Factor Analysis,' *Tourism Analysis*, 9(1–2): 91–101.

Edgell, D. & Haewisch, T., (1995) *Cooperation: Global tourism beyond the millennium*. Kansas City, MO: International Policy Publishing.

Gursoy, D. & Rutherford D.G. 2004. Host attitudes toward tourism: An Improved Structural Model, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Volume 31, Issue 3, July 2004, 495–516.

Gruescu, R., Nanu, R. & Pirvu, G. (2009). Destination Competitiveness: A Framework For Future Research. *Entelequia. Revista Interdisciplinar*, n° 9, 197–209.

Hassan S. Determinants of Market Competitiveness in an Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Industry. *Journal of Travel Research*, Feb., 2000, vol. 38, (3), 239–245.

<http://tourismmalaysia.gov.my>, date visited November, December 2011, January, February 2012.

<http://lada.gov.my>, date visited November, December 2011, January, February 2012.

<http://tat.gov.my> date visited, January, February 2012.

Hu, Y. Z., and J. R. B. Ritchie (1993). "Measuring Destination Attractiveness: A Contextual Approach." *Journal of Travel Research*, 35 (4): 42–49.

Kim, K. (2002). The effects of Tourism Impacts on Quality of life of The Residents In The Community. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virgin Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Kozak, M. and M. Rimmington (1999). 'Measuring Tourist Destination Competitiveness: Conceptual Considerations and Empirical Findings,' *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 18(3): 273–284.

Langkawi Authority of Development (LADA). Annual Report 2010, pp. 105

Liu, J.C., Sheldon, P.J., Var, T., (1987). Resident perception of the environment impacts of tourism, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 14, 17–37.

Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board Annual Report, 2010.

Massam, B., (2002). Quality of life : Public planning and private living, *Progress in Planning*, 58 (2002), 141–227.

Mihalic, T. (2000), 'Environmental management of a tourist destination: A factor of tourism competitiveness' *Tourism Management*, 21, 65–78.

Milman, A. & Pizam, A. 1988. Social impact of tourism on Central Florida. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 15 (2), 191–204.

Murphy, P., Pritchard, M. P., & Smith, B. (2000). The destination product and its impact on traveller perceptions. *Tourism Management*, 21(1), 43–52.

Pearce, D. G. (1997). Competitive Destination Analysis in Southeast Asia. *Journal of Travel Research*, Spring: 16–24.

- Perdue, R. R., Long, P. T., & Allen, L. (1990). Resident support for tourism development. *Annals of Tourism Research, 17*, 586–599.
- Poon, A., (1993). Tourism, technology and competitiveness strategy. Wallingford UK: CAB International.
- Porter, M. E. (1985). *Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance*, New York: Free Press.
- Ritchie, J. R. B. (1988). Consensus policy formulation in tourism. *Tourism Management, 9*(3), 199–216.
- Ritchie, J. R., & Crouch, G. I. (2000), 'The competitive destination: A sustainability perspective' *Tourism Management, 21*, 1–7.
- Ritchie, J. R. B., & Crouch, G. I. (2003), *The Competitive Destination: A Sustainable Tourism Perspective*, Wallingford, Oxon, UK: CABI Publishers.
- Ross, G.F. 1992. Resident Perceptions of the Impact of Tourism on an Australian City. *Journal of Travel Research, 30* (3) (1992), pp. 13–17.
- Sheldon, P.J. & Var, T. (1984). Resident Attitudes to Tourism in North Wales. *Tourism Management, 5*: 40–47.
- Smith, R.A., (1992). Beach resort evolution: Implications for planning. *Annals of Tourism Research, 19*, 304–322.
- Wilde, SJ & Cox, C 2008. 'Linking destination competitiveness and destination development: findings from a mature.

This page intentionally left blank

Environmental protection culture – perspective of tourists in a water-based tourist destination

Nor' Aini Yusof
Universiti Sains Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This paper aims to investigate the characteristics of environmental protection culture of tourists who have visited a resort in a water-based tourism destination. A questionnaire was distributed to tourists who visited a water-based tourist destination in Peninsular Malaysia. Out of 90 registered tourists, 66 had responded, yielding 73 percent usable responses. Reliability tests and descriptive analysis were used to analyse the data. The results revealed that in terms of the Environmental Protective Value, tourists agree about their enjoyment with nature, environmental movement activism and environment threat factors. In terms of Environmental Protection Practices, the respondents admit to practise environment-based actions such as recycling, buying environmentally friendly products and using energy-saving appliances.

Keywords: Environmental Protection Culture, Environmental Protection Practice, Environmental Protection Value, tourist perspective

1 INTRODUCTION

Until the 1970s the tourism industry was not regarded as an important economic activity in Malaysia. Today, the tourism sector ranks second in motivating foreign exchange after the oil and gas industry (Kaur, 2006). From January to September 2009, Malaysia recorded a total of 17,378,040 tourist arrivals (Malaysia Tourism Board, 2010). This indicated an increase of 6.4 percent in contrast to 16,329,855 for the year 2008. In September 2009 alone, tourist arrivals grew by 24.9% from 1,599,418 in September 2008 (ibid).

Despite the growing number of tourists visiting Malaysia, many water-based tourism destinations are still struggling to attract visitors. One of the main reasons for this lack of attraction is that tourists are dissatisfied with the experiences that do not correspond to their expectations (Yusof et al., 2010). While water-based tourism destinations possess natural qualities that are attractive for sustainable tourism, the lack of tourist visits has caused a bad turnover which led to some resorts accruing huge annual losses and eventually forced these resorts to cease operations (Kedah Government, 2007). Complaints about environmental neglect and meagre services abound. Chui et al (2010) report a declining number of foreign visitors to Taman Negara, one of Malaysia's National Parks. They suggest some immediate measures the management and towards improving the cleanliness and hygiene of the park, to address the problem. In a recently-concluded research in Lake Kenyir, Yusof et al (2010) reveal that tourists are dissatisfied with the products and services

offered in the area. Among the complaints is that most resorts in the area seem to have neglected important environmental practices. All resorts claimed that they were aware about the need to protect the environment, but in terms of the actual practices, out of 6 resorts in Lake Kenyir, only 2 resorts incorporated waste recycling and only 3 resorts practised low energy and consumption devices, water saving practices, recycled material and local product (Yusof, et al., 2010). Thus, there is a gap between environmental awareness and the daily practice. It is not surprising if this destination is only able to attract a limited number of tourists. Teh and Cabanban (2007) have conducted an evaluation of the biophysical environment in Pulau Banggi, Sabah and examined how the existing biophysical conditions determine the decision for future sustainable tourism development. They have found that the main challenge is the insufficient water, sanitation infrastructure and local participation, and the practice of blast fishing which can devastate the key attraction for tourists in the future. From these studies, it can be deduced that the low performance is due to the lack of environmental protection component in the facilities and services delivered to the tourists in the destination.

Similarly, researchers in other countries have found that resort operators are not adhering to environmental standards when it comes to products and services delivery (Bjork, 2000). According to Altinay and Hussain (2005) environment qualities in most tourist destinations are deteriorating because of improper waste disposal and the uncontrollable rate of ad hoc tourist development. There are also problems of

inadequate clean water supply and lack of support infrastructure (Harrison *et al.*, 2003). Resort operators are accused as the main contributor for pollution in many tourism destinations (Hillary, 2000). Statistics from the United Kingdom's Environment Agency reveal that these operators who are small in numbers contribute about 60% of waste and 80% of pollution (Environment Agency, 2003). To make things worse, most of the outlined policies are ineffective because they fail to understand and incorporate the nature and magnitude of small businesses in the industry (Thomas, 2000). Small businesses do not operate like large businesses. Small operators usually have to face some financial constraints; implying the importance of capital availability (*ibid.*). Small business operators are more likely to respond to the niche market (Storey, 1994). Because of this reason, if small operators are convinced that engaging in environmental-friendly practices will result in higher profits, they will be most likely to implement the practices (Gadenne, *et al.*, 2009). On the other hand, although they are small-sized, in terms of quantity their numbers are big; constituting more than 95% of all private businesses and thus, their influence to the environment cannot be ignored (ABS, 2003). It is important that small operators are able and willing to ensure that their business will not be destructive to the environment (Gadenne *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, as suggested by Thomas (2000) research that focuses specifically on small businesses in the tourism industry is highly needed to serve as a guide for effective tourism planning and policy measures.

2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Previous studies have shown that the success of the tourism industry is dependent upon effective planning and management of the natural environment. Dinan and Sargeant (2000) have claimed that an effective planning to address environmental issues is that in any tourism activities, environment and the culture of local communities should be preserved, while at the same time fulfilling tourists' needs and maintaining the growth of the industry. Wahab and Pigram (1997) warn that setting sustainable tourism as a development strategy to revive under developed areas is in itself a potential threat to environment quality and would probably dwindle the area's natural resources. Theoretically, the influx of tourist to a location would increase with the designation of the site as a tourism spot. As such, a proper planning of influx tourists is required to minimise the adverse effects of tourism. Indeed, as highlighted by Lynn and Brown (2003), it has become evident that failure to properly plan and manage the increasing number of tourists who visit protected areas has led to a decline in biological diversity and exploitation of natural resources. However, most literature with regards to environmental protection is originated from developed countries (Erdogan

and Baris, 2007). As such, it fails to consider the different contexts of developing countries and results in the lack of attributes relevant to environmental protection, suitable for developing countries; an indication that any theoretical adoption needs to be done in a cautious way.

It is acceptable that an unpolluted environment is a key element of quality service and is crucial for the progress of the tourism industry. However, the disposition and how far the stakeholders such as the resort operators, tourists, tourist guides and the park managers themselves can commit to environmental issues in Malaysia are largely unknown. Except for the Lake Kenyir where such study has been conducted, not much is known whether or not other water-based resort operators and park managers in Peninsular Malaysia are engaged in environmental protection practices and whether or not these practices influence tourists' satisfaction. Since the majority of resort operators are small, more attention should be given towards the understanding of how these businesses operate, before any tourism planning could be deployed to successfully address environmental problems. Recognizing the heterogeneity of small firms within the tourism industry is important so that the knowledge can serve as a guide for suitable planning approaches towards sustainable tourism development. Likewise, any identified constraints can be circumvented and thus, enhance the effectiveness of the proposed planning measures.

It should be noted that most studies on environmental protection practices in Malaysia tend to concentrate on coastal or island tourism. Teh and Cabanban (2007) have dedicated their attention to Pulau Banggi, an island in Sabah, Malaysia. A host of yet-to-be published studies is also concentrated in the islands along the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia. While half of the tourist destinations are located in inland regions or are water-based, still very little scholarly attention has been paid to such areas. Therefore, another study is needed to fill the gap.

Thus, this study aims to investigate the characteristics of environmental protection culture of tourists who visited a resort in a water-based tourism destination. The findings can serve as planning guides for the service providers (resort operators, park managers and tourist guides) in water-based tourism destinations on the proper use of natural resources and improve their service delivery through environmentally conscious designs and accountable business practices. Similarly, the findings will provide the decision makers (e.g the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and the relevant state governments) with a conceptual vehicle for effective tourism planning and policy formulation to proceed with the sustainable tourism development in the water-based tourism destinations in Malaysia. The findings will also encourage environmental awareness and practices among the main tourists and local communities, and consequently contribute towards sustainable tourism development in Malaysia, so that tourism remains

viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade the environment and the local community.

3 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION CULTURE (EPC)

Several researchers have emphasized on the need for an environmental protection culture (EPC) in order to minimize the adverse effects brought upon by the tourism industry. Dunlap and Jones (2002) define EPC as the awareness about environmental problems and the willingness to participate in activities which attempt to resolve problems. The objective of environmental protection is to accomplish and sustain a specific environmental behaviour that can reduce the negative outcome caused by the day-to-day operations of businesses on the natural environment (Erdogan and Tosun, 2009).

EPC consists of two main dimensions; environmental protection value (EPV) and environmental protection practices (EPP). EPV portrays the set of values or belief system which serves as guiding principles in determining one's behaviour towards the environment (Kaltenborn and Bjerke 2002). EPP are practices that are aimed at reducing the negative impacts to the environment. This is usually specified as technology or processes that are performed, together with the expansion of "cleaner" and competent technologies (Hale, 1996) or whether product or its elements are environmentally friendly- if they can be recycled, reused, remanufactured, repaired, disposed and biodegradable or not (Gadanne, Kennedy, & McKeiver, 2009). EPP is also manifested in the selection of raw materials, the production of waste, the means of disposal and how much pollution it generates (Zainul Abidin, 2010).

What are the indicators for EPC? Bamberg (2002) considers EPC to include values and practices which encourage recycling, energy saving and environmentally friendly products or services. In areas where there are influxes of tourists, waste processing facilities for garbage and sewage are seen as particularly important, as stated by Stern *et al* (2003). Khan (2003) coins the word 'ecotangibles' to explain environmental protection measures implemented by service providers. Ecotangibles include the management that is aware of tourists' concern towards the environment; amicable facilities to nature; tools that improve environmental performance; policies and practices that reduce negative impact on nature; not to forget the recycling, reapplying and trimming down of resources. EPC may be embedded in service providers' operational management. Examples of such practices include the efficient use of raw materials, reduction of pollution emissions and green purchasing initiatives (Blanco *et al.*, 2009).

Lane (1992) acknowledges 'imported employees' as one of the features of non-environmental sensitive condition. On the other hand, Jithendran and Baum (2000) stress that employing local people is an evidence of the awareness and sensitivity to socio-cultural

and environmental aspects. This awareness will lead to increased conscientiousness on local tourism and give positive influence to its development.

Environmental investments that directly improve the environment are also regarded as part of EPC (*ibid*). Examples of this include the efforts to improve the quality of the waterfront next to it, the cleaning of fishing or driving area, etc. Goodman (2000) studies the Scandic Hotels in Northern Europe and find out that collaborations which create a win-win situation among the stakeholders prove to be crucial for the sustainability of environmental programs. This implies that all firms can participate and benefits from environmental protection programs.

A more comprehensive indicator is developed by Erdogan and Tosun (2009). They utilise 8 dimensions with 39 items of environmental protection practices to evaluate environmental management practices adopted by accommodation operators in Goreme Historical National Park, Turkey. The dimensions include the knowledge on the environmental protection, education and training for environmental awareness, communication for environmental awareness, architecture and landscape designs, energy efficiency, waste reduction, water efficiency and water conservation and environmental program and policy.

4 METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire which consists of 2 sections was distributed personally and self-administered to the tourists who visited the area. Section A asks questions on the tourists' socio-demographic variables; namely age, gender, country of origin, marital status, education level, occupation and monthly income. Section B consists of 24 items asks questions on tourists' EPV while Section C with 20 items asks on the tourists' EPP. Respondents were asked to indicate their answers using a 6-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree). The survey data were analysed using the descriptive analysis and reliability test was carried out prior to the analysis.

Out of 90 tourists who visited the study area, 66 responded to the survey, giving the response rate of 73 percent. The majority of the tourists were female and most of them were at the age of between 18 and 24 years old. Nearly 76 percent of the respondents were first-time visitors and they stayed at the resort for 1 night/day. We performed a reliability test on all factors. With regards to EPV, all factors showed Cronbach Alpha to be above 0.7, except for the Human Dominance Over Nature (Cronbach Alpha = 0.423) and Conservation Motivated by Anthropocentric Concern (Cronbach alpha = 0.213) factors. In terms of EPP, all factors expect for Conservation Behaviour to have Cronbach Alpha above 0.7. Factors with Cronbach Alpha below 0.7 were omitted in the analysis. Table 1 presents the results of the reliability test.

Table 1. Reliability tests of all factors.

	Cronbach alpha
<i>A) Environmental Value</i>	
Enjoyment of Nature (EN)	0.879
Environmental Movement Activism(EMA)	0.803
Human Dominance Over Nature (HDON)	0.423
Conservation Motivated by Anthropocentric Concern (CMAC)	0.215
Altering Nature(AN)	0.752
Environmental Threat (ET)	0.713
<i>B) Environmental Practice</i>	
Environmental Action (EA)	0.740
Conservation Behaviour (CB)	0.571
Environmental Involvement (EI)	0.825
Resort Environmental Practice(REP)	0.815

Table 2. Mean score of environmental protection value.

	Mean
<i>A) Environmental Value</i>	
<i>Enjoyment of Nature (EN)</i>	4.85
1. I really like trips into the countryside (for example: forests or nature)	4.83
2. Sometimes when I am unhappy, I find comfort in nature.	5.05
3. I would rather spend my weekends in natural areas than in the city.	4.76
4. I enjoy spending time in natural settings	4.76
<i>Environmental Movement Activism(EMA)</i>	4.46
5. If I get extra income, I will donate some money to an environmental organization.	4.33
6. Environmental protection needs a lot of money. I am prepared to help out in a fund-raising effort.	4.27
7. I would like to join and actively participate in an environmentalist group.	4.48
8. I often try to persuade others that the environment is important.	4.76
<i>Altering Nature(AN)</i>	3.36
9. It is not a crime for humans to destroy natural areas for economic purposes.	2.65
10. I prefer a garden that is well-groomed and orderly, compared to a wild and natural garden.	4.03
11. Grass and weeds growing between pavement stones may be natural but should be destroyed	3.25
12. When nature is uncomfortable and inconvenient for humans, we have the right to change and modify it to suit ourselves.	3.51
<i>Environmental Threat (ET)</i>	4.65
13. The earth is like a spaceship with very limited room and resources.	4.57
14. The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset.	4.44
15. When humans interfere with nature, it often produces disastrous consequences.	4.78
16. Humans are severely abusing the environment.	4.83

5 RESULTS

Subsequently, the descriptive analysis was performed. Table 2 and Table 3 present the results. The highest mean score for EPV is the Enjoyment of Nature factor (mean = 4.85) followed by the Environmental Threat (mean = 4.65) factor. Meanwhile for EPP, the highest score is the Environmental Action (mean = 4.75) factor, followed by the Resort Environmental Practice (mean = 4.51) factor.

6 CONCLUSION

The study adds to the limited knowledge on the environmental protection culture of tourists in water-based destinations. In terms of EPV, respondents agree with the enjoyment with nature, environmental movement activism and environment threat factors. They put the highest score on the item concerning the comfort in nature. In terms of environmental protection practices, the respondents agree to practise environmental actions such as the need to recycle, buy environmentally friendly products and use energy-saving appliances. Therefore, resort operators, managers and tourism authorities should ensure that tourists are able to enjoy the nature, encourage environmental activism and avoid development that tends to cause threat to the environment. In addition, resort operators, managers and tourism authorities should focus on practices such as recycling, reusing, energy saving and making use of environmental friendly products or services to attract tourists to the area.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to extend their appreciation to the Universiti Sains Malaysia for the Research University Grant entitled 'Tourism Planning' [Grant No. 1001/PTS/8660013] that makes this study and paper possible.

REFERENCES

- Altinay, M. and Hussain, K. 2005. Sustainable tourism development: a case study of North Cyprus. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(3), pp. 272–280.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS): 2003, *Small Business in Australia*, cat. no. 1301.0 (ABS, Canberra). Cited in Bamberg, S. (2003). How does environmental concern influence specific environmentally related behaviors? A new answer to an old question. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 23: 21–32.
- Bjork, P. 2000. Ecotourism from a conceptual perspective, an extended definition of a unique tourism form. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 2, 189–202.
- Blancas, F.J., Gonzalez, M., Lozano-Oyola, M. and Perez, F. 2010. The assessment of sustainable tourism: Application to Spanish coastal destinations. *Ecological Indicators*, 10, pp. 484–492.

- Chui, C. T. B., Rahim, F.A., Hassan, F.H.H., Rosidah Musa, R., Yusof, J.M., Hashim, R.H., 2010, "Segmenting Nature-based Tourism and Perception of Servicescape at Taman Negara (National Park Malaysia)", Proceedings of 2010 International Conference on Business, Economics and Tourism Management Singapore, 26–28 February, 2010.
- Department of Statistics 2009. Economic Report 2008/2009, Department of Statistics & Ministry of Finance, Malaysia, Retrieved on August 14 2009, from <http://www2.treasury.gov.my>
- Dinan, C. and Sargeant, A. 2000. Social Marketing and Sustainable Tourism – is there a Match? *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 2, pp. 1–14.
- Dunlap, R.E., and Jones, R.E. 2002. Environmental Concern: Conceptual and Measurement Issues. In: R.E.Dunlap and W.Michelson (eds.). *Handbook of Environmental Sociology* Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, pp. 482–524.
- Environment Agency. 2003. Environmental Impact Assessment in relation to water resources authorisations. Bristol: Environment Agency. <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Research/eia.pdf> access on 3 March 2010
- Gadenne, D.L., Kennedy, J. and McKeiver, C. 2009. An Empirical Study of Environmental Awareness and Practices in SMEs. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 84: 45–63.
- Goodman, A. 2000. Implementing sustainability in service operations at Scandic hotels. *Interfaces*, 30, 202–214.
- Hale, M. 1996. Ecolabelling and cleaner production: principles, problems, education and training in relation to the adoption of environmentally sound production processes. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 4(2), 85–95.
- Harrison, S., B. D. Inouye, and H. D. Safford 2003. Ecological heterogeneity in the effects of grazing and fire on grassland diversity. *Conservation Biology* 17:837–845.
- Hillary R. (ed.). 2000. *Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and the Environment: Business Imperatives*. Greenleaf: Sheffield.
- Jithendran, K.J. and Baum, T. 2000. Human Resources Development and Sustainability: The Case of Indian Tourism. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 2, 40–421.
- Kaltenborn, B. P., & Bjerke, T. 2002. Associations between environmental value orientations and landscape preferences. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 59(1), 1–11. doi: 10.1016/s0169-2046(01)00243-2
- Kaur, C. R., 2006. *National Ecotourism Plan: Assessing Implementation of the Guidelines for Marine Parks*, Unpublished Paper, Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA).
- Kedah Govt to Help Reopen Two Pedu Lake Resorts, 2007, February 13, BERNAMA, 1. Retrieved August 19, 2009, from ProQuest Central.
- Lane B. 1992. *Sustainable Tourism: A Philosophy*. The Rural Tourism Unit, Department of Continuing Education, University of Bristol: Bristol.
- Lynn, N.A. and Brown, R.D. 2003. Effects of recreational use impacts on hiking experiences in natural areas. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 64(1–2), pp. 77–87.
- Malaysia Tourism Board 2010. Media Release. Retrieved from <http://www.tourism.gov.my> on 3 March 2010.
- Revell, A., Stokes, D. and Chen, H. 2009. Small Businesses and the Environment: Turning Over a New Leaf? *Business Strategy and the Environment*. DOI: 10.1002/bse.628. (www.interscience.wiley.com) access on 3 March 2010.
- Stern, C. J., Lassoie, J. P., Lee, D. R., & Deshler, J. D. 2003. How 'eco' is ecotourism? A comparative case study of ecotourism in Costa Rica. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 11(4), 322–347.
- Storey, D.J. 1994. *Understanding the Small Business Sector*. Routledge: London.
- Teh, L. and Cabanban, A.S. 2007. Planning for sustainable tourism in southern Pulau Banggi: An assessment of biophysical conditions and their implications for future tourism development. *Journal of Environmental Management*. 85(4), pp. 999–1008.
- Thomas, R. 2000. Small Firms in the Tourism Industry: Some Conceptual Issues. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 2, 345–353.
- Wahab, S. And Pigram, J.J. 1997 (Ed). *Tourism, Development And Growth: The Challenge Of Sustainability*. London: Routledge.
- Yusof, N., Said I. Osman Z. and Che Daud M. F 2010. Are resort operators in the ecotourism area adopt an environmental protection culture? The case of Lake Kenyir, Malaysia. *Sustainable Tourism 2010*. WIT Press: Southampton, UK
- Zainul Abidin, N. 2010. Investigating the awareness and application of sustainable construction concept by Malaysian developers. *Habitat International*, 34(4), 421–426.

This page intentionally left blank

Tourism receipts, education and economic growth in Malaysia

Cheam Chai Li

UiTM Kelantan, Malaysia

Ong Soon Chuan

Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The huge increase in international tourism receipts have contributed to the upsurge of interest in the role of tourism for economic growth. Malaysia's tourism is apparently the second major contributor in foreign exchange earnings after manufacturing. However, the empirical results with regards to Granger causality between tourism and economic growth are mixed. Thus, the objectives are to determine 1) the long run relationships, 2) the long run triangular Granger causality and 3) the speed of adjustment for economic growth. Based on data from 1974–2010, 1) Johansen cointegration reveals that tourism receipts and education are significantly affecting growth, 2) Granger causality in VECM shows there are bidirectional relationship among economic growth, tourism receipts and education thus witnessing a triangular relationship and 3) the speed of adjustment is moderate. Therefore, it is suggested to the policy makers to further improve and sustain tourism and its sub-sector to generate greater economic growth.

Keywords: Economic growth, tourism receipts, education, Johansen Cointegration, VECM

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most expanding sectors in the world. In recent decades, it has been observed a strong increase of interest in the role of tourism for growth. Tourism contributes to economic growth could be seen from its foreign exchange earnings which represent a significant income source for the country. These earnings can be used as an input to import capital goods to produce more goods and services, and this successively enhanced economic growth (McKinnon, 1964). Other positive externalities brings by tourism activities are tax revenues, employments, business opportunities, etc. Therefore, Balaguer & Cantavella-Jorda (2002) and Dritsakis (2004) assumed that tourism expansion should have a positive contribution to economic growth. On the other hand, it should also be highlighted that some authors such as Chen & Devereux (1999); Oh (2005) and Lee & Chang (2008) have stated that it could not be proven that any positive relationship exist between tourism and economic growth. Should developing country such as Malaysia promote its tourism sector to achieve long run economic growth?

In addition, one of the major macroeconomic policies to generate long run economic growth is to stimulate investment in education. Education and its long run effect on economic growth has been an interesting issue all this while. Education is generally

acknowledged as a main tool to promote economic growth as well as economic development. In Malaysia, the annual budget has without fail been increasing allocation for education. Government investment in education leads to higher literacy among the population. The more literate the population, the greater is the productivity that leads to a higher standard of living. The benefits of investment in education in developing country include poverty reduction and removal of inequalities in terms of social standing and income for individuals and society. Therefore it is worthwhile to determine empirically the contribution of education investment to Malaysia's economic growth. On one hand, the investment in education is reflected in the improved quality of the labour force that produces output. On the other hand, the empirical studies on the importance of education as one of the components in human capital is found to be mixed (Al-Yousif, 2008).

Figure 1 shows the trends of economic growth, tourism receipts and education from 1974-2010 in Malaysia. It can be observed that tourism receipts have witnessed significant growth since 1974 as well as the government expenditure in education has increased as time moves. The upward trends of these variables might possibly exhibit some kind of patterns and behaviours. As a result, this study is particular interested in determining the long run relationship of tourism receipts and education to economic growth and also to estimate the type of their causalities.

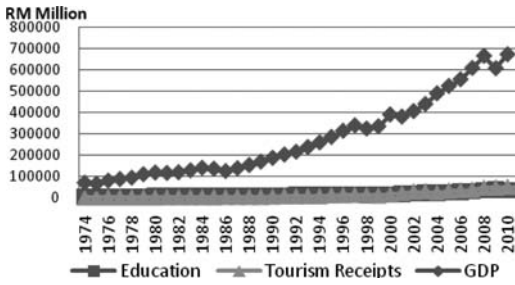


Figure 1. Trends of economic growth, tourism receipts and education from 1974–2010 in Malaysia.

Hence, the study's objectives are:

- 1) to determine whether international tourism receipts and education give impact to long run economic growth,
- 2) to determine the directions of Granger causality, and
- 3) to determine the speed of adjustment for economic growth

2 LITERATURE REVIEWS

The first to study tourism led growth (TLG) are Balaguer and Cantavella-Jorda (2002). They based TLG on the ELG (export led growth) literature on Spain and found that the economic growth there has been supported by its international tourism expansion. Among others who support TLG are Gunduz and Hetami-J (2005) in Turkey; Lau, et al. (2008) and Sarmidi, et al. (2010) in Malaysia, Kreishan (2010) in Jordan; Katircioglu (2010) in Singapore, etc. Bidirectional relationship are supported by Tang (2011) in Malaysia, Khalil et al (2007) in Pakistan and Wickremasinghe and Ihlanyake in Sri Lanka; However, there are also evidences showing the other way round i.e. tourism does not lead to growth. This is examined by Oh (2005) in Korea; Katircioglu (2009a) and Ozturk and Acaravci (2009) in Turkey. On the other hand, Paynes and Mervar (2010) in Croatia and Lee (2008) in Singapore has turned out that TLG hypothesis support for economic driven tourism growth instead of TLG.

The literature of education and economic growth relationship is extensive. However, different researchers obtained different findings, it is either education acts positively, negatively or in some cases no impact of economic growth at all. For instance, Barro (1991) discovers a positive relationship between educational expenditures and economic growth while De Meulmester and Rochet (1995) find the relationships between the two are not always positive.

The empirical findings between education and economic growth for the later years are as follow:

Oluwatobi and Ogunrinola (2011) conducted a study to find out the effect of government recurrent and capital expenditure on education and health towards economic growth in Nigeria. The variables include

GDP, physical capital (K), total stock of human capital (hL) and human capital development proxied by government capital expenditure (CE) and recurrent expenditure (RE) on education and health. The findings show that there is a long run relationship between the variables used for human capital development and economic growth where a positive relationship between RE and GDP is observed while CE is negatively related to GDP.

Odit, et al. (2010) explored to what extent does the education level of Mauritian labour force affects its economic growth by incorporating Cob Douglas production function with constant returns to scale. The variables include GDP, gross fixed capital formation (K), human capital stock (H), and labour (L). The regression analysis was run from 1990–2006. The results show that human capital does lead to economic growth, as well as capital stock. They conclude that human capital indeed increases productivity and education is really a productivity enhancing tool.

Using 'ratio of education expenditure per worker' – H1 and 'share of education expenditure in GDP' – H2 as proxy for human capital, Al-Yousif (2008) examines the nature and direction of the relationship between the formal and economic growth in the six GCC economies using time series data from 1977–2004. There are mixed evidences both across countries and the use of human capital variables when testing for ECM Granger causality test. For Bahrain and Qatar, the causality run from economic growth to human capital (H1 and H2), For UAE, human capital (H1) contributes to economic growth in the short run and long run and there is bidirectional causality for H2 in the short run only. In the case of Oman, the causality runs from human capital to economic growth. H1 has unidirectional causality in the short and long run but H2 has unidirectional causality in the short run only.

Seetanah et al. (2011) used Panel VAR to determine whether tourism is a determinant of economic growth in 40 African countries. The variables use include Income (Y), Gross fixed capital formation (K), Secondary school enrolment (H), openness-ratio of export plus import (O), Tourist arrivals (T) and economic freedom (EF). The findings show T is the important sector of African development although K, O and H remain the main drivers. There is bidirectional causality between T and Y, Unidirectional causality from H, EF and K to Y.

Katircioglu et al (2010) conducted a study in Turkey from 1979-2007 using Bound test, ECM and Granger causality. The variables are real GDP (Y), international tourist arrivals (T) and higher education (E). The results show tourism led growth as well as higher education led growth in the research.

3 METHODOLOGY

The study employs econometric procedures such as unit roots, Johansen cointegration (Johansen & Juselius (1990)) and vector errors correction model

(VECM) in Granger causality test to find out the long run equilibrium and Granger causal relationships among economic growth, tourism receipts and education. The model of the study is then written as $Y = f(\text{TRPT}, \text{EDU})$. Taking logs on both side, the equation becomes:

$$LY_t = \omega_0 + \omega_1 \text{LTRPT}_t + \omega_2 \text{LEDU}_t + v_t \quad (1)$$

The proxies for Y, TRPT and EDU are GDP, tourism receipts per tourist and government operating expenditure on education respectively, while $t = \text{time}$; $\omega_{01} = \text{intercept terms}$; ω_1, ω_2 , coefficient; and $v = \text{error terms}$.

Firstly, the technique of detecting the presence of unit root for individual variables is carried out by using ADF test (Dickey and Fuller, 1979, 1981) for intercept, and intercept with time trend on the level and first difference. If the data is confirmed to be stationary at the same order, the second step is to conduct Johansen cointegration test. This is to estimate the long run relationship between nonstationary variables for the number of cointegration relationship and also to determine the parameters of those cointegration relationship. Trace and maximum eigenvalue are the two likelihood ratio tests proposed for cointegration rank. Granger causality tests by vector error correction model (VECM) will only be conducted to check the causality among the variables if and only if the data is cointegrated. The three VECM in this study based on (1) are then expressed as follows:

$$\Delta Y_t = \alpha_{01} + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_{11i} \Delta Y_{t-i} + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_{21i} \Delta \text{TRPT}_{t-i} + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_{31i} \Delta \text{EDU}_{t-i} + \theta_1 \text{ECT}_{t-1} + \mu_{\mu 1t} \quad (2)$$

$$\Delta \text{TRPT}_t = \alpha_{02} + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_{12i} \Delta Y_{t-1} + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_{22i} \Delta \text{TRPT}_{t-i} + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_{32i} \Delta \text{EDU}_{t-i} + \theta_2 \text{ECT}_{t-1} + \mu_{\mu 2t} \quad (3)$$

$$\Delta \text{EDU}_t = \alpha_{03} + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_{13i} \Delta Y_{t-1} + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_{23i} \Delta \text{TRPT}_{t-i} + \sum_{i=1}^p \alpha_{33i} \Delta \text{EDU}_{t-i} + \theta_3 \text{ECT}_{t-1} + \mu_{\mu 3t} \quad (4)$$

The notation for Y, TRPT and EDU are as explained earlier; ECT is error correction terms; i is the number of lagged terms; t denotes time; Δ is the lag operator; μ are the disturbances in each equation; α_s are constant terms and the parameters of the lagged values of the relevant in each equation.

The results from VECM reveal three facts: the t -statistics shows the existence of long run causality, while F -statistics exhibits the presence of short run causality, and the coefficient of ECT_{t-1} are the indicators for the speed of adjustment which show how much the economic growth should adjust when a state of disequilibrium exists.

4 DATA ANALYSIS

The results of ADF tests are shown in Table 1. The second and third columns indicate that all series are

Table 1. ADF test for unit root.

Level	1st difference			
	Constant	Constant & Constant	Constant Trends	Trends
LY	-0.516(0)	-2.810(0)	-6.651*(0)	-6.683*(0)
LTRPT	-0.506(0)	-2.754(0)	-6.915*(0)	-6.788*(0)
LEDU	-0.032(0)	-2.11(0)	-5.476*(0)	-5.366*(0)

*Denotes rejection of the null hypothesis at the 1% level of confidence for ADF and PP.

not stationary at level when constant, and constant with trend are selected respectively. The calculated t -statistic of ADF test is higher than its critical value at 1% level of significance, this implies that the null hypothesis of unit root for Y, TRPT and EDU is failed to be rejected. The fourth and fifth columns exhibit the 1st difference null hypothesis of a unit root is rejected for all the series at 1% level of significance when constant or constant and trend are included respectively. This implies that there is no unit root and the series are stationary.

After examining the unit roots of the variable and confirming the time series data are stationary, the next procedure is to determine the long run equilibrium relationship among variables that are non stationary in levels but stationary in the first differences. This can be done by employing cointegration test developed by Johansen (1988) and Johansen & Juselius (1990) as this procedure is known to be the most reliable test for cointegration.

Before cointegration test is performed, the study picks out lag 1 based on several criteria such as likelihood ration test (LR), final predication error (FPE), Akaike information criterion (AIC), Schwarz Bayesian criterion (SBIC), and Hannan and Quinn criterion (HQ), to test the cointegration among Y, TR, and Hh.

Table 2 reports the level of long run cointegration between the variables. The null hypothesis for trace statistic of no cointegration ($r = 0$) between the variables is rejected because its statistic value 32.50292 is bigger compared to the critical value of 29.79707 at 5% level of significance. This is confirmed by maximum eigenvalue statistic values, which is also rejecting the null hypothesis of no cointegration ($r = 0$) because the test statistics of 27.01989 is larger than the critical values of 21.13162 at 5% level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis of no cointegration is rejected for rank of zero in favour of the alternative hypothesis of one or more cointegration vectors at 5% significance level for trace and maximum eigenvalue tests.

From the one cointegrating vector found among the variables, the cointegrating regression of economic growth in Malaysia can be written as follows:

$$\text{LT}_t = 0.675^* \text{LTRPT}_t + 0.47^* \text{LEDU}_t \quad (5)$$

Table 2. Johansen's test for the number of cointegration vectors.

H ₀	H ₁	L _{trace}	L _{max}
r = 0	r = 1	32.50*	27.02*
r ≤ 1	r = 2	5.48	5.31
r ≤ 2	r = 3	0.169	0.169

Trace and max-eigenvalue tests both indicate 1 cointegrating equations at 5% level of significance

*Rejection of the hypothesis at 5% level of significance.

**MacKinnon-Haug-Michelis (1999) p-values.

Table 3. VEC Granger causality/block exogeneity Wald tests.

Dependent variables	ΔLY	ΔLTRPT	ΔLEDU	ECT _{t-1}
Δ LY	–	1.64 (0.211)	2.411 (0.121)	–0.535* [–3.149]
Δ LTRPT	0.045 (0.832)	–	0.145 (0.703)	0.995* [3.783]
Δ LEDU	0.147 (0.701)	6.030 (0.014)	–	0.333** [1.917]

*, ** and *** Denote rejection of the hypothesis at 1, 5 and 10% significant level.

The values in [] and () are t-statistics and p-value respectively.

This normalized equation describes the signs on the variables whether they are consistent with a priori expectation. The results show that TRPT and EDU are positive and statistically significant at 1% level. This means that tourism receipts and education are statistically significant and contributing to economic growth in the long run. In terms of degree of impact, it indicates that 1% change in TRPT and EDU will lead to 0.67% and 0.47% increased in Y respectively which is in line with a priori expectations.

The study's tourism receipts (TR) finding is supported by Balaguer & Cantavella-Jorda (2002), Kasman & Kirbas (2004), Gunduz & Hetami-J (2005), Cortes-Jimenez (2008), Kareem (2008), Lau et al. (2008), Fayissa et al (2007, 2009), Chen & Song Zan (2009), Ka (2009), Brida et al. (2010, 2008), Chew & Woan (2010) and Kreishan (2010).

The findings on education (EDU) which show that government spending on education increases economic growth is consistent with Barro & Sala-i-Martin (1995), Ogujiuba & Adeniyi (2005), Bose et al. (2007), Tang (2009), Cooray (2009), Govindaraju et al. (2010) and Oluwatobi & Ogunrinola (2011). This is also supported by Odit et al. (2010) where they find that education is really a productivity enhancing tool.

Table 3 shows the results for Granger causality in VECM. It unveils several important information such as long run causality from t-statistics, short run causality based on Wald tests are given as chi squared and the speed of adjustment based on ECT_{t-1}. It can be

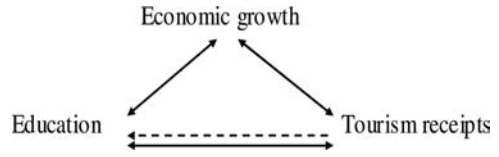


Figure 2. Long run causal relationships among economic growth, tourism receipts and education.

summarized that long run bidirectional causality is found between Y and TRPT, Y and EDU, and EDU and TRPT at 1%, 1% and 5% level of significant respectively. However, short run causality is only evidenced from TRPT to EDU at 5% of significant.

Bidirectional causality between Y and TR are supported by Tang (2011 and 2011b); Lean & Tang (2010); Khalil et al. (2007); Dristsakis (2004), Balaguer and Cantavella-Jorda (2002). Unidirectional causality from Y to He are consistent with Tang (2009) and Samudram, Nair & Vaithilingan (2009). Unidirectional causality from He to Y is confirmed by Govindaraju et al (2010); Jiranyakul and Brahmasrene (2007) show general government expenditure to Y, and Katircioglu et al (2010) show higher education led growth. Bidirectional relationship between Y and EDU is affirmed by Seetana et al (2011). They also show that enhancing EDU will in turn increase TRPT and give indirect impact to growth.

The speed of adjustment shows that any disequilibrium in the error term for the dependent variable (economic growth) in time t-1 will be adjusted the following year at 54%. In other words, the speed of adjustment for economic growth to changes in tourism receipts and health in an effort to obtain a long run static equilibrium is slightly above moderate.

Figure 2's illustration is translated graphically from long run and short run Granger causality findings in Table 4. On one side, the more advance the country is, the more educated will the population be. Thus they will be able to develop the tourism industry further, and it would in turn lead to greater economic growth in Malaysia. This is shown by the anti-clockwise triangular relationship. On the other hand, the higher the economic growth, the more tourists are attracted to the country leading to greater tourism receipts. The foreign exchange earnings gained from tourism can be used as inputs to improve the education system in the country. Education system improvement in turn will lead to higher economic growth. This triangular relationship is shown by the clockwise flow.

5 CONCLUSION

Tourism receipts and education are found to influence positively the economic growth. In terms of Granger causality, economic growth, tourism receipts and education seem to complement each other in the long run. On one hand, economic growth enhances tourism receipts and education – growth leads tourism

(growth-led tourism) and growth leads to education (growth-led education). On the other hand, tourism receipts and education also lead to economic growth – that is tourism-led growth and education-led growth. Hence it is suggested that greater attention should be given to the sustainability of economic growth and also the promotion of tourism receipts and education in Malaysia. Interestingly, tourism receipts and education also cause each other and these indirectly lead to the avenue of economic growth. Policy makers are implored to create a better strategy to improve tourism and the education sectors simultaneously as there are interactions between them in the studies. The government can even turn Malaysia into one of the best Asean region's education hub to attract more international students to study in Malaysia and shore up tourism by providing intensive promotions and marketing in potential countries to attract greater tourist arrivals and students to Malaysia. This would boost up tourism and education leading to education tourism. This in turn would generate income for the country and thus stimulate growth.

REFERENCES

- Al-Yousif, Y. K. 2008. Education expenditure and economic growth: some empirical evidence from the GCC countries. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 69–80.
- Balaguer, J., & Cantavella-Jorda, M. 2002. Tourism as a long run economic growth factor: the Spanish case. *Applied Economics*, 34, 877–884.
- Barro, R. 1991. Economic Growth in Cross Section of Countries. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 407–443.
- Barro, R. J., & Xavier Sala-i-Martin, X. 1995. *Economic Growth*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- BNM. 1974–2010. Bank Negara Malaysia Annual Report. Bank Negara Malaysia.
- Bose, N., Haque, M. E., & Osborn, D. R. 2007. Public expenditure and economic growth: A disaggregated analysis for developing countries. *The Manchester School*, 75 (5), 533–556.
- Brida, J. G., & Pulina, M. 2010. A literature review on the tourism led growth hypothesis. Working Papers, CRENoS, 17.
- Brida, J., Carrera, E., & Risso, W. 2008. Tourism's impact on long run Mexican economic growth. *Economics Bulletin*, 3(7), 1–10.
- Chen, C. F., & Song Zan, C. W. 2009. Tourism expansion, tourism uncertainty and economic growth: New evidence from Taiwan and Korea. *Tourism Management*, 20, 812–818.
- Chen, L. L. & Devereux, J. 1999. Tourism and welfare in Sub-Saharan Africa: a theoretical Analysis. *Journal of African Economies*, 8, 209–227
- Chew, G. L., & Woan, T. H. 2010. Tourism, health and income in Singapore. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 355–359.
- Cooray, A. 2009. Government expenditure, governance and economic growth. Retrieved July 6, 2011, from comparative economic studies: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1686538
- Cortes-Jimenez, I. 2008. Which type of tourism matters to the regional economic growth? The cases of Spain and Italy. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 10, 127–139.
- De Meulmester, J.C. and Rochet, D. 1995. A causality analysis of the link between higher education and economic development, *Economics of Education Review*, Vol.144, No.4, 351–361.
- Dickey, D. A., & Fuller, W. A. 1979. Distribution of the estimator for autoregressive time series with a unit root. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 74, 427–31.
- Dickey, D. A., & Fuller, W. A. 1981. Likelihood ratio statistics for autoregressive time series with a unit root. *Econometrica*, 49, 1057–72.
- DOSM. 1974–2010. Balance of Payments. Malaysia: Department of Statistics.
- Dritsakis, N. 2004. Tourism as a long run economic growth factor: An empirical investigation for Greece using causality analysis. *Tourism Economics*, 10 (3), 305–316.
- Fayissa, B., Nsiah, C., & Tadasse, T. 2007. The impact of tourism on economic growth and development in Africa. Middle Tennessee State University, Department of Economics and Finance, Working Paper.
- Fayissa, B., Nsiah, C., & Tadasse, T. 2009. Tourism and economic growth in Latin American Countries (LAC): Further empirical evidence. Middle Tennessee State University, Department of Economics and Finance, Working Paper.
- Govindaraju, V. G., Rao, R., & Anwar, S. 2010. Economic growth and government spending in Malaysia: A re-examination of Wagner and Keynesian views. Springer Science.
- Gunduz, L., & Hatemi, J. A. 2005. Is the tourism led growth hypothesis valid for Turkey? *Applied Economics Letters*, 12, 499–504.
- Jiranyakul, K., & Brahmasrene, T. 2007. The relationship between government expenditures and economic growth in Thailand. *Journal of Economics and Economic Education Research*, 8 (1), 93–102.
- Johansen, S. 1988. Statistical analysis of cointegrating vectors. *Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control*, 12(2–3), 21–40.
- Johansen, S., & Juselius, K. 1990. Maximum likelihood estimation and inference on cointegration with application to the demand for money. *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*, 54(2), 169–210.
- Ka, M. C. 2009. Three essays in tourism, trade and economic growth. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Auburn University.
- Kareem, O. I. 2008. Tourism-exports and economic growth in Africa. 13th African Econometrics Society (AES), (pp. 1–32). Pretoria, South Africa.
- Kasman, A., & Kirbas, K. S. 2004. Turizm gelirleri ve ekonomik butunlesme ve nedensellik iliskisi. *Iktisat Isletme Finns Dergisi*, 19 (220), 122–131.
- Katircioglu, S. T. 2009a. Revisiting the tourism led growth hypothesis for Turkey using the bounds test and Johansen approach for cointegration. *Tourism Management*, 30, 17–20.
- Katircioglu, S. T. 2010. Research note: testing the tourism led growth hypothesis for Singapore – an empirical investigation from bounds test to cointegration and Granger causality tests.
- Khalil, S., Kakar, M. K., & Valiullah. 2007. Role of tourism in economic growth: Empirical evidence from Pakistan economy. *The Pakistan Development Review*, 46 (4), 985–995.
- Kreishan, F. M. 2010. Tourism and Economic growth: The case of Jordan. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 15 (2), 229–234.

- Lau, E., Oh, S.-L., & Hu, S. S. 2008, August 6. Tourist arrivals and economic growth in Sarawak. Retrieved May 30, 2010, from Munich Personal RePEc Archive (MPRA): http://mpra.ub.unimuenchen.de/9888/1/MPRA_paper_9888.pdf
- Lee, C. G. 2008. Tourism and economic growth: The case of Singapore, regional and sectoral economic studies. *Euro-American Association of Economic Development*, 89–98.
- Lee, C., & Chang, C. 2008. Tourism development and economic growth: A closer look at panels. *Tourism Management*, 29 (1), 180–192.
- MacKinnon, J. G., Haug, A., & Michelis, L. 1999. Numerical distribution functions of likelihood ratio tests for cointegration. *Journal of Applied Econometrics*, 14, 5, 563–577.
- McKinnon, R. 1964. Foreign exchange constrain in economic development and efficient aid allocation. *Economic Journal*, 74, 388–409.
- MOTOUR. 1974–2000. Annual Report. Malaysia: Tourism Malaysia.
- MOTOUR. 2001–2009. Annual Report. Malaysia: Tourism Malaysia.
- MOTOUR. 2008, April. Malaysia among world' top 5 medical tourism destinations. Retrieved October 27, 2010, from Ministry of Tourism Malaysia: http://corporate.tourism.gov.my/mediacentre.asp?page=news_desk&subpage=archive&news_id=16
- MOTOUR. 2010. Annual Report. Malaysia: Tourism Malaysia.
- Odit, M. P., Dookhan, K., & Fauzel, S. (2010). The impact of education on economic growth: The same of Mauritius. *International Business and economics Research Journal*, 9 (8), 141–152.
- Odit, M. P., Dookhan, K., & Fauzel, S. 2010. The impact of education on economic growth: The same of Mauritius. *International Business and economics Research Journal*, 9 (8), 141–152.
- Ogujiuba, K., & Adeniyi, A. O. 2004. Economic growth and human capital development: The case of Nigeria. *EconWPA*.
- Oh, C.-O. 2005. The contribution of tourism development to economic growth in the Korean economy. *Tourism Management*, 26 (1), 39–44.
- Oluwatobi, S. O., & Ogunrinola, I. O. 2011. Government expenditure on human capital development: Implications for economic growth in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development*, 72–80.
- Osterwald-Lenum, M. 1992. A note with quantities of the asymptotic distribution of the maximum likelihood cointegration rank test statistics. *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*, 54, 461–472.
- Ozturk, I., & Acaravci, A. 2009. On the causality between tourism growth and economic growth: Empirical evidence from Turkey. *Transylvanian Review*, 25, 73–81.
- Payne, J., & Mervar, A. 2010. Research note: The tourism growth nexus in Croatia. *Tourism Economics*, 16 (4), 1089–1094.
- Samudram, M., Nair, M., & Vaithilingan, S. 2009. Keynes and Wagner on government expenditures and economic development: The case of a developing economy. *Empirical Economics*, 697–712.
- Sarmidi, T., & Mohd Salleh, N. H. 2010. Dynamic inter relationship between trade, economic growth and tourism in Malaysia. Retrieved February 24, 2011, from Econpapers: <http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/21056/>
- Seetanah, B., Padachi, K., & Rojid, S. 2011, June. Tourism and Economic Growth: African evidence from panel Vector Autoregressive Framework. Working Paper. World Institute for Development Economics Research.
- Tang, C. F. 2009. An examination of government spending and economic growth nexus for Malaysia using the leveraged bootstrap simulation approach. *Global Economic Review*, 38, 215–227.
- Tang, C. F. 2011. Temporal granger causality and the dynamics examination on the tourism growth nexus in Malaysia. Retrieved February 14, 2011, from Munich Personal RePEc Archive: http://mpra.ub.unimuenchen.de/29237/2/MPRA_paper_29237.pdf
- Wickremasinghe, G. B., & Ihalanayake, R. 11–14 February, 2007. The causal relationship between tourism and economic growth in Sri Lanka: Some empirical evidence. CAUTHE Confernece: Tourism Past Achievements, Future Challenges. Sydney, Australia.

Medical tourism destination brand positioning model

Syukuriah Idrus, Rosidah Musa, Yusrina Hayati Nik Muhammad Naziman,
Nadia Farleena Mohd Aznan, Azmahani Yaacob@Othman & Nooradzlina Mohd Pauzi
Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Kelantan, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Malaysia is one of the countries that have deliberately set out to be a dominant medical tourism destination competing with other country. This sector is to generate RM35.5 billion incremental Gross National Income (GNI) contribution and reach RM506 billion by the target year 2020. Malaysia has strong competitive advantage in stable political climate, comparable quality of medical services at private medical centers and price advantage over other regional players. However, lack of marketing strategy was the reason why Malaysia, despite the fact it is a Muslim country, is behind Thailand and Singapore in attracting medical tourism from Middle East. Indeed Malaysia appears to have the edge in term of religion, Muslim Hospital staff, halal food and other aspects. Porter's diamond of national competitiveness shows that medical tourism has numbers of limitation and one of it is positioning brand name of destination. It shows the important of brand image toward building destination positioning in gaining competitive advantage. Only a few academic researches have been conducted on this particular niche market. However, there is increasing availability of literature in the mainstream media example print, electronic media and the Internet, illustrating the growth this form of tourism. Hence the lacking of academia interest in medical tourism both necessitates and validates this study within the medical tourism niche market. The study will propose a new model destination brand positioning which incorporate the factors that contribute to the destination image and their effect on customer engagement and destination positioning. The study was conducted in selected private hospital in Malaysia; interview and questionnaire distribution was used in order to get the respond from the tourists. Expected result from this study will help Malaysia medical tourism industry in competing with other competitor especially Thailand and Singapore in building our own destination brand position.

1 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia Medical Tourism has become indication toward contributing Malaysia Economy and there are many benefits and opportunity that offered by medical tourism. Medical tourism is one of the elements in tourism that proposed under the National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) that could help the nation to achieve the status of a developed economy by 2020. Malaysia is among the world top 5 medical tourism destinations for medical tourist and foreign investor, the selection were based the quality and affordability of medical care and receptiveness to foreign investment.

However based on the comparison study done by (E. Peter and N. Swati, 2010) showed that Malaysia is behind Thailand and Singapore in attracting medical tourist from Middle East. According to Secretary General of the National Chambers of Commerce and Industry Malaysia (NCCIM) Datuk Syed Hussien Al-Hasbshee, (2010) lack of marketing strategy was the reason why Malaysia, despite the fact it is a Muslim country, is behind Thailand and Singapore in attracting medical tourism from Middle East, while Malaysia appears to have the edge in term of religion, Muslim Hospital staff, halal food and other aspects. Thailand

is universally known as the Mecca of Medical Tourism driven largely by Bumrungrad's almost thirty years of activities. India, the second largest destination in terms of medical tourist arrivals, is the clear price leader for the region. Singapore's infrastructure, which is second to none, is a strong draw, provide customer who are willing to pay for it. Countries like Malaysia need to be careful to consider on their strategy to be competitive than other countries. Therefore, a study on marketing strategy focusing on destination brand positioning need to be done in order to attract tourist to come to Malaysia and experience Malaysia as a good destination for medical.

The Porter diamond of national competitiveness is useful a framework for examining the development of medical tourism industry. However, it does have a number of limitations. Based from the research that has been done one of the problem that has been determined on considering attracting customer is the brand positioning on the destination (Andres and Marcus, 2011). An extension of this destination branding, is the selection of a consistent element mix to identify and distinguish the destination through positive image building (Hem & Iversen, 2004). As is common in many sun, sea and sand destinations, the destination

image has emerged as a crucial marketing concept in the tourism industry (Hem & Iversen, 2004).

Accordingly the destination positioning is important in gaining customer motivation towards traveling for medication. Developing countries are believed, to be poor and lacking in quality facilities or physician, which lead to skepticism among patients. According to Chong Yoke Har, Director of the international Marketing Division of Tourism Malaysia, the challenge facing Malaysia's tourist trade include negative media report, adverse travel advisories, media reports, adverse travel advisories misconception about Malaysia as a Muslim country linked to terrorism, unprecedented pandemics and global issues such as tsunamis, fuel hikes and economic slowdown (Malaysia Marketing report, 2010). To overcome the problem strong theoretical framework on building destination brand positioning are needed. This study will determine the factors contributing to destination image in building strong destination position, so that while introducing Malaysia as a hub for medical tourism we do emphases on our destination position and the differences that Malaysia offer for medical tourism.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Medical tourism

Aside from having no universally agreed definition of health tourism (Ross, 2001), other concepts such as medical tourism and the wellness tourism (Mueller and Kaufmann, 2001), and medical travel (Kangas, 2007) also share conceptual similarity with health tourism so that they are agreed by some as interchangeable concepts (Smith, 2008). Some scholars (Ross, 2001), however, noted health tourism as an overarching concept encompassing all forms of health-related tourism activities.

2.2 Destination image

Brand image is an important concept in consumer behavior (E. Martinez and Y. Polo, 2010). The most common and widely accepted definition of brand image is "the perceptions about a brand reflected as associations existing in the memory of the consumer" (Keller, 1993). The associations are created in three potential ways: direct experience with the product/service, from information sources or from inferences to pre-existing associations (Martinez and Pina, 2003). Brand image is a multidimensional construct (Martinez and de Chernatony, 2004) and consists of functional and symbolic brand benefits (Low and Lamb, 2000).

Similar to the strong interests at studying brand image, for the past three decades, destination image has been a dominating area of tourism research. As an extension of this destination branding, is the selection of a consistent element mix to identify and distinguish the destination through positive image building

(Hem & Iversen, 2004). While we agree with the provided definition of branding we find it somewhat lacking for the purposes of this study. As is common in many sun, sea and sand destinations the destination image has emerged as a crucial marketing concept in the tourism industry (Hem & Iversen, 2004).

Destination Positioning is "the way a product is defined by consumers on important attributes" (Kotler, 1999). In fact, positioning is part of a firm's core strategy within marketing and it's about meeting the strengths of the firm with the opportunities present in the market. The core strategy has two parts; first the firm has to identify the group of customers for whom it has a differential advantage and the second step would be to position the product or service in those consumers' minds (Kotler, 1999). A firm's positioning of a product or service will also depend on the competitor's position in the market. Either the positioning strategy would be to compare this product or service to the others in the market or to differentiate it from the rest (Learn Marketing.net, 2006).

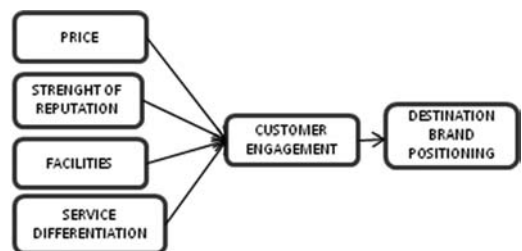
2.3 Customer engagement

An engaged customer is a customer who clearly understands your strategy and direction and is personally committed to making it a success. They are more committed to settling disputes peacefully and are more loyal to their company in general (LaMalfa, 2008). It is integral to establish a strategic and collaborative link between engaged employees and engaged customers if you want to achieve long-term growth.

This alignment of all elements is what facilitates the creation of engaged customers and staff. Another way to represent this is to imagine a journey where the goal is to stand out in a world of increased communication, commoditization, media dilution and competition. The path towards customer engagement is outlined above. Organizations sometimes operate like dim lights in a sea of other dim lights, struggling to get noticed in an over communicated and competitive world. They get around this by investing more in advertising, price promotions and sales incentives to create awareness and increase sales.

3 THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Proposed framework



4 METHODOLOGY

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the tourists that consume medical service in Malaysia and. The sample is being taken based on convenient sampling bases.

Reliability Analysis (Cronbach Alpha) was used in determining the consistency and stability of each variable in this study. The demographic variables was analyzed using the frequency analysis. While regression analysis was used to identify the relationship between a response variable and one or more predictor variables.

4.1 *Exploratory factor analysis*

A principal component extraction with varimax rotation was utilized in reducing these large items to a more manageable set, since it has been recognised to be a valuable preliminary analysis when no sufficient theory is available to establish the underlying dimensions of a specific. In achieving a more meaningful and interpretable solution in the iterative process, items with low factor loadings (<0.5) or high cross-loadings (>0.3) were removed and EFA was performed again. The results for all emerging factor structures within the respective constructs showed high factor loadings and that the Alpha coefficients of these factors ranged from 0.769 to 0.903, well above acceptable value of 0.70.

4.2 *Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)*

A more rigorous statistical procedure was further recommended to refine and confirm respective factor structures generated from the initial EFA. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) has been proposed as an analytical tool to ascertain uni dimensionality of measures. Hence, all the resulting measures derived from EFA were validated using a CFA analytic procedure by employing AMOS 16 analytical software program.

In order to achieve an acceptable ratio of observations to estimate parameters, four separate measurement models were conducted using CFA. From the result, the fit indices suggest that all these models fit the data well. Construct reliability was also assessed by estimating the average variance extracted (AVE), which reflects the overall amount of variance captured by the latent construct and Composite Reliability (CR). CR reflects the internal consistency of the construct indicators, while AVE reflects the amount of variance captured by the construct indicators. All CR scores ranging from 0.86–0.96, were much higher than the recommended cut-off point of 0.7. Thus, each of the factors reliably measured its respective constructs. The AVE scores ranged from 0.60 to 0.89, exceeding the recommended cut-off point of 0.5.

Construct validity was subsequently assessed in terms of convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is established through high correlations between the measure of interest and other measures that are supposedly measuring the same concept.

The critical ratio (t-value) of the items varied from 6.29 to 16.36 and the standardized item loadings varied from 0.48 to 0.81, thus supporting the convergent validity of the constructs.

Discriminate validity is established through low correlations between the constructs and it is evident, when the correlation between factors was lower than 0.8. Thus, discriminate validity is achieved as the correlation coefficients ranging from 0.06 to 0.66. For a rigorous test of discriminate validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct was computed and found to be greater than the squared correlation between that construct and any other constructs in the model. In conclusion, it is reasonable to claim that all the measures used in the study possess adequate psychometric properties.

5 DISCUSSION OF RESULT

This study concentrated more on the tourist who comes to Malaysia to consume Medical service in Malaysia. The result of the study was to determine factors that contributed to the destination brand positioning. Apart of that the study will find the solution on positioning destination brand on medical tourism in Malaysia. The significant of this study is to help Medical Tourism Industry in Malaysia in competing with the ASIAN country.

REFERENCES

- Kuusik, A., Tiru, M., & Varblane, U. 2011. "Innovation in destination Marketing: The use of passive mobile positioning for the segmentation of repeat visitors in Estoni." *Baltic Journal of Management* Vol. 6, No. 3, 2011, pp. 378–399 q Emerald Group Publishing Limited 1746-5265 DOI 10.1108/17465261111168000
- E. Martinez and Y. Polo, 2008. Effect of brand extension strategy on brand image: A comparative study of the UK and Spanish markets. *International Marketing Review* Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 107–137, 2008.
- E. Peter and N. Swati, 2010. "The competitive challenge of emerging markets: the case of medical tourism" *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 2011 pp. 329-350 q Emerald Group Publishing Limited 1746-8809 DOI 10.1108/17468801111170347
- Hem, L.E. & Iversen, N.M. 2004. How to Develop a Destination Brand Logo: A Qualitative and Quantitative Approach. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 4(2). Taylor & Francis.
- Kangas, B. 2007, "Hope from abroad in the international medical travel of Yemeni patients", *Anthropology & Medicine*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 293–305.
- Keller, K.L. 1993. "Conceptualising, measuring and managing customer-based brand equity", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 57, pp. 1–2.
- Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., Saunders, J. & Wong, V. (1999). *Principles of Marketing* (Second European Ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall
- LaMalfa, K. 2008, "The positive economics of customer engagement", available at: www.allegiance.com/library.php (accessed 16 December 2008).

- Martinez, E. and Pina, J.M. 2003, "The negative impact of brand extensions on parent brand image", *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 12, No. 7, pp. 432–48.
- Mueller, H., Kaufmann, E.L. 2001, "Wellness tourism: market analysis of a special health tourism segment and implications for the hotel industry", *Journal of Vocation Marketing*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 5–17.
- Musa, R., Putit, L., Naziman, Y. H. N. M., & Husin, N. 2011. Investigating the Impact of Destination Image on Total Tourists' Experience (TTE) and Destination Loyalty: Using Structural Equation Modelling Approach. Paper presented at the International Conference on Business, Engineering and Industrial Applications (ICBEIA), Langkawi.
- Ross, K. 2001, "Health tourism: an overview", available at: www.hospitalitynet.org/news/4010521.search?query=%22health+tourism%22a (accessed 20 January 2012).
- Seow, J. 2010. Challenges To Medical Tourism. Retrieved from <http://www.marketingmagazine.com.my/online-edition/challenges-to-medical-tourism> (accessed 20 January 2012).
- Smith, K. 2008, "Medical tourism: for richer or poorer", University of Auckland, New Zealand, paper presented at Ownership & Appropriation, a Joint Conference of the ASA, the ASAANZ and the AAS.
- Mascarenhas, O. A., Kesavan R., and Bernacchi, M., 2006 "Lasting customer loyalty: a total customer experience approach", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. Vol. 23, No. 7, pp. 97–405.
- Stanford A Westjohn, Nitish Singh, and Peter Magnusson 2011. Responsiveness to Global and Local Consumer Culture Positioning: A Personality and Collective Identity Perspective. *Journal of International Marketing*. Ahead of Print. doi: 10.1509/jim.10.0154.

Strategies for improving leisure spaces position with an emphasis on urban regeneration: A case study of Ghaytariyeh neighborhood, Tehran

A. Pourahmad, A. Hosseini & H. Nasiri

University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

ABSTRACT: Among the main features of urban regeneration is the creation of leisure spaces taking into account the role of culture and utilization of historical and cultural values as resources for creation of such spaces. These spaces in blight regions are considered as inherent goals and in the form of an extensive regeneration projects. This study codifies optimum strategies to improve role of leisure spaces taking theoretical approach for urban regeneration in blight texture of Gheydariyeh in Tehran. To this end, previous literature were reviewed and survey studies were used for data gathering. Results showed that failing to take into account several importance aspects will result in variety of damages. Different entities such as public sector, NGOs and citizen must play a role in decision making and planning for development of leisure facilities.

Keywords: Leisure spaces, urban regeneration, blight texture, culture, Gheydariyeh neighborhood, Tehran

1 INTRODUCTION

Recent decades are characterized with fundamental changes in urban live and meaning of work, settlement, leisure. As a vital necessity for human societies, leisure spaces are one of main issues for plan makers and managers. A common land use in urban area is leisure spaces.

When it comes to leisure, people have more freedom and option. It can create culture and reveal people's identity (Parker, 1976). To express its importance, leisure is resembled by researchers as cultural mirror of society and resocialization. That is, cultural existence and identity is based on amount of leisure time the member of society enjoy (Pieper, 2009). From economic standpoint, it results in higher performance and production, from social viewpoint, it stops social disorders, and from political viewpoint it prevents political crises and social unrest. Finally psychologically leisure activities can results in mental health and guarantees people's alacrity (Keymanesh, 1999).

There is a shortage of leisure activities in blight and old textures of Tehran. Following gradual development and evolution, the texture is now surrounded by the age of technology. Once, it was logically and hierarchically functional at the time of development but nowadays the texture fail to cope with modern demands of life neither functionally nor structurally (Habibi & Maghsoudi, 2011). To meet modern life necessities which will result information of new urban relation or redefinition of an ancient city, interventional strategy such as development of spatial organization is under consideration.

Regeneration through creating new urban space and provision of better services is aimed to answer modern demands while preserving spatial characteristics of old textures. Therefore, to avert more depreciation of old neighborhoods and enliven the texture, modern necessities must be provided and new urban space must be defined. This will result in new urban space with fundamental similarities with old urban space and difference in substantive and meaning (Habibi & Maghsoudi, 2011). When necessities are provided for a neighborhood, what remains to create an urban space is to spot needs and take measure in observation of applicable standards.

Urban recreation deals with urban function, reciprocal effects of resources and many other dynamics. It is an answer to challenges and opportunities in declining space. As primary needs for creation of successful and creative space, urban infrastructures are first to be dealt with by regeneration plans. The plan may include provision of leisure facilities, transportation and intelligent infrastructures. While economic and financial advantages are taken into account, cultural approach based on urban regeneration projects are featured with fast capital return and profoundly affect the neighborhoods through the creation of specific attraction for communities (Sehizadeh & Izadi, 2005). In this way, more emphasis is put on role of art, culture and leisure time as an essential element of urban regeneration, while new viewpoint about economic benefits results in of special approaches regarding urban regeneration whether theoretically and practically.

Faced with many challenges, blight texture of Gheydariyeh with high social level suffers from low

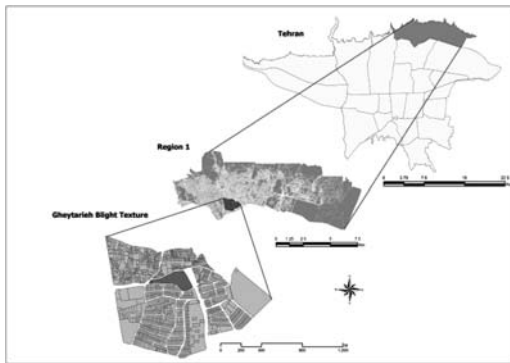


Figure 1. Position of blight texture of Gheydariyeh in Tehran.



Figure 2. Gheydariyeh blight texture expansion process from 1946 to present.

social, economic and structures indices. The neighborhood is in disharmony with the surroundings. Neighborhoods around old texture of Gheydariyeh are well developed with all kind of leisure facilities. However, negative perception of local communities regarding population of the old neighborhood has made them reluctant to use the facilities. The result is discrimination in access to urban services rooted in different social level, which consequently many social and cultural disorders are expected. This paper aims to find solutions to improve leisure space of the neighborhood emphasizing on regeneration of urban blight texture.

2 CASE STUDY

As one of the oldest neighborhoods of Tehran city with long, the blight texture of the neighborhood is part of the history, Gheydariyeh was one of peripheral villages of the capital which was gradually mixed with developing texture of Tehran region in one of the city (Figure 1). Formation of the texture triggered in 1946. Also in 1979 the neighborhood was quite developed at that age and no free space was left undeveloped. Texture of the neighborhood is remained intact until 2012. The only change is the increase of density of the texture in height and area. Figure 2 illustrates development process of the texture.

The neighborhood is expanded in an area of 4.85 hectare. Relative increase in density or gross density of population is evident in emergence of residential building blocks, with top density of 960 individuals per hectare. Taller buildings and relative small living spaces as major feature of recent urban development is the main cause of this difference.

As the major element in the texture, residential usage consumes 58.3% of total area. On street side there is only enough space to run a fast food business and of course in long run the small businesses and shops have to change into residential space (Hosseini, 2011). Considering the immense role of residential usages, and high unity among the community members and great sense of enthusiasm for their neighborhood, it is essential to solve the great shortage of

leisure spaces for the neighborhood and preservation of social identity of the texture.

3 METHODOLOGY

Taking into account the subject (improvement of leisure space for blight texture of Gheydariyeh), literature search were carried out for data gathering along with field studies, surveying and, interviewing experts. The questionnaire for this study was developed using Delphi method.

The respondents for this study were divided into two groups;

- A: managers and experts in related fields of urban blight textures and municipality experts with 17 questionnaires;
- B: academic experts with 15 questionnaires. To determine sample size, snowball technique was applied. The technique entails with asking academicians and other experts to introduce knowledgeable and experienced individual in the fields. Afterward, SWOT matrix was used to obtain the strategy through ST, WO, ST and WT strategies.

4 RESULTS

Internal and external factors affecting current leisure spaces were identified and surveyed using SWOT analysis. The factors were determined through interview, Delphi group questionnaire and surveying the texture (Table 1).

SWOT (Opportunities, weaknesses, strengths and threats) was utilized to identify internal weakness and strengths and external opportunities and threat (Halla, 2007; Noori et al, 2007). The logic of the approach is that the effective strategy must maximize opportunities and strengths of system and minimize weaknesses and threats (Amin et al, 2011, 335; Pearce & Robinson 2005).

Internal factors

Strengths

- S1. Barren lands to be used for leisure purposes
- S2. Not traffic problem in streets
- S3. High enthusiasm regarding the neighborhood
- S4. Short distance between residential unit in business and service center areas to tendency to pedestrian to access the areas
- S5. Proper geographical position (good climate and landscape)
- S6. Vicinity to Gheyariyeh Park (region scale park)

Weaknesses

- W1. Incompatibility of organic texture and surrounding area from cultural viewpoint
- W2. Lack of decent continuous pedestrian, required facilities like marking and traffic lights
- W3. Poor urban perspective and disharmony in width and length of blocks due to organic form of the texture
- W4. Reluctance to interaction among residents of Gheyariyeh neighborhood and old region residence in sharing leisure spaces
- W5. Discrimination in access to urban services in surrounding areas due to different social level
- W6. Lack of knowledge regarding citizenship rights
- W7. Lack of urban furniture
- W8. Lack of shopping center in the neighborhood
- W9. Low social position and low social self-esteem

External factors

Opportunities

- O1. Access to service, transportation and business facilities in surrounding region
- O2. Complex structure of active urban system and urban managers attention to nature of the texture
- O3. Role of NGOs and other non-government in management and planning
- O4. Emphasize on social values of society based on hierarchy of value
- O5. Tendency to renew the blight texture
- O6. Landscape view
- O7. Emphasize on cultural, artistic, sport and leisure spaces in blight texture and definition of deadlines in the 5th national development plan act

Threats

- T1. Ambiguity in urban developing regulations and codes regarding urban perspective organization
 - T2. Deserted historical important structures
 - T3. Absence of supervising institution for uncontrolled development in historical texture
 - T4. Threat of cutting trees down for developing purposes
 - T5. Failing to take into account public rights in subway station expanse
 - T6. Negative presumption regarding residents in the texture by communities in Gheyariyeh neighborhoods
 - T7. Anti-social behaviors
-

Strategies are designed to achieve better results. Major parts of academic planning research in organizations are rooted in scientific reasoning and conceptual aspect especially (Kordnaej et al, 2010). Adopting proper strategy in this study may help in positioning leisure facilities and identify essential modification in

SO strategies

- SO1-** Creation and development of leisure and public spaces with local functions relative to regulations and codes to create functionality and efficiency in the texture (S1-S4-S5-O1-O6-O7)
- SO2-** Improving quality of life in neighborhood and communities through creating sense of being belonged and common goals through common experience, recreational and sport activities (S3-S6-O4)

ST strategies

- ST1-** Creation decent pedestrian between the blight texture and surround neighborhood (S2-S4-T6)
- ST2-** Renewal of old structures and land use change for leisure and cultural centers (S3-T2-T3-T7)

WO strategies

- WO1-** Emphasize on urban perspective by urban planners and managers, also better urban furniture, sidewalks and deter design in the texture (W2-W3-W7-O2-O3-O5)
- WO2-** Sharing leisure facilities through cultural solution to improve social position of the population (W1-W4-W5-W6-O4-O7)
- WO3-** Establishment of shopping center using transportation network and pedestrian (W2-W8-O1-O7)

WT strategies

- WT1-** Creation of leisure and public spaces, common programs and spatial and structure connection to improve interaction in the neighborhood (W4-T1-T6)
- WT2-** Improving public information services, supporting talents by establishment of libraries, and local cultural centers (W6-W9-T1)
- WT3-** Codification of transparent regulations to preserve environment and guarantee of permanent development and convenience (W6-T1-T4-T5)
-

facilities and services. Strategies tell us how to establish relation between internal and external factors and adopt policies to utilize such factors (Nohegar et al, 2009).

Based on status of the system, there are four groups of strategies with different interaction level:

- SO:** utilization of strengths improves usage of opportunities.
- ST:** use strengths to separation threats.
- WO:** reduction of weaknesses by using opportunities.
- WT:** avoid threats and reduce weaknesses.

Table 2 lists effective strategies to improve leisure facilities in blight texture of Gheyariyeh neighborhood in four different sectors. Each strategy is resemblance of factors in codification of the strategy.

5 DISCUSSION

Many works on leisure times tend to focus on effect or relation between a variable and leisure time. For instance, Cheng & Tsaur (2012) discussed the relationship between serious leisure characteristics and

recreation involvement, Mottiar & Walsh (2012) studied leisure space reflecting changing city demography, and Aitchison (1997, 93) worked on feminist reflections. Emphasizing role of leisure education on living quality as implication for tourism economies, Henderson (2007) argued that demands for leisure activities, benefits of local residences and quality of life must be taken into account along with development of tourism economy. Equal chances for citizens and visitor is expected as a result. Other studies on leisure activities focus on perception of a group of people and their reaction to leisure spaces (Konlaan et al, 2002; Parr & Lashua, 2004; Craig & Mullan, 2012; Harinen et al, 2012). Relationship between geography and leisure research is well established (Carlson, 1980; Barbier, 1984; Mowl and Turner, 1995, Duffield, 2010). In the new cultural geography, Aitchison (1999) emphasized on the relationship between spatiality of leisure, gender and sexuality and the role of space in geography of leisure time behaviour was pointed out by Crouch (2000) and Kreisel (2004).

In fact, majority of the researches in this field were conducted when recreational facilities and users (human) were available and the main purpose of studying mutual relation was social-behavioral or geographical viewpoints. There are studies about land use planning of recreational facilities, though mainly focused on new cities (Wezenaar, 1999) rather blight textures.

The main challenge in this case study was lack of any recreational facilities. Urban regeneration intervention approach in the strategic planning framework was applied considering the blight texture. Taking retrospect viewpoint and avoiding modification of historical identify of the past periods, the approach tries to create new identity relative to lifestyle of the citizen. This, for blight texture of Gheyariyeh is new spaces for leisure activities. Environmental stability is guaranteed owing to involvement, comprehensive policy making, appreciation of heritage and preservation of historic building as ruling approach in urban regeneration. In fact, differentiating factor in this work is utilization of strategic planning using SWOT analytical model to improve position of leisure spaces, as it is a systematic method for decision making and carrying out activities for shaping a system, application and causes. Moreover, it helps spotting threats and opportunities and redefining weaknesses and strengths to measure status – social, economic, cultural, environmental and political – Optimal strategies for directing and direct control on the system.

6 CONCLUSION

The main feature of regeneration is development of leisure space facilities as sources for development and improvement of such spaces for citizens. In fact, cultural, art and leisure centers power urban regeneration movement. Recently, there has been emphasis for blight urban textures.

One result of development of leisure spaces is more welfare and convenience for citizens in neighborhoods. Easy access to leisure facilities for all (inside/outside neighborhood) with emphasize on blocking vehicle access (proper access to local services) is an opportunity to improve civil relations between citizen of neighborhood and other communities based on social position and value principles per se. By attending these spaces, for instance, resident of neighborhoods surrounding Gheyariyeh may change their perception regarding citizen of blight texture of Gheyariyeh. Social security, improvement of life quality and citizen strive to improve quality of their life following interaction with other neighborhoods are some of advantages of the process. The neighborhood has good potential for children activities and provides ground for leisure, recreational and sport activities for youngsters.

REFERENCES

- Aitchison, C. 1997 A decade of compulsory competitive tendering in UK sport and leisure services: some feminist reflections. *Leisure Studies*, 16 (2), 85–105
- Aitchison, C. 1999 New cultural geographies: the spatiality of leisure, gender and sexuality. *Leisure Studies*, 18 (1), 19–39
- Amin, S.H.; Razmi, J. & Zhang, G. 2011 Supplier selection and order allocation based on fuzzy SWOT analysis and fuzzy linear programming. *Expert Systems with Applications*, 38 (1), 334–342
- Army Geography Origination, 2012 Aerial Photos 1946 & 1969, Tehran
- Barbier, B., 1984. Geography of tourism and leisure. *Geographical Journal* 9 (1), 5–10
- Carlson, A.W. 1980 Geographical research on international and domestic tourism. *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 1 (1), 149–60.
- Cheng, T.M. & Tsaur, S.H. 2012 The relationship between serious leisure characteristics and recreation involvement: a case study of Taiwan's surfing activities. *Leisure Studies*, 31 (1), 53–68
- Craig, L. & Mullan, K. 2012 Shared parent-child leisure time in four countries. *Leisure Studies*, 31 (2), 211–229
- Crouch, D. 2000 Places around us: embodied lay geographies in leisure and tourism. *Leisure Studies*, 19 (2), 63–76
- Duffield, B.S. 1983 IGU Commission of the Geography of Tourism and Leisure. *The Professional Geographer*, 35 (3), 355–356
- Habibi, S.M. & Maghsoudi, M. 2011 *Urban Renovation?*. 6th, Tehran, University of Tehran Press.
- Halla, F. 2007 A SWOT Analysis of Strategic Urban Development Planning: The case of Dar es Salaam city in Tanzania. *Habitat International*, 31 (1), 130–142
- Harinen, P.M.; Honkasalo, M.V.; Ronkainen, J.K. & Suurpää, L.E. 2012 Multiculturalism and young people's leisure spaces in Finland: perspectives of multicultural youth. *Leisure Studies*, 31 (2), 177–191
- Henderson, K.A. 2007 *Quality of Life and Leisure Education: Implications for Tourism Economies*. *World Leisure Journal*, 49 (2), 88–93
- Hosseini, A. 2011 *Feasibility Study of Leisure Spaces with Emphasis on Urban Old Texture Regeneration in Gheyariyeh Neighborhood*. M.A Thesis. University of Tehran

- Keymanesh, Kh. 1999 Leisure and identify ways to fill it. Qom, Published Daroshogholain
- Konlaan, B.B.; Theobald, H. & Bygren, L.O. 2002 Leisure time activity as a determinant of survival: a 26-year follow-up of a Swedish cohort. *Public Health*, 116, 227–230
- Kordnaiej, A.; Azar, A. & Lahiji, N.N. 2010 Formulating the Effective Organizational Strategy in Public Sector: Case study in the Islamic Republic of Iran's Customs (IRIC). *The Economic Research*, 10 (2), 91–114
- Kreisel, W. 2004 Geography of leisure and tourism research in the German-speaking world: three pillars to progress. *Tourism Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment*, 6 (2), 163–185
- Mottiar, Z. & Walsh, L. 2012 Leisure space reflecting changing city demography: tracking the phase of an international quarter development in Parnell Street East, Dublin. *Leisure Studies*, 31 (1), 21–32
- Mowl, G. & Turner, J. 1995 Women, gender, leisure and place: towards a more 'humanistic' geography of women's leisure. *Leisure Studies* 14 (2), 102–16
- Nohegar, A. Hosseinzadeh, M. & Pirasteh, A. 2009 Geography and Development Iranian Journal, 15 (3), 151–172
- Noori, J.; Abbaspour, M. & Kamalim, M. 2007 Strategic environmental evaluation policies for industrial development in Iran Using the approach of strategic SWOT analysis, *Journal of Environmental Science and Technology*, 29 (2), 25–38
- Parker, S.R. 1976 *The Sociology of Leisure*. Allen and Unwin, London, UK
- Parr, M.G. & Lashua, B.D. (2004) What is Leisure? The Perceptions of Recreation Practitioners and Others. *Leisure Sciences: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 26 (1), 1–17
- Pearce, J.A., & Robinson, R. B. 2005 *Strategic Management: Formulation, Implementation, and Control*. Publisher McGraw-Hill/Irwin
- Pieper, J. 2009 *Leisure: The Basis of Culture and the Philosophical Act*. Ignatius Press
- Sehizadeh, M. & Izadi, M. 2005 Conservation and Development: Complementary or Conflicting Approaches?, *Abadi Journal*, 4 (10), 12–21
- Tehran Municipality, 2012 *A city map of Tehran*. Tehran
- Wezenaar, H.J.A. 1999 Leisure land use planning and sustainability in the new town of Almere, The Netherlands. *Tourism Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment*, 1 (4), 460–476.

This page intentionally left blank

The role of security in development of tourism

Abdolhossein Daneshvarinasab

Bardsir Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bardsir, Iran

ABSTRACT: Tourism development is one of the most important criteria of social, political, and economic improvement in the world. Due to the role that tourism can play in this particular situation especially in Iran, it is important to pay much attention to its necessity and emergency. Successful tourism is underlined in conformity and suitable functions of some factors which have integrated relations. One of the most important factors is security of tourist and their destinations. Nowadays, security is one of the fundamental factors in conduct of tourism development strategy in the world. There is a significant relation between tourism, stability, development, and security, and any insecurity and violence can be lead to irreparable detriments in variety levels to this industry. The aim of this article is to examine the role of security in development of sustainable tourism, and the main constraint in development of this industry in Iran. At the end, some implication to development of this industry will be presented.

Keywords: Tourism, security, tourism security

1 INTRODUCTION

Safety and security has been identified as one of the most important factors that would encourage the tourism activities in the new millennium. Tourism is highly sensitive to perceptions of danger and lack of safety and security. It is in this context that lack of safety and security and incidences of crime represent a more serious threat to travel and tourism than any other negative factor. Safety and security are vital to providing quality in tourism. More than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors.

Security refers to a perceived and/or actual invulnerability of tourists considering visiting a given destination. It deals with manmade potential or actual activities that risk the lives of tourists and/or their possessions. Activities that might jeopardize tourists may include crime, social or political unrest, terrorist activity and/or warfare. Security in tourism has been regarded as one of the major concerns of both tourists and industry (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006).

2 SECURITY AND TOURISM

To formulate and construct the basis for a theory of tourism security it is necessary, first to define the major concepts that derived from the relationship between tourism and security incidents. So we define the relevant concepts and their corresponding variables grouped by common subjects. In recent years, the theoretical discourse on the relationship between tourism

and security has been conducted around three main groups of concepts and their derived variables. These groups are (Hall & Timothy, 2003):

1. Concepts relating to the nature of tourism related security incidents and crises (including types, causes, mode of operation, motives, targets, etc.). The first and perhaps the most fundamental concept to be discussed under this group is the type of security incident that affects tourism. This concepts centrality stems from its substantial influence on its potential impact on tourism. So far, the literature dealing with these interrelations identified four major types of security incidents that triggered some form of negative impact on the host communities, the tourism industry, and the tourists themselves. The four possible generators of a given security situation that might harmfully impinge on the tourism system are: Crime-related incidents, terrorism, war and civil/political unrest.

Crime-related incidents can be in the form of Theft, Robbery, Rape, Murder, Piracy, and Kidnapping. These crime-related incidents may take place in various scenarios, such as crimes committed by local residents against tourists; crimes committed by tourists against local residents; crimes committed by tourists against other tourists; and organized crime against tourism enterprises.

Terrorism can take the form of, Domestic terrorism, International terrorism and Cross-border terrorism. The relationship between tourism and terrorism can be manifested in three possible scenarios: Terrorism that is aimed at civil targets yet sometimes victimizes tourists as well, Terrorism

that is directed at economic targets that are functionally related to tourism, and finally, terrorism that targets tourism and/or tourists since both are regarded as soft targets with relatively high-impact media coverage.

Wars, either full-scale or limited to a given region, have also had major impacts on tourist demand, both for the involved countries as well as on global tourist flows. The outbreak of wars, unlike terror activities, tends to have a negative tourism impact on larger areas and for a longer period of time. Historically, the types of wars that have been found to have an impact on tourism are: Cross-border wars, Trans-border wars, Wars of attrition and Civil wars. Civil and/or political unrest can be in the form of: Violent demonstrations, Uprising and Riots (Mansfeld, 1996).

The above incidents have caused major declines in tourism demand in various parts of the world. Whether it is a violent demonstrations against the Group of Seven nations (G7) in several different venues, the uprising of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, or riots in the Chiapas region of Mexico, such incidents paralyzed or severely impacted the local tourism industry as a result of trip cancellation behavior and a shift of bookings to safer alternative destinations.

Empirical evidence so far shows that the higher the frequency of such incidents, the greater the negative impact on tourist demand. A high frequency of security incidents causes changes in tourists booking and cancellation behavior, selective spatial behavior in the affected destination, and other tourism demand characteristics. As previously indicated, to predict the impacts that security incidents have on tourism, it is imperative to understand the motives behind such incidents. An in depth study of these motives could provide valuable information on potential targets. A greater understanding of this cause and effect relationship can lead to more effective contingency and mitigation plans for affected destinations. Thus, the variables most often used to detect goals and targets are: Types of (declared or undeclared) motives such as Political, Religious, Social, Economic, and Hostility to tourists. Types of (declared or undeclared) targets: Tourists on the way to and from their travel destinations, Tourists vacationing in a given travel destination, Tourism and hospitality installations and facilities, Strategic and non-strategic transportation facilities serving tourists and Public and private services and businesses also serving tourists.

2. Impacts of Security Incidents. The accumulated evidence throughout the world shows that the impacts of security incidents on the tourism industry, the destination, the local community, and the tourists are, in most cases, negative and multifaceted. Consequently, impact concepts are grouped here into six subgroups depicting different facets of the impact of security situations on tourism. These are: Impact on Tourists' Behavior,

Media Behavior, Impact on the Destination Itself, Impact on the Tourism Industry, Impact on Host Governments and Impact on Governments of Generating Markets (Tarlow & Muehsam, 1996).

3. Impact on Tourists' Behavior. In most cases, security incidents cause changes in tourists' perception of risk, and thus are always translated into travel decisions. These could be in the form of cancellations of booked trips, avoiding booking trips to affected destinations, or, for those already in the affected destination, moving to a safer place or evacuating the destination and returning home. Such decisions are based on a variety of considerations and circumstances that will be discussed later on. However, at this stage it is important to note that measuring tourists' behavior following a major change in the security level of a given destination is imperative in order to formulate crisis management plans. The most frequent variables used in pursuit of understanding tourists' reaction to changing security situations are: Intention to travel to affected destination; Actual cancellations; Actual bookings; Actual avoidance of unsafe destinations; Risk-taking tendency of various tourist segments; Change in use of risk-related travel information prior to destination choice; Perceived vulnerability to specific types of crimes; Characteristics of tourist image projection; Familiarity with safe and unsafe areas within a given destination; and Involvement in illicit activities (Hall & Timothy, 2003).

3 SECURITY AND TOURISM IN IRAN

Lack of security is one of the most important factor causes to decline tourism industry in each country. Obviously, if the borderline and internal security of country increased, so tourists' tendencies will be increased as well. In other words, by increasing financial and living insecurity, the tendencies and interests of tourists will be increased progressively. For instance, in recent years, happened insecurity such as kidnapping and hostaging tourists in some countries (like Philippines and Yemen) influenced considerably on decreasing the number of entered tourists to these countries

Providing and ensuring external, internal and national security inclusively is the first step toward improving tourism industry in Iran. To achieve this aim, following establishing comprehensive security in the country, this news should be publicized to all tourists worldwide via applying communication and international media in order to remove the incorrect image about insecurity in Iran and eliminate the obstacles toward developing tourism industry.

Scholars believed that concepts of security and security sense are different. There may be security in a society, but there may not be felt this security. Therefore, it is required to know whether tourists have

security in Iran and also whether they feel this security, fundamentally, if there is insecurity or insecurity sense, what factors are effective on it. Based on positive results of travelling, tourists can find out how much of his concerns and fears are noticeable and how much of them are influenced by advertisement and his mind presuppositions. According to the experience of involved people in Iran tourism industry, it is indicated that most tourists travelling to Iran have sense of insecurity at arrival time but at the end of their trip they believe that Iran is a safe place.

National and internal security is the most important factor in developing tourism in each country which is sought to match with the specification of tourism in other leading countries. Nowadays, some of experts believe that tourists can be attracted to Iran by taking anti-tension policies continually in foreign relations and reducing international sensitivity against Iran. In this regard, it is necessary to advertise out of boundaries about tourism attractions of Iran desirably, and facilitate the procedure of travelling and returning foreign tourists. Iran has many cultural ecotourism attractions which this privilege should be used for its economic and cultural development. Economic growth completely is a security-oriented phenomenon, and tourism industry is one of economic sectors which is highly vulnerable against lack of security, because there is a defined relationship between tourism and stability and development of security. Experts believe that there is sufficient security for tourists in Iran, but the major problem in attracting tourists is lack of advertisement from Iran and ill advertisement from other countries against Iran.

4 MAJOR OBSTACLES REGARDING DEVELOPING TOURISM IN IRAN

Despite of affluence and cultural variety, natural and ecotourism attractions of Iran, but it has not obtained appropriate position in tourism industry in comparison with other countries. There are some problems and bottlenecks referred as below:

- i. Lack of a comprehensive and strategic program, and also because goals and policies for Iran and global travelling have not been specified in an operational plan such as Lack of an organization entitles tourism or culture and tourism in Iran- Recognizing and documentation of cultural heritage in Iran- quantitative and qualitative enhancing of cultural heritage- focusing just on religious tourism such as hotel servants, agency personnel, and tourism guides.
- ii. Lack of experienced and specialized human resources for doing tourism affairs in Iran and global travelling agencies, and unaware and inexperienced working personnel in tourism institutes.
- iii. Because of non-profitability in tourism industry and insufficient support of government regarding security of tourists, in this circumstance, private

sectors are unwilling to invest in tourism industry. Lack of necessary facilities for private sector Such as lack of long and low rate loan, and government ownership of tourism facilities are some examples.

- iv. Taking a security view to tourism issue in Iran such as uncultured encounter with some tourist especially from religious conservative pressure groups. Some of the politician evaluate tourism and tourists with a negative view and suppose that tourism demolish the local cultures in the country.

5 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Although Iran is among 10 top countries in regard of having historical, ancient, and tourism places, but it is not placed in a proper position in respect of foreign exchange earnings from tourism which indicates that related systems to tourism industry are weak in Iran. Security or security sense of tourists are the most important factors effective on tourism industry in each country.

Thus, establishing and ensuring external, internal and national security inclusively is the first step toward improving tourism industry in Iran. To achieve this aim, following establishing comprehensive security in the country, this news should be publicized to all tourists worldwide via applying communication and international media in order to remove the incorrect image about insecurity in Iran and eliminate the obstacles toward developing tourism industry.

Considering the role of security in developing tourism, the below suggestions are recommended to upgrade and improve internal and external tourism status:

- i. Presenting a proper and comprehensive definition about tourism industry and the desired goals, in which global and Iran travelling are not threats and tourists are not threats as well but are regarded as chances.
- ii. Extensive and inclusive planning in tourism sector via cooperation with all related sectors such as government and private sector.
- iii. Expanding borderline and internal security. The borders of Iran with Pakistan and Afghanistan and Iraq are unsafe, some countries suggest to their citizenships to avoid to these borders. They also prevent their citizenship to avoid trafficking in Bam and Bandar Abbas Street (Abbas Port). This is in some wise because of expanded and unresidential areas between the Iran's borders and other's borders which suggest insecurity.
- iv. Preventing internal events and occurrences against international tourists. Kidnapping and murdering are some threats to tourist which have occurred in the past. Some cases such as hostaging Japanese tourist in south eastern of Iran and killing French tourist in the central of Iran are very few but it should be eradicated and with presenting some proper approaches it can be completely removed.

- v. Presenting some approaches to reduce the related political problems.
 Securing tourist's safety on uncrowded and low traffic hours in historical contexts.
- vi. Enjoying other countries' experience especially successful countries in tourism industry.

REFERENCES

Hall, C. M., & Timothy, J. D. 2003. *Safety and Security in Tourism, relationships, management, and marketing*: Haworth Hospitality Press.

- Mansfeld, Y. 1996. Wars, tourism and the Middle East factor. In A. Pizam & Y. Mansfeld (Eds.), *Tourism, Crime and International Security Issues*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Mansfeld, Y., & Pizam, A. 2006. *Tourism, Security and Safety, From Theory to Practice*: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Tarlow, P., & Muehsam, M. 1996. Theoretical aspect of crime as they impact the tourism industry. In I. A. A. P. a. Y. Mansfeld (Ed.), *Tourism, Crime and International Security Issues*. Chichester: Wiley.

Hot sleeping beauties: Touristic development potential of hot thermal springs in West Malaysia

Karl Wagner

University of Applied Sciences Rosenheim, Germany
Universiti Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Nurbaidura Salim & Badaruddin Mohamed

Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Hot spring water is believed to have healing power derived from its valuable mineral contents. To date, 79 localities of thermal springs in Malaysia including 20 hot springs which located in Perak have been reported. Based on a recent exploratory study, hot springs in Peninsular Malaysia are seen to have good potential to be developed into successful tourism destinations. Currently, the most visited hot springs in West Malaysia are eight fully-fledged locations without realizing there are at least 20 more potential areas to be developed or redeveloped. The authors have devised a benchmarking concept to learn from best practices of how to study the market, create a proper infrastructure, use the Japanese Onsen principles of hot springs balneology and practice hot springs management as eco-tourism. Implementing such a system, it is hoped that we can assist in developing some of the new and those unmaintained hot springs in West Malaysia to become successful tourism destinations.

Keywords: thermal springs, eco-tourism, West Malaysia, tourism destination.

1 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is country with full idyllic tropical rainfall having a high potential including geothermal energy resources. In West Malaysia, thermal springs usually can be found along the Main Range Granite batholiths especially within major fault and shear zones. The research by ASEAN (2005) and Chow, Irawan & Fathaddin (2010) reveal that 61 hot springs have been discovered in Peninsular. Sitting on a silent part of the South-East Asian branch of the ring of fire, the existence of the thermal springs is related to tectonic activities. Some of the hot springs turned into spas are abandoned and the number of visitors to these places is restricted to a few. Some of the hot springs located off the main roads and in the jungle are waiting to be explored further.

Hot springs turned into spas can bring lots of benefits for visitors. Their development would be profitable if the places were properly marketed and managed resulting in attracting visitors. In Japan, a country with a legacy of hot springs culture, visiting its destination is one of the pertinent market niches for its tourism industry. However, this situation is in contrast to Malaysia since hot spring development is quite limited and some of the sites are not well maintained. Currently, the most visited hot springs in West Malaysia are eight fully-fledged locations such as Tambun, Sungai Klah, Ulu

Legong, Kg. La, Pedas, Gadek Jasin, Labis and Air Hangat Village while in the vicinity of human settlements we can find at least 20 more potential hot springs areas to be developed and redeveloped.

By looking at the success of Japan's hot springs and those eight reference locations mentioned above, it is plain to see that there are clear patterns to turn thermal springs into successful tourism destinations. This paper intends to initiate a benchmarking concept to learn from the best practices of how to study the market and operation of hot springs especially in Peninsular Malaysia. Hence, the authors will take into account the Japanese Onsen principles as guidelines to develop or redevelop hot springs in Peninsular Malaysia.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Definition of hot springs*

There are various definitions of hot springs that can be found in the geological literature. For example, Allaby (2008) in his *Earth Science Dictionary* portrays hot spring as 'a continuous flow of hot water through a small opening on to the Earth's surface. The water is usually groundwater heated at the depth by hot rocks and recycled to the surface by convection'. Besides

that, Erfurt-Cooper and Cooper (2009) describe thermal springs as a naturally occurring water source that rises to the surface under pressure usually along fault lines or in the vicinity of active volcanic environments.

A hot spring is a spring that is produced by the emergence of geothermally heated groundwater from the Earth's crust. Hot springs are believed to have specific healing power derived from its natural minerals. Depending on the hot spring's nature, different minerals are dissolved in the water that gives it different health benefits, colours and even smells. Water pressure and buoyancy of the hot springs provide also beneficial features in stimulating the body.

There are geothermal hot springs in many locations all over the crust of the earth. As a geothermally heated natural spring with a water temperature of 5°C (10°F) or more above its surroundings, the temperature of hot springs can range from 10°C (50°F) to 100°C (212°F). According to the standard of the WHO (World Health Organization), the most suitable temperature for soaking or bathing is between 35°C (95°F) and 45°C (113°F).

2.2 Previous investigation of hot springs in Malaysia

Chow et al., (2010) stated that the first documented research of hot springs was conducted by Bott in 1890 in Malacca and Selangor. Bott gave an account of the occurrences, chemical composition of the hot water and gaseous discharges from these springs. The investigation later continued by Ho in 1979 who conducts a geothermometric research on hot springs in Perak and Kedah (Chow, et al., 2010). He measured the sub-surface temperature using chemical geothermometric measurements.

In 1990, Abdul Rashid conducted a regional research of 45 hot springs in Peninsular Malaysia. He conducted field measurements on the temperature, conductivity and pH water of these hot springs. Samples of water from these hot springs were collected and analysed for their chemical and physical properties in the laboratory. These results were compared with the quality of some commercial mineral water from France, Indonesia, Scotland and Malaysia with the aim of determining if the water from the hot springs could be commercially exploited as mineral water (Chow, et al., 2010).

2.3 Japanese onsen principles

Japanese perceived/pronounced hot spring as '*onsen*' which is often used to describe bathing facilities and inns around the hot springs. An onsen should contains at least one of the 19 designated chemical elements which includes radon and metabolic acid and be 25°C or warmer before it being reheated again. Its water is believed to have healing power that derived from its mineral content. Since Japan is one of the volcanic countries, there are many hot springs all over the country from north to south. Thermal springs can be found

in various places throughout Japan and it has becomes a popular culture for the Japanese to spend their leisure time visiting onsen. The Japanese believe that onsen is one of the suitable places for them to gather among friends and families since it provides such a relaxation when they want to relax from the hectic life of the major cities. Onsen which were traditionally used for public bathing places has now play an important role in directing Japanese domestic tourism. Mostly, hot springs in Japan are equipped with facilities and spas that not only woo domestic tourists but attract international visitors from all over the world to visit the natural legacy of hot springs.

3 METHODOLOGY

After an already conducted desk exploration that led to an in-depth study of the 61 hot springs mentioned above, remote sensing (by the interpretation of satellite images and aero-photographs) detected two fractured zones to enhance the existing geological map of West Malaysia (Wagner & Nawawi, 2012). This was base for on-site visits of 27 selected sites, as others are situated in the jungle or far away from significant human settlements. From the on-site tour, geochemical analysis of the water was made in order to gage and reconfirm their features by geochemical tests. An electricity study will find out in parallel whether or not some of the sites are interesting for power production or any other geothermal usages. Along with the geochemical analysis of the water samples, the reconnaissance report enables us to provide answers for our spa benchmarking.

This project is meant to furnish Tourism Malaysia, federal governments, communities and other stakeholders with information to assist respective owners to improve their services and make people getting aware of this slumbering beauty potential. Cascading the knowledge would surely help to attract more Malaysians and international visitors to consider this almost free-of-charge source to refuel their energy tank for wellness and better health.

4 FINDINGS

By surveying the hot springs areas in Peninsular Malaysia, the research team has received a clear picture about the abundance, temperature, water quality and surrounding of the respective areas. These results are not dwelled upon here further, as they are basically replicates of previous research that has been undertaken by Abdul Rashid (1991) and Chow et al (2010). Results of our study reveal that hot springs in Peninsular Malaysia can be divided into four in part overlapping categories as in Table 1 below:

As the team had not visited all hot springs, the undisclosed rest of locations might be mainly fall into category 3 or category 4. In order to conclude based

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
19 mainly undeveloped areas	8 highly developed hot springs areas, run in professional operation (fence, operation times, fees, etc)	15 areas with significant viable room for improvement	13 previously developed, but secluded or abandoned places with no evidence of a viability check in order to gauge their spa potential

Figure 1. Interpretive signboard about bathing technique.



Figure 2. Interpretive signboard about bathing technique.

on the results gained, we will elaborate on our findings further in the following part.

5 CONCLUSION

Based on the study, there are five recommendations that might be useful to develop hot springs into a successful tourism spa destination.

5.1 Create transparency of the whereabouts

So far, it is not clear for an approaching visitor where even most of the developed hot springs are located, unless the visitor has a local guide or stands in front of the entrance. There is no proper signage that guides the visitors to the spa's location. Some of the hot springs are not even listed in the map. Therefore, it took the teams hours to retrieve some locations. This gap of transparency could be closed by ample signboards and by link of Tourism Malaysia (MOTOUR) based on a web-based hot spring map for Peninsular Malaysia.

5.2 Assist visitors the right techniques of bath taking

Good informative brochures and signboards within the spa would give the visitors extra value as it not only creates their awareness and knowledge, but encourages them to enjoy the hot spring even more. A good hot spring management should assist visitors to gain insight of how to take a bath to get the best mileage in terms of health. The On Sen technique could be practiced on four different counts:

- a. Kaburu Yu
- b. Ofuro
- c. Utase Yu
- d. Ashi Yu

5.3 Provide proper infrastructures and facilities

One of the main stumbling blocks of rendering hot springs successful is not only the lack of information, but the missing infrastructures as well. It is important

to provide a protected area by fences and 24-hours guarding system. Furthermore, proper shower facilities and amenities for hygiene must be provided. Any spa that succeeds in a competitive market of other leisure activities requires attraction that creates the 'wow' factor. As state-of-the-art hot springs are all charging entrance fees between RM 2 and RM 15, it is expected that payment of considerable and still affordable levies will not be an issue. Only two of the visited places namely Sungkai Klah and La Hot Springs provide resorts to stay overnight for the visitors to relax after taking a bath and start the day anew with revamping one's energy tank the same way again.

5.4 Keep the natural legacy of hot springs

Redeveloping existing spa areas might also means retro fitting them back into their natural legacy. As the example of the Sungkai Klah hot spring area teaches us, there is no necessity to curb the hot spring by building artificial tubs and pools around the source. Heavy rain will spoil not only the original temperature, but also impact the virtues of the hot springs' healing features. Therefore, some hot springs reported to include egg boiling activities before the artificial pools were built are only memories of the past. Their websites indicating that visitors can bring their own eggs to use this kind of geothermal water energy to boil them are the only story-telling survivors of their lost heritage.

5.5 Business strategies for state-of-the-art hot springs

Finally, the usage of a spa should be counterbalanced by a cautiously done cold relaxation area with accessible rivers or pools to chill the body temperature. In countries of the Northern hemisphere, this part is a predominantly used strategy to strengthen the visitor's natural capability to defy influenza.

The difference between a state-of-the-art spa and an ordinary hot spring is not primarily based on the composition of the facilities provided, but it appeals

more to the unique concept and design of the place. Uniqueness of the architectural virtues of shaping a hot spring may attract flocks of tourists and encourage repeating visitation. In order to assist underdeveloped hot spring areas to attract visitors, detailed tailor-made studies should be undertaken. Once a shareholder has been allocated, a business plan could assist defining market needs, size and growth. Furthermore, from elaborations on benchmarking the target market, its owner could learn about the correct pricing. Usual financial projections such as Return of Investment (ROI), Break-Even Point, and Net Present Value (NPV) together with commercial risk analysis could complete the Financial Forecast of a prospective highly developed hot springs area. Last, but not least, considerations to commercialise could include benchmarks in terms of marketing, distribution network and strategic alliances such as a joint website with direct links to proposed hot springs tours.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Rashid Bachik. 1991. A Preliminary Study of The Water Quality and Flow of Thermal Springs in Peninsular Malaysia *Annual Report* (pp. 170–185).
- Allaby, M. 2008. *Oxford dictionary of earth sciences*: Oxford University Press.
- ASEAN Energy. 2005. Renewable Energy in ASEAN. (December). Retrieved from www.aseanenergy.org
- Chow, W. S., Irawan, S., & Fathaddin, M. T. 2010. *Hot Springs in the Malay Peninsular*: Paper presented at the Proceedings World Geothermal Congress 2010, Bali.
- Cohen, M., & Bodeker, G. 2008. Understanding the Global Spa Industry: Spa Management Retrieved from http://www.scribd.com/doc/78234603/7/Table-6-1-Example-of-a-Profit-and-Loss-Statement#outer_page_114
- Erfurt-Cooper, P., & Cooper, M. 2009. *Health and Wellness Tourism: Spas and Hot Springs*: Channel View Publications.
- Wikipedia. 2012. Hot Spring Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hot_spring

Tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience in Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia

S.E. Tan, Y.A. Aziz, K.W. Awang & S. Zaiton
Universiti Putra Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Tour guides provide services that enhance tourists' visiting experience. The current study aimed to determine the antecedents of tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience in the context of guided tour in Taman Negara National Park. The current study is formulated on the basis of propositions that relate tour guide performance, servicescape, tour guide satisfaction with guiding service, tourist satisfaction with servicescape, tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience and to observe if these constructs have any influence on tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience. Multiple regression analysis was employed to verify the relationships effect and revealed that tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience is dependent on the antecedents of tourist satisfaction with guiding service and servicescape. The findings implicate that tour guides and servicescape are able to affect tourist satisfaction with one another's services. Further studies can be conducted to discover other antecedents that may have effect on tourists' satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience.

Keywords: Tour guide, national park, tourist satisfaction, servicescape, service quality

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism in Malaysia is a lustrous industry which is growing at the average rate of 10% a year in its tourist arrival for the past decade as reported by (Tourism Malaysia, 2012). The robust growth of the industry is also visible in ecotourism and rural tourism, which are growing at a rate of 30% annually and thus, considered as the fastest growing tourism sectors (Chong, 2002; Ling, Abidin, Nair, Ramachandran & Shuib, 2011). The growth in the ecotourism sector can be attributed to the fact that Malaysia has numerous ecotourism sites such as marine parks, rainforest, rivers, caves and mountains. Some of these areas are gazetted to be national parks with the intention of protecting the natural environment, flora and fauna being damaged by development (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, 2006).

In recent years, the numbers of visitor arrivals in national parks are surging due to international award recognition of natural heritage sites and intensive marketing (Hasan, Saleh & Ibrahim, 1997). These increases are also creating job opportunities for tour guides because even though it is plausible for the tourists to visit without engaging the services of tour guides, but it is an undesirable choice for most tourists (Baum, 1993). Thus, this study was conducted in Taman Negara National Park (TNNP) with the intention to discover the effects of the tour guide and service setting constructs on tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience in national park.

The study particularly intended to address the relationships between tourist satisfaction, tour guide and service setting. And thus, its objectives are:

1. To identify the effects of tour guide performance on tourist satisfaction with: guiding service and servicescape.
2. To explore the effects of servicescape on tourist satisfaction with: servicescape and guiding service.
3. To investigate the relationships of tourist satisfaction with guiding service and servicescape on tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Service quality*

The notion of service quality is sought after to be achieved by service providers as recognition of excellent services which in return increase customer loyalty (Caruana, 2002). Previous studies on service quality had generally concentrated solely on the intangible services such as banking services (Parasuraman, Berry & Zeithaml, 1991), travel agents (Johns, Avci & Karatepe, 2004) and hospitality services (Farouk & Ryan, 1991) or only the tangible services such as recreation areas (Lee, 2010) and leisure settings (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). In a tour experience, tourists encountered both tangible services of

the visited area and the intangible services of the tour guides. For instance, tour guiding could only happen with a destination to promote or inform to tourists. Hence, there's a relationship between tour guide performances and service setting in effecting tourist overall satisfaction. However, despite the numerous studies, the effects of both tour guide performances and servicescape on tourist overall satisfaction were rarely studied.

2.2 Tour guide

Tour guides provides assistance, interpretation and mediation that helps tourists to appreciate the natural attractions (Weiler & Davis, 1993). And thus, tour guide services are important to enhance the tourist experience at national park. Additionally, the role of tour guide is noticeably important in Malaysia's national parks because the Ministry of Tourism (MOTOUR)* requires national parks' tour guides to obtain license to conduct guiding services. This is seen as a way to ensure the quality of the tour guides in national parks. Hence, it is vital to understand the expectations of tourists towards tour guides in order to provide satisfactory trip (Zhang & Chow, 2004). Besides that, tour guide has the skills to make tourists to be intrigued and awed by the attractions in the servicescape, which is a form of emotion impact that affects tourists' satisfaction (Mattila & Enz, 2002).

2.3 Overall tour guiding experience

Overall satisfaction of a particular service is based on multiple intangible and tangible service encounters provided by the service. In other words, overall satisfaction is a form of satisfaction that takes into the account all products, services and environment and thus, making it a construct of multi-dimensional attributes (Albayrak, Caber & Aksoy, 2010). This notion is strongly identical with the notion of overall tour guiding experience. In measuring the experience of tour guiding, there may be more than one aspect that make up this experience.

The inclusion of the construct of tourist satisfaction with servicescape is vital because the guiding service would not have happened if there is no destination or attractions to visit. Moreover, the image of a destination is closely related to the performance of tour guide in promoting the destination to tourists (Grönroos, 1978; Zhang & Chow, 2004).

Hence, based on the literature review, the hypotheses were proposed as follow:

- H1a: Tour guide performance has effect on tourist satisfaction with guiding service.
- H1b: Tour guide performance has effect on tourist satisfaction with servicescape.

*Ministry of Tourism Malaysia is mainly in charge of legislating tourism policy. It is also in charge of overseeing the implementation of National Tourism Policy. It is also known in its abbreviation form, MOTOUR.

- H2a: Servicescape has effect on tourist satisfaction with servicescape.
- H2b: Servicescape has effect on tourist satisfaction with guiding service.
- H3a: Tourist satisfaction with guiding service has effect on tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience.
- H3b: Tourist satisfaction with servicescape has effect on tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience.'

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

First, the questionnaire was developed using secondary data of past studies to create a list of attributes reflecting the performance of tour guides services (Black, Ham & Weiler, 2001; Zhang & Chow, 2004; Huang, Hsu & Chan, 2010), performance of TNNP servicescape (Bitner, 1992; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Lee & Chen, 2005; Chen, Hwang & Lee, 2006; Lee, 2010) and tourist satisfaction (Fornell *et al.*, 1996; Huang *et al.*, 2010). The measures used were derived from Huang *et al.* (2010) study whereby tour guide performance was measured based on attributes identified on past studies, service setting was measured based on the servicescape measurement while overall satisfaction measurement was based on the well established American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) framework. The scale used was 5-point Likert-type scale. On top of that, a copy of Bahasa Melayu translation of the questionnaire was done to address the Malay language speakers of the domestic tourists in the population studied. After establishing the relevant questions, the officers of Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), tourism academicians and peer reviews were obtained from lecturers and colleagues whereby substantial feedbacks were gained.

The second phase was conducting a pilot study through a face-to-face trial interview. The third phase was researchers conducting the actual survey with the help of park officers. Finally, the last phase was analyzing the data collected. The population identified for the study is domestic and international tourists, who had experience the services of tour guides in TNNP. The targeted sample size was 384 respondents (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) but 500 questionnaires were distributed in order to avoid insufficient number of respondents. Convenience sampling method was applied due to the unknown and unpredictable population, who will be visiting the park (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008).

4 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

After omitting 94 incomplete and 21 with outliers questionnaires, 385 questionnaires were deemed applicable for the analysis. After conducting missing data, reliability and validity, there were 27 items remained in tour guide performance while 21 items remained in servicescape. In the reliability analysis,

Table 1. Coefficient alpha on variables (N = 385).

Variables	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Tour guide performance	27	0.950
Servicescape	21	0.894
Ambience	3	0.845
Space and function	4	0.850
Sign, symbol and artefacts	4	0.950
Flora and fauna	5	0.871
Cleanliness	5	0.869
Satisfaction with guiding service	3	0.701
Satisfaction with servicescape	3	0.753
Satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience	3	0.715

variables with Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 were considered as good reliability (Zhang & Chow, 2004). Table 1 present the alpha value of the constructs of study.

4.1 Respondent's characteristics

The analysis of respondent's characteristics reported that 45.7% of the respondents were domestic tourists while the remaining 54.3% were international tourists. The numbers of domestic tourists were outnumbered by international tourists may be contributed by Tourism Malaysia's marketing campaign of the million-year-old forests in the park at overseas that could have sparked the interest of the international tourists. Besides that, the analysis reported that more than three quarter (88%) of the respondents were first time visitors. Furthermore, a total of 42.1% of the respondents learnt about TNNP from family and friends while 6.5% of the respondents said that they learnt about the destination from travel books. This proves that word-of-mouth is a useful and practical marketing tool to promote a destination.

4.2 Hypotheses testing

All hypotheses were tested with multiple regression analysis. According to Cohen's (1988) conventions, the effect size could be distinguished as small ($R^2 = 0.10$), medium $R^2 = 0.30$) and large ($R^2 = 0.50$). Using the *enter method*, all the tests showed that the independent variables were significant on the dependent variables that were hypothesized, where the $p < 0.05$. Table 2 represents the findings of hypotheses 1a and 1b.

Table 2 shows the multiple regression analysis results of the relationship between tourist satisfaction with guiding service and its independent variables; $R^2 = 0.273$, $F(2, 379) = 71.178$, $p < 0.05$. The results convey that the effect size from both variables is small. Nevertheless, the results confirm hypotheses 1a and 1b, whereby tour guide performance and servicescape are predictors of tourist satisfaction with guiding

Table 2. Regression analysis of tourist satisfaction with guiding service (N = 385).

	(Constant)	Tour guide	Servicescape performance
Model	1		
Unstandardized Coefficients:			
B	3.728	0.067	0.050
Standardized Coefficients:			
SE	0.77	0.010	0.007
Beta	–	0.310	0.333
<i>t</i>	–	1.111	4.371
<i>p</i>	–	0.267	0.000*
<i>F</i>	71.178	–	–
<i>R</i>	0.523	–	–
<i>R</i> ²	0.273	–	–

* $p < 0.05$ – statistically significant.

Table 3. Regression analysis of tourist satisfaction with servicescape (N = 385).

	(Constant)	Servicescape	Tour guide performance
Model	1		
Unstandardized Coefficients:			
B	0.897	0.096	0.045
Standardized Coefficients:			
SE	0.807	0.07	0.1
Beta	–	0.053	0.179
<i>t</i>	–	1.111	13.182
<i>p</i>	–	0.267	0.000*
<i>F</i>	126.958	–	–
<i>R</i>	0.633	–	–
<i>R</i> ²	0.401	–	–

* $p < 0.05$ – statistically significant

service. Table 3 reports the findings of hypotheses 2a and 2b.

Table 3 shows the multiple regression analysis results of the relationship between tourist satisfaction with servicescape and its independent variables; $R^2 = 0.401$, $F(2, 379) = 126.958$, $p < 0.05$. The results also show that the effect size from both servicescape is medium but tour guide is small. Nonetheless, hypotheses 2a and 2b are confirmed, whereby servicescape and tour guide performance are predictors of tourist satisfaction with servicescape. Hypotheses results of 3a and 3b are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 presents the multiple regression analysis results of the relationship between tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding service and its independent variables; $R^2 = 0.929$, $F(2, 382) = 1204.688$, $p < 0.05$. According to Table 6, it is proven that tourist satisfaction with guiding service ($\beta = 0.716$) has a

Table 4. Regression analysis of tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience (N = 385).

	(Constant)	Satisfaction with guiding service	Satisfaction with servicescape
Model	1		
Unstandardized Coefficients:			
B	1.349	0.673	0.224
Standardized Coefficients:			
SE	0.234	0.25	0.021
Beta	–	0.716	0.276
t	–	5.775	27.337
p	–	0.000*	0.000*
F	1204.69	–	–
R	0.929	–	–
R ²	0.863	–	–

*p < 0.05 – statistically significant.

much higher positive effect on overall tour guiding experience compared to tourist satisfaction with servicescape ($\beta = 0.276$). This verifies that tourist satisfaction with tour guide performance is the essential element in affecting tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience. Furthermore, although tourist satisfaction with servicescape is secondary in affecting tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience, it is still a significant finding. Thus, hypotheses 3a and 3b are confirmed, whereby tourist satisfaction with guiding service and tourist satisfaction with servicescape were predictors of tourist satisfaction with overall tour guiding service.

5 DISCUSSIONS

The study was conducted with the focus on the roles on tour guides, the attributes of servicescape and the tourist satisfaction. The study had illuminated that these not only has correlation between one and another but also has causal relationship. The significant effect of the tested relationship was found to be valid and this is in line with the study by Huang *et al.* (2010) except for one. Their study did not manage to establish the relationship between tourist satisfaction with guiding service and tourist satisfaction with the overall tour experience but they did not deny that the relationship could exist either as proven by the current study and other studies (e.g. Chan, 2004; Hsu, 2000). On the other hand, a surprising result is that the regression analysis shows that tour guide performance did not have a large effect on satisfaction with guiding service whereas Huang *et al.* (2010) found that the effect is big. Thus, in view of the direct involvement of tour guide in providing guiding service, the effect of tour guides on tourist satisfaction with guiding service must still be viewed as largely significant.

Besides that, satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience is largely affected by the antecedents

of tourist satisfaction with guiding service and servicescape. Tour guide and servicescape are the essential elements in the causal relationships of tourist satisfaction with tour guiding service and tourist satisfaction with servicescape. Therefore, this supports the prevalent belief that service quality shapes satisfaction in both the intangible service and the tangible service, which the latter are tour guides and servicescape.

The theoretical contribution of the study is overall satisfaction is affected by more than one service construct whereby the evaluation should carefully consider the employees and also the materials, equipments or environment involved throughout the service process. Each element has different effect size which should also be addressed to prioritize the important elements that enhance the service satisfaction. Another notable theoretical contribution of the study is the recognition of the flora and fauna dimension when evaluating the servicescape of national park. This evidently shows that each servicescape that provides different services is set up using different concepts. Thus, it is important to identify the nature of the service provided to determine the servicescape dimensions.

6 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

The study was carried out on the tour guides of TNNP where the services and surrounding may differ from other national park; thus the model may not be utilized on other tour guides of a different environment. Nevertheless, the authors believe that the differences may not be huge if applied in Malaysia because all tour guides received the same training under Tourism Malaysia and DWNP. As for the geographical environment and attractions between the national parks, it may not differ a lot in terms of the attributes the parks should have as a servicescape. Another limitation is the data collection which was not fully carried out by researchers themselves, the non-response bias may possibly be present.

Future studies could be carried out base on the tourists from different regions to compare their overall satisfaction level while further validate the results of this study. Another matter worth studying is the effect of tour guide behaviour, servicescape and tour company services on overall tourist satisfaction and behaviour because part of the reasons in establishing national park is to provide tourists a natural environment for a vacation while at the same time educating them on the importance of taking care of the environment. Thus, an evaluation of the depth of tour guide behaviour in affecting tourist behaviour is worth finding out.

REFERENCES

- Albayrak, T., Caber, M. & Aksoy, S. 2010. Relationships of the tangible and intangible elements of tourism products with overall customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Trade, Economics and Finance* 1: 140–143.

- Baum, T. 1993. Human resources in tourism: An introduction. In T. Baum (ed.), *Human resource issues in international tourism*: 3–21. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Bitner, M. J. 1992. Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of Marketing* 56: 57–71.
- Black, R., Ham, S. & Weiler, B. 2001. Ecotour guide training in less developed countries: Some preliminary research findings. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 9: 147–156.
- Caruana, A. 2002. Service loyalty: The effects of service quality and the mediating role of customer satisfaction. *European Journal of Marketing* 36: 811–828.
- Chan, A. 2004, May. Towards an improved understanding of tour services and customer satisfaction in package tours. Paper presented at the Second Asia-Pacific CHRIE (APac-CHRIE) Conference and Sixth Biennial Conference on Tourism in Asia. Phuket, Thailand.
- Chen, H.-J., Hwang, S.-N. & Lee, C. 2006. Visitors' characteristics of guided interpretation tours. *Journal of Business Research* 59: 1167–1181.
- Chong, K. K. 2002. Keynote address by Sabah Chief Minister at the conference on Transforming Sabah in the 21st Century: Challenges and Prospects in the New Sabah Economy. Retrieved March 21, 2010, from Official Website of the Sabah State Government: <http://www.sabah.gov.my/press/docs/2002004241.htm>
- Cohen, J. 1988. *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Farouk, S. & Ryan, C. 1991. Analyzing service quality in the hospitality industry using the SERVQUAL model. *The Service Industries Journal* 11: 324–346.
- Grönroos, C. 1984. A service quality model and its marketing implications. *European Journal of Marketing* 18: 36–44.
- Hasan, M. N., Salleh, H. & Ibrahim, K. 1997. Sabah parks: Conserving out national heritage. In M. N. Hasan (ed.), *Parks: Notes on a more dynamic approach to sustainable use*: 21–23. Bangi: University Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Hsu, C. H. 2000. Determinants of mature travelers' motor-coach tour satisfaction and brand loyalty. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* 24: 223–238.
- Huang, S., Hsu, C. & Chan, A. 2010. Tour guide performance and tourist satisfaction: A study of the package tours in Shanghai. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research* 34: 3–33.
- Johns, N., Avci, T. & Karatepe, O. M. 2004. Measuring service quality of travel agents: Evidence from Northern Cyprus. *The Service Industries Journal* 24: 82–100.
- Krejcie, R. V. & Morgan, D. W. 1970. Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 30: 607–610.
- Lee, T. H. 2010. Assessing visitors' experiences at hot spring recreation areas in Taiwan. *International Journal of Tourism Research* 12: 193–203.
- Lee, Y.-H. & Chen, T.-L. 2005. Travelling motivation and satisfaction of tourists: An empirical study of Taroko National Park in Taiwan. *The Business Review, Cambridge* 4: 175–181.
- Ling, S. M., Abidin, Z., Nair, V., Ramachandran, S., & Shuib, A. 2011. Developing criteria and indicators for responsible rural tourism in Taman Negara National Park (TNNP), Malaysia. *The Malaysian Forester* 74: 143–155.
- Mattila, A. S. & Enz, C. A. 2002. The role of emotions in service encounters. *Journal of Service Research* 4: 268–277.
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. 2006. Management effectiveness assessment of national and state parks in Malaysia. Putrajaya: Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.
- Parasuraman, A., Berry, L. L. & Zeithaml, V. 1991. Refinement and reassessment of the SERVQUAL scale. *Journal of Retailing* 60: 420–450.
- Tourism Malaysia. 2012. Facts & Figures. Retrieved May 3, 2012, from Tourism Malaysia: http://www.tourism.gov.my/facts_figures/
- Wakefield, K. L. & Blodgett, J. G. 1994. The importance of servicescapes in leisure service settings. *Journal of Services Marketing* 8: 66–76.
- Weiler, B., & Davis, D. 1993. An exploratory investigation into the roles of the nature-based tour leader. *Tourism Management* 14: 91–98.
- Zhang, H. & Chow, I. 2004. Application of importance-performance model in tour guides' performance: evidence from mainland Chinese outbound visitors in Hong Kong. *Tourism Management* 25: 81–91.

This page intentionally left blank

Tourism area life-cycle model and its applicability to lodging development of Langkawi Island, Malaysia

Noraziah Hazmi, Shida Irwana Omar & Badaruddin Mohamed

*Sustainable Tourism Resesarch Cluster, School of Housing, Building and Planning,
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia*

ABSTRACT: As one of Malaysia's premier tourist destinations, Langkawi Island has experienced a tremendous pace in tourism development particularly in infrastructure and accommodation. This paper aims to examine the applicability of the tourism area life-cycle model by Butler (1980) to Langkawi's lodging development. Results indicate that the island has experienced the first four stages; exploration, involvement, development and consolidation. Both government and private sector are the major players for the island's lodging development. This paper outlines a suggestion for future research.

Keywords: Langkawi Island, lodging development, tourism area life-cycle model.

1 INTRODUCTION

According to Butler (1980), the tourism area life-cycle consists of six stages which are exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation and post-stagnation which consist of rejuvenation and decline. Diagram 1 shows the stages involved in tourism area life-cycle model while Table 1 briefly explains the characteristics of each stage in the model. It is important to understand the characteristics of each stage because this paper aims to examine the applicability of the tourism area life-cycle model by Butler (1980) to Langkawi's lodging development. The concept provides useful framework for research that seeks to enhance understanding of the development process and their implications. The usefulness of the model as a general framework for description and analysis of the evolution of tourism is recognized in a variety of case studies. The model's utility as an organizing concept for academic research will thus be a basis for this case study.

2 LANGKAWI ISLAND

Langkawi Island is an archipelago of 99 islands in the Andaman Sea at the northern most part of the Straits of Malacca. The current population is at 50,000, with the majority (90 percent) occupying the main island (Pazim Othman & M. Mohd. Rosli 2011). With a total land area of 204 sq. miles (528 sq. km), Langkawi is much bigger than Penang (233 sq. km) but slightly smaller than Singapore (595 sq. km). Langkawi has

become the most visited destination by Malaysians due to its duty-free status since 1987 and the declaration as the first Tourism City in the country in April 2001 (Wan 2001). The three specific areas of the island namely, the Dayang Bunting Island, Gunung Mat Cincang and Kilim, were gazetted by UNESCO as the Langkawi Geopark on the 1st of June 2007. On July 15, 2008, Sultan Abdul Halim had consented to the change of name to Langkawi the Jewel of Kedah in conjunction to his Golden Jubilee Celebration (Embun Majid 2008).

The number of tourists who visited Langkawi Island can be seen in Diagram 2. The diagram illustrates the increasing number of tourist arrival from 1986 to 2010. The decrease in number caused by some phenomena occurred in 1998 (e.g. economic crisis, haze and Cox Sackie), 2002 (e.g. Bali bombing), 2004 (e.g. SARS and Iraq war), 2005 (e.g. earthquake and Tsunami) and 2008 (e.g. H1N1 and economic crisis).

2.1 *Exploration stage (1948–1969)*

The inception stage of lodging development in Langkawi began in 1948 where the first hotel, Fairwinds Hotel was built. A number of rest houses made of wood were built in 1950s and 1960s in the form of chalets. Some of the local families in Tanjung Rhu opened businesses and sold food and drinks to local tourists until the area was a popular picnic spot. Most of them were involved as fishermen and farmers in the paddy field.

During this time, there were a limited number of tourists who visited this site due to lack of public

Table 1. Characteristics of Each Stage in Tourism Area Life Cycle.

Stage	Characteristics
Exploration	“Limited and sporadic visitation by a few adventurous (allocentric)” tourists. Visiting sites with no public facilities and “high degree of contact with locals and use of their facilities”. Visitors are attracted to the resort by a natural physical feature, and “very little social and economic impact”.
Involvement	Increasing visitation leads to the provision of basic services by some locals primarily for visitors. “Contact with locals is still high and many adjust their social patterns to accommodate the changing economic conditions”. Increasing advertising induces a definable pattern of seasonal variation and definite market area begins to emerge. Government agencies begin to develop transport or other infrastructure to support visitors.
Development	“Outside investment is attracted to the destination as a well-defined tourism market emerges. Accessibility is enhanced, advertising becomes more intensive and extensive and local facilities are displaced by more elaborate and up-to-date ones”. Number of tourists at peak periods far outweighs the size of the resident population.
Consolidation	Tourism has become a major part of the local economy and “dominated by major chains and franchises”. A well-delineated business district has taken shape. “Visitation levels continue to increase but at declining rates. Marketing and advertising efforts are further widened to extend the tourism season attract more distant visitors”. Some of the older deteriorating facilities are perceived as second-rate and undesirable.
Stagnation	“Capacity levels for many relevant factors are reached or exceeded, resulting in economic, social and/or environmental problems. A peak numbers of possible visitations are achieved, forcing facility managers to rely on repeat visitations and conventions for business”. Stagnation stage has two types which are rejuvenation and decline.

Source: Adopted from Butler (1980); Tooman (1997 p. 217).

facilities and a high degree of contact with locals and use of their facilities (Tooman 1997; Linsheng, Jinyang & Baohui 2008; Page & Connell 2010). According to Brooker & Burgess (2008), the socio-economic impacts of tourism are very little due to the lack of number of tourists. Moreover, the physical fabric and social milieu of the area would be unchanged by tourism and the arrival and departure of tourists would be of relatively little significance to economic and social life of the permanent residents.

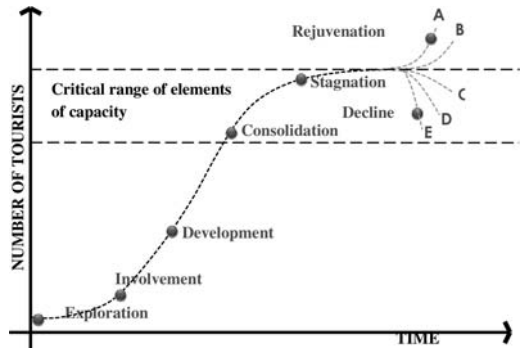


Diagram 1. Tourism area life-cycle model.

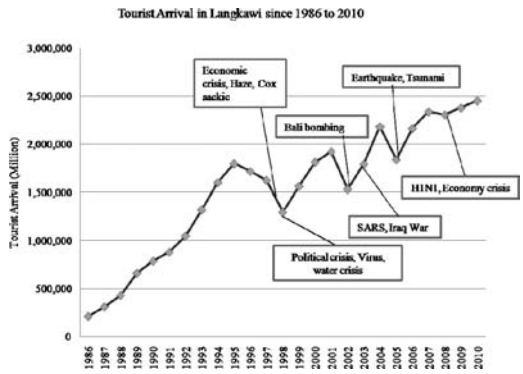


Diagram 2. Tourist Arrival in Langkawi from 1986 to 2010. Source: Langkawi Development Authority, 2012.

2.2 Involvement stage (1970–1983)

According to Brooker & Burgess (2008), involvement stage represents the first real wave of visitors. During 1970s, Langkawi grew to become popular destination among domestic tourists until the island was proposed for a US\$1 billion resort development in 1984 (Bird 1989, p. 3; Kadir 1993, p. 330). Linsheng *et al.* (2008) noted that the increasing number of informal visitors and the direct economic benefits lead to resort development while increasing visitation leads to the provision of basic services or even exclusively for visitors by local residents in involvement stage (Page & Connell 2010; Tooman 1997; Douglas 1997).

Although identified as a potential resort island in the Tourism Master Plan of 1975, no development took place until 1980s with the resort at Tanjung Rhu but it was subsequently scaled down (Wong 1993, p. 85). According to Tooman (1997), income tends to increase rapidly from the involvement to the development stage where road was built to connect from the lodging area to the town centre, making the lodging area more accessible for visitors arriving from across the country.

Furthermore, federal government asked Tourist Development Corporation (TDC) to prepare a master

plan for tourism development for Langkawi Islands in 1976. The function of TDC is to promote tourism in Malaysia and it was established in 1972 (Parliament Act No. 72 of 1972). The aim of this proposal is to improve the economy of Langkawi Islands by promoting Langkawi Islands to become tourist destination. TDC also was asked by the federal government to assess the market and financial prospect of the Langkawi Country Club which was purchased by them from Federal Hotels in January 1977.

2.3 Development stage (1984–1999)

In 1984, the state government leased 405 hectares of land to Promet Berhad to be developed as an international hotel. However, due to financial crisis the project was abandoned except for a small hotel in Tanjung Rhu. This period marked a rapid increase in visitor numbers. The total number of visitors reached 1,295,341 tourists in 1998 approximately 6 times more from 1986 which were 209,763 tourists. Parallel to the rapid increase of visitors was the rapid development of the lodging sector as well.

Meanwhile, in 1985, TDC spent \$26 million to upgrade and expand the facilities of Langkawi Country Club as stated in the Fourth Malaysia Plan where 100 facilities for the room Langkawi Country Club were improved.

In 1986, the name of Langkawi Country Club was changed to Langkawi Island Resort and it was declared a hotel resort of international standard. “Outside investment is attracted to the destination as a well-defined tourism market emerges. Imported labor and auxiliary facilities and services become necessary to support the rapidly growing tourism industry” (Tooman 1997). In 1985, the Langkawi International Airport was built and it was started to operate on July 1st, 1987. Other than that, the first international flight, a B757 commenced operations on November 2, 1988 while the first ferry terminal was built and completed in 1988 as well.

In 1989, about 13 chalet motels have been built along the island’s beaches at Pantai Tengah, Pantai Kok and Pantai Chenang which reflected the highest level of local initiative and participation in tourism sector (Bird 1989). The number of chalet, motels has sprung up gradually in response to demand mainly from domestic and foreign travelers.

According to Linsheng *et al.* (2008), the rapid improvement of people’s living standards and the formation of positive attitudes toward leisure and tourism has motivated the travel. According to Page and Connell (2010), natural and cultural attractions will be developed and marketed specifically, and these original attractions will be supplemented by man-made imported facilities.

In the Fifth Malaysia Plan (1986–1990), Langkawi Island was included in the development and promotion of selected areas for the new policies and strategies for tourism development. Page and Connell (2010) noted that the development stage reflects a well-defined

Table 2. List of accommodations.

Accommodation & Location	Date of Operation	Rating
Ooi Daily Store (Kuah)	Feb 1, 1997	–
Beringin Beach Resort (Kuah)	Feb 1, 1997	3-star
Crystall Hill Sdn.Bhd. (Kedawang)	Mar 2, 1997	4-star
The Andaman Resort Sdn. Bhd. (Padang Matsirat)	May 24, 1997	5-star
Kembang Alaf Sdn. Bhd. (Kuah)	June 23, 1997	3-star
Charlie Motel & Restaurant (Kedawang)	Nov 11, 1997	–
Asrama Pelancongan Sri Pulau, (Kuah)	Feb 1, 1998	–
Langkapuri Beach Resort (Kedawang)	Feb 7, 1998	–
AB Motel Beach Resort (Kedawang)	Feb 25, 1998	–
Hotel Langkasuka Sdn.Bhd. (Kuah)	Mar 3, 1998	2–star
Delta Motel & Restaurant (Kedawang)	May 4, 1998	–
Asia Domitory (Kuah)	June 3, 1998	–
Langkawi Sandy Beach Resort Sdn. Bhd. (Kedawang)	Mar 1, 1999	–
Sri Manis Motel (Kuah)	Mar 2, 1999	–
Panorama Vication Club Sdn. Bhd. (Ulu Melaka)	Mar 5, 1999	–
Grand Island Hotel (Kuah)	Mar13,1999	3–star
Melati Tanjung (Kedawang)	April 3,1999	–
Kok Seng Motel (Kuah)	June 15,1999	–
H.H.K Motel (Kuah)	July 6, 1999	–

Source: Langkawi Development Authority, 2012.

tourist market area, shaped in part by heavy advertising in tourist-generating areas. In response to this, more luxurious international class hotels and resorts started to spring up like mushrooms all over the island in 1990s.

In fact, 19 resorts started to operate in 1990s. The resorts are listed in Table 2. In addition, greater control of the tourist trade by outsiders resulted a decline in local participation and control (Tooman 1997). According to Page and Connell (2010), as this stage progresses, local involvement and control of development will decline rapidly. In this stage, government still played an essential role in speeding the development. For instance, In March 1990, the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) which housed in the LADA Complex was set up by federal government to develop the island as a tourist destination as well as to improve the socio-economic conditions of the local people.

The main development activities currently were located in the main towns of Kuah (the sea gateway to the island), Padang Matsirat (the air gateway) and Padang Lalang. The coastal locations identified

for development are at Kuah, Pantai Cenang, Pantai Tengah, Pantai Kok/Telok Burau, Telok Dawai and Tanjung Rhu (Jamil Jusoh & Badaruddin 2006). Regional and national involvement in the planning and provision of facilities will almost certainly be necessary (Page and Connell 2010).

Moreover, Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA) which was first started in 1991 (biennial event) has boosted the status of Langkawi as an important international, exhibition and convention centre. The Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre (MIEC) was developed in Padang Matsirat with an area of 71,400 square meters as the largest exhibition and convention facility in Langkawi. New development and enhancement of the facilities have encouraged the local and international tourist to visit Langkawi Island, thus supporting the lodging development in this island.

2.4 Consolidation stage (2000–2012)

At this stage, the destination boasts a large number of hotels, fast-food restaurants, shops and other forms of entertainment (Brooker & Burgess 2008). Influx of domestic and international arrivals in Langkawi has increased the number of hotel rooms from 859 rooms in 1998 to 7072 rooms in 2005. Thus, the lodging evolution entered the consolidation stage in 2000. A total of 1,809,760 tourists visited the Langkawi Island in 2000 while 2,450,000 tourists in 2010. The increasing number in 2010 is 1.3 times more than the total number of tourist arrival in 2000. As Langkawi entered the consolidation stage, number of tourists exceeded the number of permanent residents which is around 50,000 people.

Almost 60 resorts started to operate in 2000 and still continue to do so. The resorts recently developed were Langkawi Hotel Asia Sdn. Bhd., My Hotel Management, Langkawi Baron Hotel, De Baron Resort Sdn. Bhd. and Akasia Mega Enterprise. These resorts started to operate in 2010 and 2011 (Langkawi Development Authority 2012) and are still operating. Furthermore, there are 1,883 rooms provided which can cater 3,766 tourists at the same time in Pantai Chenang (Langkawi Tourism City Council 2011).

In addition, new products were developed and promoted in the island destination aimed to raise lodging and facilities demands by both foreign tourists and locals. For instance, Le Tour De Langkawi was held in January 2005 to draw back visitors and boost the island's tourism industry which was temporarily paralyzed due to the fear brought by the tsunami in 2004 that affected neighbouring countries such as Indonesia, Thailand and others (Diagram 2). Also, the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition were held every 2 years since 1991 in order to display and promote the latest aerospace technology of industries from Malaysia as well as the Asia Pacific region. However, despite these efforts raised by the government and tourism related agencies, a few resorts still discontinued their operations as illustrated in the Table 3.

Table 3. List of accommodation failed to operate.

Accommodation & location	Date of operation	End date	Duration
Langkapuri Beach Resort (Kedawang)	Feb 7, 1998	2008	10 years
Asia Domitory (Kuah)	June 3, 1998	2009	11 years
H.H.K Motel	July 6, 1999	2008	9 years
Panorama Vication Club Sdn.Bhd. (Ulu Melaka)	Mar 5, 1999	2007	8 years
Beach Garden Resort & Bistro (Kedawang)	May 16, 2000	2007	7 years
Hotel Asia (Kuah)	June 15, 2000	2011	1 year
Nagoya City Hotel Sdn.Bhd. (Kuah)	April 2, 2002	2007	5 years
Sherwood Hotel	June 5, 2003	n/a	n/a
Langkawi Village Resort (Kedawang)	Feb 12, 2006	n/a	n/a
Tanjung Sanctuary Langkawi (Pdg Matsirat)	April 15, 2006	2007	1 year

Source: Langkawi Development Authority, 2012.

The failure of these resorts may be due to external and internal factors. However, Agarwal and Shaw (2007) noted that the symptoms of decline of the resorts are declining tourist arrivals, dependence on long-holiday markets, diminishing share and volume of domestic holiday market, poorly maintained accommodation and amenities, poor information and interpretation provision, low-budgets for marketing and promotion, lack of professionalism and experienced staff, low priority given to strategic thinking and shortage of market information and limited quality control.

3 CONCLUSION

Findings indicate that the lodging sector in Langkawi Island experienced only four stages namely exploration, involvement, development and consolidation. At the exploration stage, limited tourists visited this site due to lack of public facilities and high degree of contact with locals and use of their facilities. Moreover, the socio-economic impacts of tourism are very little due to lack of number of tourists. For the involvement stage, government and public agencies began to provide more lodging and other facilities for visitors while at the development stage, there was a rapid increase in tourist arrival and has led to the expansion of facilities and lodging development in Langkawi Island.

At the consolidation stage, almost 60 resorts have started to operate in supporting new products but there are also resorts that failed to operate. The decline of those resorts has raised the issues in lodging sector

due to increasing lodging's demand. It is important to note that the symptoms of resorts declination can be studied by adopting the survival analysis model for a further research. Finally, this paper has determined the lodging evolution stage by adopting tourism area life-cycle model.

REFERENCES

- Agarwal, S. & Shaw, G., 2007, *Managing Coastal Tourism Resorts: A Global Perspective*, England, Channel View Publications.
- Bernama, 2011, Masterplan to Boost Langkawi as International Tourist Destination, October, viewed 26 April 2012, from <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsbudget2012.php?id=618565>
- Bird, B. 1989. Langkawi—from Mahsuri to Mahathir: Tourism for Whom?, Petaling Jaya, Selangor: INSAN, the Institute of Social Analysis.
- Brooker, E. & Burgess, J., 2008, International journal of contemporary hospitality management, Marketing Destination Niagara Effectively Through the Tourism Life Cycle, 20(3), 278–292, viewed 2 April 2012, from <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?issn=09596119&volume=20&issue=3&articleid=1722838&show=html>
- Butler, R., 1980, The concept of a tourist area life cycle of evolution: implications for management of resources, *The Canadian Geographer*, 24(1), 5–12, viewed 26 March 2012, from <http://aaronluman.com/articles/CycleOfEvolution.pdf>
- Embun Majid, 2008, 'It's Langkawi Permata Kedah now', *The Star Online*, July 16, viewed 20 April 2012, from <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2008/7/16/nation/20080716171300&sec=nation>
- Eva, Y., 1999, Tourism in Langkawi Island, viewed 29 March 2012, from <http://www1.american.edu/TED/langkawi.htm>
- Jamil Jusoh & Badaruddin Mohamed, 2006, Tourist Infrastructure Provision Versus Successful Destinations Case Study: Langkawi Island, viewed 4 April 2012, from http://eprints.usm.my/1977/1/Tourist_Infrastructure_Provision_Versus_Successful_Destinations_Case_Tudy_Langkawi_Island.pdf
- Kadir Haji Din, 1993, Dialogue with the hosts-An educational strategy towards sustainable tourism. In Hitchcock, M., King, V.T. & Parnwell, M. Eds, *Tourism in South-East Asia*, 327–336, viewed 7 April 2012, from http://books.google.com.my/books?id=0DoOAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA327&dq=when+was+the+first+hotel+in+langkawi+built%3F&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q=when%20was%20the%20first%20hotel%20in%20langkawi%20built%3F&f=false
- Langkawi Tourism City Council, 2011, Draft Special Area Plan of Pantai Chenang 2015, viewed 7 May 2012, from http://www.townplan.gov.my/epublisiti/rkk/RKK_PantaiChenang/publisiti_rkk_pantai_chenang.php
- Linsheng, Z., Jinyang D., & Baohui X., 2008, Tourism management, Tourism Development and the Tourism Area Life-Cycle Model : A Case Study of Zhangjiajie National Forest Park, China, 29, 841–856, viewed 29 March 2012, from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0261517707002129>
- Page, S. & Connell, J., 2010, *Tourism: The Management and Planning of Tourism*, London, Sage Pub.
- Pazim Othman & M. Mohd. Rosli, 2011, International journal of business and social science, The Impacts of Tourism on Small Business Performance: Empirical Evidence from Malaysian Islands, 2(1), 11–21, viewed 11 April 2012, from http://www.ijbssnet.com/journals/Vol._2_No._1_January_2011/2.pdf
- Tooman, L., 1997, Applications of the life-cycle model in tourism, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24(1), 214–234, viewed 1 April 2012, from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160738396000527>
- Wan, C., 2001, Langkawi Declared a Tourism City, viewed 19 April 2012, from <http://www.travelweeklyweb.com/langkawi-declared-a-tourism-city/31287>
- Wong, P. P., 1993, Island tourism development in peninsular Malaysia: Environmental perspective, In P. P. Wong (ed.), *Tourism vs Environment: The Case for Coastal Areas*, 83–97, The Netherlands: Kluwer, viewed 3 April 2012, from http://books.google.com.my/books?id=d6Tp5ZHYVlkC&pg=PA321&lpq=PA321&dq=Wong+Island+tourism+development+in+Peninsular+Malaysia:+Environmental+perspective&source=bl&ots=qkxkRxI89_&sig=yVqdIZeT6ZgiAEc5iJri7mPmUf4&hl=en&ei=SS7oTuKZMYnNrQej-OW7Bw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCIQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=Wong%20Island%20tourism%20development%20in%20Peninsular%20Malaysia%3A%20Environmental%20perspective&f=false

This page intentionally left blank

Impacts of physical development on Malaysia Islands: How Island tourism survives?

Muhamad Ferdhaus Sazali, Masitah Muhibudin & Badaruddin Mohamed

Sustainable Tourism Research Cluster and School of Housing, Building and Planning, Universiti Sains Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Island tourism is one of the fastest growth sectors in Malaysia. Islands in Malaysia are famous around the globe with its beautiful nature, culture and sparkling blue seawater. As a result, the government had set up the plan, strategies and actions to promote island tourism. On the other hand, the growing number of tourist arrivals to this destination were resulted in the development and upgrading of tourist infrastructure, accommodation, communication, recreation centre, transportation and other supporting infrastructure by the relevant government and private agencies as to ensure a high level of satisfaction of tourist during their stay. However, these physical developments have led to the some impacts and challenges. This paper examines the impact of physical development faces by Malaysia Islands. It also discusses on how does tourism survives by looking at the strategies and actions.

Keywords: Island tourism, tourism development, physical impacts, Malaysia

1 ISLAND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA

Definition of the island according to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the United Nations International Sea 1982 (UNCLOS 82), clause 121 is “a land in a natural form and is surrounded by water and always be above the high water table”. Island tourism developments in Malaysia except for Penang Island were dependent mainly on fishing income up to 1980s

(Wong, 1993). Most of the islands in Malaysia shift into island tourism due to the high demand and the opportunities that tourism industry brings on to the island. Malaysia has so many islands surrounding it, dividing into 4 categories (Table 1) and located in east coast, west coast, Sabah and Sarawak (Diagram 1). Islands in Malaysia are mostly fall into two categories of Develop Island and Island Tourism Destination. Tourism developments on the island are influenced by various factors. It depends on the size of the island, resources, physical character, land uses, policies and strategies by the authorities. Somehow, there is still improper planning in the island due to the development process started from the earliest day where the villagers or islanders started their residential area in the island (Wong, 1993). The nuisance to the island

Table 1. Island category in Malaysia.

Category	Descriptions	Islands
1. Develop Island	A. More than 90 km. B. More than 200, 000 peoples. C. Economy actuator.	Penang Island, Langkawi Island and Labuan Island
2. Island resort/ island tourism destination	A. Tourism is the main sector. B. Have the natural resources and tourist attractions	Pangkor Island, Tioman Island
3. Marine Park Island	Marine Parks Malaysia Order 1994. No marines activities within 2 nautical miles	Payar Island, Kapas Island
4. Uninhabited Island	Unoccupied island	–

Source: Town and Country Planning Department of Peninsular Malaysia, (2011).

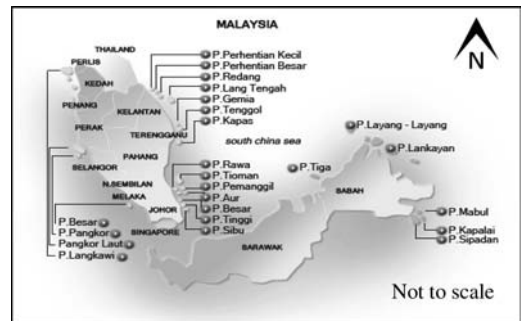


Diagram 1. Location of Tourism Island in Malaysia.

happened due to the irresponsible person or group of people who come and develop the island with less consideration on the impacts.

2 PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPACT ON ISLAND TOURISM

2.1 *Physical development: A review from tourism development plan*

Island tourism needs proper planning and attention. The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (1999) perhaps echoes a similar concern “the survival of small island developing states is firmly rooted in their human resource and cultural heritage, which are their most significant assets, those assets are under severe stress and all efforts must be taken to ensure the central position of people in the process of sustainable development”. In Malaysia, could be seen not only on nature but also the physical aspects of the manmade such as lodging and tourism infrastructure.

2.2 *Development of tourism infrastructure*

Island receives impacts through construction of tourism facilities and infrastructure. The tourism developments create an economic spill over not only to the areas of the island but also to the State and the country as well. Government authority under the Eastern Corridor Economic Region (ECER) had planned to boost up the area of Mersing where it will be developed to emerge as an important mainland coastal tourism destination. It will be the gateway to the Mersing group of islands consists of Pulau Besar, Pulau Rawa, Pulau Aur, Pulau Sibul and Pulau Pemanggil (The Star, July 24, 2011). Under the 10th Malaysia Plan, the government allocated RM27 million to upgrade tourism infrastructure like in the Pulau Pangkor, Pulau Sibul and Pulau Duyong. The Government offer many opportunities for local governments to promote their natural environments to visitors or tourists.

2.3 *Development of marina*

Furthermore, Government of Malaysia has attracted many foreign yachts lover to come to the Island by developing marina in the island. A marina is a dock or basin with moorings and supplies for yachts and small boats. The marina will attract high end tourist to the island. The development of marina will promote and attract the owner of the yacht to sail to Malaysia's Island and park their yacht in the marina. In Malaysia, among the popular marina among yacht owner is the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club. In the 10th Malaysia Plan, the development of Marina Island Pangkor International Resort and Entertainment Extension Project in Perak by Globalports Sdn Bhd and Marina Sanctuary Resort Sdn Bhd will bring a tremendous impact to the island tourism industry. Once completed, it will support the nascent cruise line industry in Malaysia,

serving as a catalyst for water front and urban renewal. It will generate the Gross National Income (GNI) about RM 9 Billion by the year 2020. On the other hand, once the marina had been completed, the marina is not operational and close for any activity. It is totally abandoned. The marina is now under the jurisdiction of Department of Marine. Recent visit to this marina found that the marina was totally closed. Therefore the State Government recently announced to propose to the Federal Government to take over the management of the marina under the monitoring of Manjung Municipal Council (Perak Today, February 29, 2012).



*Photo: Abandoned marina project
Source: Field Survey, 2011*

2.4 *Development of lodging*

Then, The Northern Corridor offers a wide variety of tourism infrastructure and services targeted at the masses, such as affordable accommodation, food and shopping. The Region is known for world-class resorts and spas in Pulau Pinang and Langkawi which are targeting especially for at high-end tourists. Amongst these are The Andaman, The Datai and the Four Seasons Resorts in Langkawi, and the Shangri-La Rasa Sayang and Mutiara Beach Resort in Pulau Pinang. The provision of world class facilities would attract greater number of foreign to come and spent their holiday in Malaysia Island. The target of tourist not only the high end but also the medium and low income people to come to Malaysian Island. So the facilities and accommodation for medium and low income people also being provided.

2.5 *Threat to nature environment*

Tourism development on the island is tremendously happened in all islands in Malaysia. It is due to the increase number of tourist coming into Malaysia and spent their holiday on the island. Land is the main issues of every development. It is also becomes a problem in the island tourism development. Sibul Island in Johor faces the conflict issue of land matters. The

conflict arises between extending tourist facilities and land for pasture (Ahmad Tajudin et al, 1979). Many hotel operators are interested to set up their hotels or resorts in the island due to the potential it has. This issue is regarding the development of island to be a tourism base sector other than to conserve the island as it is. The area of Sibu Island has a good potential to be developed as tourism base sector due to all attractions it has in terms of the nature of the island itself and the water activities such as scuba diving and snorkelling. Some people might think that Sibu Island should remain without excessive development for the future generations to enjoy the nature. The issues of land do not only happen in Sibu Island, it also happened in other island in Malaysia as well. One of the current challenges is that locations with outstanding natural beauty on the main island are limited, and have already been developed into luxury resorts. To further entice additional world-class resorts to Langkawi, the Government will have to attract these operators to undertake regulated developments on selected outer islands around Langkawi. However, operating resorts on outer islands is known to be an expensive endeavour, with additional costs incurred, e.g. when ferrying guests to and from the main island and the airport.

Secondly, the uncontrolled diving and snorkelling activities at the area will affect and be a threat to the marine life especially the coral reef (Tatsuki, Tomoko, Takeshi, 2007). Almost all popular islands in Malaysia like Sibu Island in Johor, Pangkor Island in Perak, Langkawi Island in Kedah, Tioman Island in Pahang, Perhentian Island in Terengganu and Sipadan Island in Sabah face the issues of coral problem effect from scuba and diving activity. The increase number of tourists who loves scuba diving or snorkelling without proper guidance from the expert will also destroy the nature of coral reef in the Island. Tourism impact may also be one of the major reasons for the decrease of live coral coverage in the Peninsular Malaysia (Badaruddin et al., 2004).

3 PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Physically, the development planning should be based on the "Total Planning and Development Doctrine" by the Town and Country Planning Department. In the Total Planning and Development Doctrine, it is more on the relationship between man and god, relationship between man and man and relationship between man and the environment. These principles are adopted as reference in formulating guidelines in decision making and action implementation of any development activity. Bottom line it is promoting the sustainable development. In addition, physical planning islands should refer to some existing policies such as environmental policy, policy Malaysia five years plan, the national physical plan, the existing guidelines and existing legislation that has been allocated. When all of the development follows the law that had been set up by the government, cases like coral problem can

Table 2. Five years Malaysia plan for tourism sector.

Five years Malaysia plan	Allocation (RM Million)
2nd Malaysia Plan (197–1975)	8.59
3rd Malaysia Plan (1976–1980)	27.19
4th Malaysia Plan (1981–1985)	40.00
5th Malaysia Plan (1986–1990)	140.50
6th Malaysia Plan (1991–1995)	533.90
7th Malaysia Plan (1996–2000)	605.50
8th Malaysia Plan (2001–2005)	1009.00
9th Malaysia Plan (2006–2010)	1847.90

be avoided. So, sustainable development plays a big role in order to have a better future and the nature of the island can be preserved and conserved. In the Five Years Malaysia Plan, the Government had allocated some money for tourism sector (Table 2). The amount of money that had been allocated is found to be increasing every five years of the plan. This indicates that the tourism sector plays an important role in enhancing the country's economy.

4 STRATEGIES ON ISLAND TOURISM

Government of Malaysia under the Ministry of Tourism is extremely promoting Malaysia to the world. Visit Malaysia campaign launched in year 1990 is one of the strategies to attract tourists to visit Malaysia. Tourism sector has been identified by the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (Pemandu) amongst the twelve National Key Result Areas (NKRAs) which are national priority areas of focus identified under the Government Transformation Programme (GTP). For the island tourism sector, some strategies have been set up to promote island tourism in Malaysia. The strategies set up by the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER), Langkawi Island and Penang Island will be enhanced to attract high-end tourist and to increase per capita tourist spending and also the size of tourism industry in the Region. In 2011, Langkawi Tourism Blueprint 2011–2015 had been launched by Prime Minister, YAB Dato Najib Tun Abd Razak. The aim of the blueprint is to be in the list of 10 islands and destinations of the world's top eco-tourism by 2015. These kinds of strategies are to promote and attract tourists to the Malaysian Island other than to protect the environment. Eastern Corridor Economic Region (ECER) also promotes island tourism development. The area of Mersing in Johor State has been developed as a gate way to the island like Sibu and Tinggi Island. This will attract tourists and investors to invest in the area of Mersing. Other than that, Marine Park Malaysia is endorsed by law under the Section 41–45 Fishing Acts 1985. This Act is to protect the marine life from any kind of problems related to island development and activities in or surrounding the island. Marine Park in Malaysia is like Pulau Redang and Pulau Perhentian in

Terengganu, Islands of Payar in Kedah, the islands of Tioman in Pahang and islands of Pulau Tinggi in Johor.

5 CONCLUSION

In the nutshell, island tourism in Malaysia will keep on growing parallel with the development of the country. It will still keep on surviving due to the high number of demand from the tourists and with continuous support from the government and related tourism agencies. All the impact of the island tourism development needs to be viewed in the positive way in order to have good practices island tourism. All tourism development in the island need to be developed in a good and proper way by following all the rules and regulation that had been set up by the related agencies. Sustainable development need to be practiced in island tourism development in Malaysia.

REFERENCES

- Badaruddin, M., Yusnit, Y., Abdul, A.H., & Abdullah 2004. *Tourism impact on aquatic ecosystem—a review. p. 496–499. In Proc. KUSTEM 3rd Annual Seminar on Sustainability Science and Management, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia.*
- Elliott, Sheryl M. and Mann, Shaun. 2005. “Development, Poverty and Tourism: Perspective and Influences in Sub Saharan Africa.” Occasional Paper Series, The GW Center for the Study of Globalization.
- Ghaderi, Z. 2004. Sustainable tourism development planning principles in rural areas, organization municipalities and rural district country. *Journal of Geography and Regional Planning*, 4(2), pp. 63–76.
- Marine Department. 2010. Port Circular No. 02/2010: Opening of the public marina at Pulau Mentangor, Lumut, Perak. Retrieved from <http://www.marine.gov.my/service/notice/port/north/2010/PCN022010.pdf>
- Perak Today. February 29, 2012. Perak cadang ambil alih, urus sendiri marina Pulau Mentagor: DS Zambry. Retrieved from <http://peraktoday.com>
- Sinclair, M. T. 1998. Tourism and economic development: a survey. *Journal of Development Studies*, 34(5): 1–51.
- Smith, S. L.J. 1989. *Tourism analysis – a handbook*. Harlow, Essex: Longman.
- Tatsuki Toda, Tomoko Okashita, Takeshi Maekawa, Bin Abdul Adziz Kee Alfian, Mohd Kushairi Mohd Rajuddin, Ryota Nakajima, Wenxi Chen, Kunio T. Takahashi, Bin Haji Ross Othman & Makoto Terazaki 2007. Community structures of coral reefs around Peninsular Malaysia. *Journal of Oceanography* (63), 113–123.
- Wong, P. P., 1993. Island tourism development in peninsular Malaysia: Environmental perspective, In P. P. Wong (ed.), *Tourism vs Environment: The Case for Coastal Areas*, 83–97.
- Zabidi Ishar. 2008. Legend behind Pulau Perhentian. *The Star*, Monday, August 11.

Malta: A tourism destination to the land of the Goddess

Louis Laganà

University of Malta

ABSTRACT: Malta, a small island in the middle of the Mediterranean is extremely rich in its Prehistoric archaeological heritage. Many tourists who visit Malta from all over the world are fascinated by the Prehistoric Temples and their artefacts. This paper shows the ways in which contemporary archaeologists, writers, and artists interpret Neolithic symbolism, particularly the images of Neolithic Goddesses found in various temples on the islands. The well preserved state of the Maltese Temples and their artefacts and their beauty, still attract pilgrims coming from all over the world to visit the Maltese Neolithic Temples – the places for ancient Goddess worship. The description and some interpretation of the temples and Goddess statues and statuettes shed light on the hypothesis that the Goddess representation was a strong symbol of a fertility cult which existed on the islands thousands of years ago. The Prehistoric Goddess remains an important figure of cultural tourism in Malta.

Keywords: Cultural tourism, the Maltese prehistoric Goddess, fertility cult, feminist movement.

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years interest in Maltese Prehistoric temples and artefacts increased markedly. People in Malta are becoming more conscious about their origins and more awareness about the conservation of the temples is also noticeable. The importance of Prehistoric art lies in its power to reveal the social context of the life of the early inhabitants of the Maltese Islands. The growth of this interest involved not only archaeologists and historians, but also artists. Many tourists from all over the world come to Malta to visit the prehistoric temples and their extraordinary statues and statuettes.

One can say that during these last two decades, there has been an increase of pilgrims coming from all over the world to visit the Maltese Neolithic Temples – the places for ancient Goddess worship. This includes not just regular tourists but also a good number of artists and scholars. We know that there are also groups of American women involved in the ‘Goddess movement’ who make these pilgrimages to Malta. Here I would like to make it clear that not just American women are interested in these visits to the land of the Mother Goddess but also men and women coming from other countries. As social anthropologist Kathryn Rountree puts it:

Malta’s reputation in the Goddess movement draws sizeable numbers, although not droves, of women pilgrims from many other countries each year. Some visit as independent tourists, while others join tours organised by a number of operators based mostly outside Malta.

Linda Eneix is another American writer-artist who frequently visits Malta to organize conferences,

seminars and Goddess-tours. She is greatly influenced by Maltese prehistoric culture, which is evident in her paintings and written work. For her the figures of “ancient goddesses” are so inspiring. They have a kind of “fullness and touchability” (Eneix, 2002). When asked about the way she sees the re-emergence of the Mother Goddess in our times she comments:

“Mother Earth”, “Mother Nature” – these are terms that came from somewhere. They are remnants, which survived, because they were used with tongue in cheek, like “Father Time” or “Daddy Long Legs”. People these days get excited if you talk about a Goddess. It is pretty clear in the Bible that there were thousands of years and a lot of bloodshed involved in stamping out the Canaanite and Pagan concepts of any lusty female divinities. But we don’t have to attest to a belief system to acknowledge that it once existed. Not only in Malta but also all over the world in Neolithic times, it is well documented that women had a much larger role in the pantheons of power. It’s found to some extent in every society, which lives close to the earth, and where people are more relaxed about sexuality.

With these words by Linda Eneix, it is easily argued that feminists come out with strong statements like this to show the world that the reasons why there is an increased interest in ancient goddesses could be various. Primarily goddesses ‘call’ all those who are dissatisfied with mainstream religions, political institutions and all male-centred cultures because many feminists find that institutionalised religions are dissatisfying because of the missing female element.

The Goddess movement left a great influence on many artists, particularly on female artists who used the imagery of Goddesses to create a spiritual

awareness especially amongst women. As we have already seen this spirituality is based on Earth based traditions. Willow La Monte described the Goddess religion not a religion based on faith but on experience. She claims "One doesn't say one believes in the goddess when one experiences the goddess or goddess energy." (Lagana, 2001). La Monte used the title of her newspaper '*Goddessing Regenerated*' as an "idea of deity or goddess as a verb not as a noun, as personality but also as energy, as motion, as movement." (ibid). Artists experience this energy and it is translated into art or Literature. La Monte pointed out

Just as poet Robert Graves has felt that the moon goddess was his muse, so many artists in many countries, both visual arts as well as literary arts, are heavily inspired by the imagery. There is just an enormous outpouring of creativity right now around the world based on these cycles and these goddess images (ibid).

La Monte mentions Robert Graves here because he was a leader in the promotion of the Prehistoric goddess in Old Europe. He is considered as one of the most prolific British writers, but he mainly considered himself more as a poet. Perhaps his most popular book is *The White Goddess*, first published in 1948. Graves explored the ancient European deities through the study of myth and psychology. *The White Goddess* was considered to be the goddess of Birth, Love and Death. Certain Feminists within the Goddess movement considered his work as an uncompromising, advocated and momentous way for Goddess-centred spirituality. Artists, writers, poets and musicians get not only inspired by ancient goddesses but they become so much involved in the reconstruction of ancient myths, religions and spirituality.

It is important now to give a general brief account and interpretation of the major temples in Malta and their artefacts which are of great interest to many tourists who purposely come to visit these ancient shrines.

One of the most spectacular Neolithic monuments on the island is undoubtedly the underground, labyrinthine sanctuary known as *Hypogeum* or also known as *Hal Saflieni* (part of the village known as Paola) temple. This extraordinary structure, both used as temple and burial place was cut into the soft rock. With the archaeological finds in this temple a remarkable statuette was found. This is the world famous '*Dreamer of Malta*' or better known as the '*Sleeping Lady*'. This prehistoric masterpiece, made in terracotta is a reclining figure no more than 12 cm. in length, ample-hipped and topless with the lower part of her hips covered with a pleated skirt, which is held around her waist with a belt. Her head rests on some sort of a pillow and the bed she is lying on is sustained by four long strips of wood held together by two others which transverse them. She is resting on her side, with one arm under her head and which suggests that she is clearly asleep, visibly dreaming. This statuette is considered by many to represent the rite of incubation.

Another similar statuette was found in the same place, this time the figure is lying face down on a

four-legged couch with raised arms on either side of the head. Again this figure is wearing a pleated skirt and a belt. These figures suggest two popular hypotheses: The idea that some kinds of ceremonies of dream incubation or rituals of healing (Gimbutas, 1991) took place in the shrine. Other related explanations are that these were votive offerings to the deity of the temple or used as a symbol when the burial of the dead was taking place. Both statuettes had traces of red ochre colouring. Another two small alabaster standing figures, partly damaged, and were also excavated from this site. The postures of these standing figures are very similar to those on figures found on a larger scale at *Hagar Qim*. I will refer to other interesting figurine fragments found in the *Hypogeum* later on when I discuss the aesthetic aspect of these statuettes.

Hagar Qim temples, (situated in the limits of Zurriq) are the best known for its stone statuary. The numerous so called 'cult statuettes', however, are something of a mystery. We see them both standing and in comfortably seated postures and also in other various positions. Although headless, many are equipped with a socket between the shoulders, with tiny holes for attaching cordage. Many were found with separate heads nearby, others are more likely to have had their heads made of other material such as wood (which explains their disappearance). They might have been created to be used in some sort of oracle rituals. The particular locations, in which they were found at *Hagar Qim* temples, probably point to ritual use. Cristina Biaggi explained this in her paper delivered at the Malta Conference in 1985.

The moveable heads could have been made to move in ritual to assent or dissent a particular request made by a worshipper. Their differences show that they represented different numinous aspects of the Goddess: the clothed figures are often seated on a stool decorated with sacred symbols, wear a bell shaped skirt, and are shown with much smaller figures crowding below; while the nude figures stand or squat and are always alone (Biaggi, 1986).

All statuettes have corpulent bodies. The most popular one is the standing one which is approximately 49 cm high and with a very stylised posture: the right hand arm is straight and attached to the right thigh and the left one bent with the palm of the hand placed in the middle of the stomach. The rounded shape of the figure with grossly plump flesh in the arms, thighs and egg-shaped buttocks may indicate that this figure could have been a woman, although there is no clear definition of female breasts and vulva (Biaggi, 1986). Surely it is not a male because no trace of male genitalia is visible. This statuette is standing on a rectangular low pedestal. Two other seated, obese stone statuettes at *Hagar Qim* aroused more debates on the gender issue of these figures (Veen, 1992). Looking at a glance at these figures one quickly realises that the flow of the line of these corpulent bodies makes them look more female than male. Again, the breasts are small but the anatomical structure from the torso to the buttocks shows curves that evoke more the female

rather than the male form. But certain archaeologists (Trump, 1983) hold that these figures are genderless, or androgynous.

Later on in this paper I will continue to show both sides of the discussion on the gender of the many figurines found in Maltese temples. This is important because it will give some light on the hypothesis that a Mother Goddess existed in Malta, and that these discussions could reveal that the early inhabitants of these islands venerated such a deity. One of the most renowned small figurines found at *Hagar Qim* is the famous 'Venus of Malta', a nude female figure, which is made of terracotta with very precise anatomical details but headless. The probability is that its head was destroyed. This figurine is only a few centimetres high and the large breasts that dominate her body express the nurturing qualities of the female.

In *Tarxien* temples, one of the most beautifully decorated temples, one may come across a very popular, interesting, impressive colossal statue of the so-called 'Fat Lady', also referred to as the 'Fertility Goddess'. This idol is wearing a pleated skirt and has tiny feet compared to the rest of her body. Unfortunately, only the lowest part of this statue survived. In other various parts of the temple site other similar statuettes were found. The majority of these figures seem to show the image of the so-called 'fat ladies', their shape very identical with other statues found in other temple sites. Other statuettes seem to be sexless as no part of their genitals is clearly visible but others are without doubt females. A particular small clay statuette (6.6cm.) which looks slightly grotesque, is a female figure, showing the crucial moment of birth, and expressing a sense of gesture, with one hand touching the head, (with a broken raised leg), and suggesting that the person is in labour pain. The lines incised across the back might have represented the months of gestation. Another colossal fragment of a stone statue is the lowest part of a 'goddess' with a pleated skirt and robust legs. On the base of the pedestal one could see also images of other small figures. Some parts of a genderless figure, hypothetically regarded as a 'temple-priest', were also found at *Tarxien* temples (Trump, 1961). Archaeologist Michael Ridley considers this statuette as a priestess. (Ridley, 1986). A detail that survived of this small statuette is the face and fine rendering of the hair in the form of a wig (Zammit, 1986). The figure also is wearing a long pleated skirt covering both feet. Unfortunately there is nothing to suggest the gender of this representation of the figure. A good number of stone and clay heads were also found in this temple.

Another similar sculpture in stone, like the one found at *Tarxien* was discovered in 1964 by a group of Italian archaeologists at *Tas-Silg* temples near Marsaxlokk. The figure is wearing a skirt and stands on small hefty feet. It stands on a low plinth with decorated spirals on the front part. Unfortunately this 1.14-meter statue is heavily damaged on the upper part, so it is impossible to identify its gender.

When we come to analyse other statuettes from other temple sites in Malta one must not leave out one of the earliest human representations so far recorded in the Maltese islands a much stylised figurine found at *Skorba*. This Palaeolithic form of statuette (which resembles the Cycladic and Danubian figurines) is wearing a triangular mask with a nose indicated and a dot for a mouth. Although anatomically peculiar, the figure is surely a female because the breasts and the deeply incised vulva are evident. This statuette is one of the oldest found in Malta, from the 5th Millennium B.C. (Gimbutas, 1989). Characteristics show a certain type of concern for fertility. Marija Gimbutas suggested that this statuette represented the "Bird Goddess." 'Statue menhirs' were also found at *Zebbug*. These tend to be more of an abstract reflection of the human figure.

Finally we come to discuss the most recent and remarkable finds of various figurines and statuettes found during this last decade. These were found at the *Xaghra Stone Circle*, also known as the *Gozo Stone Circle* or the *Xaghra Brochtorff Circle* (Fig. 08), which was used as a burial site, and is about 500 metres away from the *Ggantija* temples. The re-excavation of this site (first excavated in 1820 by James Somerville and Otto Bayer) was started by an Anglo-Maltese team of archaeologists in June 1987 and concluded around the summer of 1994. A great amount of pottery and figurines were found on this site and this enriched the artistic Neolithic heritage of the Maltese islands. According to Malone:

Earlier excavations discovered about one hundred figurine fragments from temples and the Hypogeum. The *Xaghra Brochtorff Circle* work has increased the sample by a third, with seventeen near-complete terracotta figurines, eighteen fragments and heads; a snail seated stone figure, a larger seated pair on a bed, six stick figures and three other stone images (Malone, 1998).

These anthropomorphic figures brought new debates on the gender, use, and meaning of the images. I wish to analyse first the extraordinary 'Double Goddess' or 'Twin Fat Ladies'. It was found in the summer of 1991. It is a rather small statue about 9 cm by 14 cm. Both figures are seated on a couch with one of the figures holding a tiny figure on the lap and the other one a pot. Again, like temple statuettes from other sites, the figures are dressed up with pleated skirts and their small feet are resting on some sort of a pedestal decorated with spiral motifs. Unfortunately one of the figures' head is missing and the other has a very interesting elaborate hairstyle. Traces of red ochre are also evident on the lower part of the twin figures. This statue was located in one of the apses of the burial complex. Here again archaeologists call these figures asexual (Malone, 1998) but others maintain that they are females. Another group of statuettes, considered as very peculiar works of art for that period, were found at the *Xaghra Stone Circle*, a cache of nine figures (Fig. 24) associated with the burial cave. These are called the 'Shaman's Bundle'.

Six of the figures are approximately of the same size, without arms and legs; they are flat with no indication of anatomy, very stylised as well as idealised. Their heads are finely carved. Two of the figures have ornate hairstyles, while the others show less detail in their general appearance. Again two of the figures wear the recurring pleated skirt. The smaller figures look as if they represent children. A head of an animal, probably a domesticated animal, a dog also makes part of the group. These figurines give the impression that they were used to be handheld or supported on sticks for ritual purposes, suggesting the use of a shamanic ceremonial performance during the burial (Malone, 1996).

Contrasted with this group of nine statuettes, other rotund figurines were excavated in the same area of the *Xaghra Stone Circle*. One of them is a fine small-seated figure about 7 cm high with a very mysterious expression. In my opinion this is one of the best examples of a Neolithic statuette expressing abundance, and the nurturing qualities of the human being. Unfortunately no clear indication of sex is present in this artefact, as well as in three other examples of seated figurines with large buttocks found in this burial shrine. The remains of the largest sculpture, part of this burial site and were probably a one meter in height statue were found scattered in this area. When the image is reconstructed a corpulent anthropomorphic figure with closed arms and pleated skirt appears.

When analysing all these figurines and statuettes together, coming from various temple and burial sites in Malta and Gozo, one recognises an analogy amongst many: the corpulent bodies with pleated skirts, headless, egg-shaped buttocks and fleshy legs. These common characteristics are observed on many statuettes. Another thing I want to point out is that there must have been a relation between the statuettes and the temples. One cannot look at these artefacts independently of the sites at which they were found. There is an interrelationship between the megalithic buildings and the figurative representations, as well as the ritual practices of the Neolithic inhabitants of the islands. It seems reasonable to assume that these figurines or statuettes had a ritual function (Evans, 1959) and many are of the opinion that 'fertility cults' appeared to be an important aspect of Neolithic culture in Malta. The apparent strong development of this cult in the later Temple Period has been interpreted as an increased effort at appeasing the Fertility deity (Savona Ventura, 1999). So we see that some kind of symbolism associated with fertility was present in these temples and this was undoubtedly expressed in figurative form. Fertility ritual practices were in fact part of the religious custom of the Temple people. Veteran, British archaeologist John Evans, in a short paper published in 1996, suggested that a relationship exists between the function of the temples and human representation. He also accepted the hypothesis that the early Maltese inhabitants venerated some kind of divinity and referred to the colossal statue

and the subordinate figures found at *Tarxien* temples (Evans, 1996).

The prehistoric peoples in Malta were preoccupied with the propagation of life. They were very much concerned with survival and very conscious of the cyclical process of reproduction of their crops and stock, and of their own species. It appears that they possibly developed this fertility cult in an effort to promote and encourage the reproductive cycle. Worshipping such figurative representations may have been part of their daily observance. One can say that most megalithic temples have been associated with a progressive Fertility Cult, on the basis that the clay statuettes and symbols were associated with the fertility deity, which have been found in the various temples and tombs. Fertility appeared to have been the centre of the culture of the Neolithic.

As we can see from the description and interpretation of the various statues and statuettes found in temples, Malta is a unique place as a destination for tourists because of its prehistoric heritage. These World heritage megalithic temples attract thousands of tourists each year. The development of heritage tourism in Malta allows for further regeneration and continues to maintain "the principles of sustainable cultural tourism, while at the same time urging the introduction of necessary controls to protect individual cultural heritage sites." (The Malta Declaration on Cultural Tourism, 2006).

REFERENCES

- Biaggi, Cristina, The Significance Of Nudity, Obesity And Sexuality Of The Maltese Goddess Figures, In *Archaeology And Fertility Cult In Ancient Mediterranean*, Edit. A. Bonanno, 1986, P.133.
- Evans, J.D., *Malta, Thames And Hudson*, 1959, P.91.
- Evans, John, What Went On In A Maltese Megalithic Temple? In *Maltese Prehistoric Art 5000-2500bc*, Pace, Anthony, Edit., 1996, *Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti*, P. 42.
- Gimbutas, Marija, *The Language Of The Goddess*, 1989, P. 176.
- Gimbutas, Marija, *The Civilization Of The Goddess: The World Of Old Europe*, 1991, P. 289.
- Laganà, Louis, *Maltese Neolithic Art And Its Influence On Contemporary Artists – Interview With Willow La Monte*, Broadcast By The Voice Of The Mediterranean Radio Station Malta On The 17th January 2001.
- Malone, Caroline, *God Or Goddess – The Temple Art Of Ancient Malta*, In *Ancient Goddesses*, In Goodison, Lucy And Morris, Christine, Edits., 1998, *British Museum Press*. P. 156.
- Malone, Caroline, Stoddart, Simon, *Representations Of Death – Discoveries At The Xaghra Stone Circle, Gozo*, In *Maltese Prehistoric Art 5000-2500 Bc*, Edit. Pace, Tony, 1996, P. 50.
- Ridley, Michael, *The Megalithic Art Of The Maltese Islands*, 1971, 1976, P.117; Biaggi, Cristina, Biaggi, Cristina, *The Significance Of Nudity, Obesity And Sexuality Of The Maltese Goddess Figures*, In Bonanno, A., Edit., *Archaeology And Fertility Cult In Ancient Mediterranean*, 1986, P. 136.

- Rountree, Kathryn, The Past Is A Foreigners' Country: Goddess Feminists, Archaeologists, And The Appropriation Of Prehistory, In The Journal Of Contemporary Religion, Vol. 16, No.1, P.14.
- Savona Ventura, Charles, Medical Mythology In Stone Age Malta, In Facets Of Maltese Prehistory, 1999, P. 109, Published By The Prehistoric Society Of Malta, Quoting Stoddart Simon, Et Al.
- The Malta Declaration On Cultural Tourism: Its Encouragement And Control, Europa Nostra Congress, Malta, 2006.
- Trump, David, Megalithic Architecture In Malta In Renfrew, Colin, Edit., The Megalithic Monuments Of Western Europe, London Thames And Hudson, 1983.
- Trump, David, National Museum Of Malta, Archaeological Section, Guide, 1961, P. 16.
- Veen, Veronica, The Goddess Of Malta – The Lady Of The Waters And The Earth, 1992, P. 45.
- Zammit, Vincent, Tarxien Prehistoric Temples, 1986, P. 6.

This page intentionally left blank

The relationship between recreational quality and desert tourism development in Esfahan, Iran

S. Tarzaban & A. Zainal

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study was to assess perspective of the relationship between recreational quality and desert tourism development in Esfahan, Iran. For this present study, Naein city was chosen by researcher because this city at the same time has both cultural and natural heritage in Esfahan, Iran. The data were collected through self-administered survey questionnaire. The result shows that desert tourism destination is noticed by the international tourists as compared to local tourists who are not so familiar with desert tourism destination. Nonetheless nowadays the suppliers are focusing in promoting and developing desert areas as tourism destination for both domestic and international tourists.

Keywords: Desert Tourism Development, recreational quality, Esfahan

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism provides an important way to expand a country's economic base through linkages with the agricultural, industrial, and service sectors. Tourism is also able to provide local jobs and training places and enhances the recognition factor for towns and regions and with that for Iran as a location for business and industry. It also benefits a variety of allied economic sectors (Drucksache 2005).

1.1 Desert tourism issue globally

Deserts are home to many human populations of the world. Currently around 500 million people live in deserts and desert margins, amounting to 8 per cent of the global population. Notably, desert tourism is another source of investment which has grown quickly in many countries. Four million tourists visit Morocco and five million reach Tunisia each year. They contributed six per cent to Tunisian gross domestic product in 1999, and employed over 300,000 people. Desert destinations in both countries outperformed their coasts. There was a 161 per cent increase in tourism to Egypt in 2005. Dubai claims to be the world's fastest growing tourist destination; 100 000 British people have bought homes there, and it is aiming at 15 million tourist visits a year. Baja California is booming. More gambling is said to take place in deserts than in any other global environment. The upward trends may continue in some places, although some markets are nearing saturation (UNEP, 2006).

1.2 Desert & tourism in Esfahan, Iran

Basically, Iran has a suitable geographical situation and natural endowment (e.g. Iran has 12 out of 17 kinds of climate) and 11 registered historical attractions which means it is possible for the country to boost the tourism products to the highest level. However, tourism has not been highlighted to the fullest in Iran. Although Iran is on the list of 10 superior countries of the world from view point of tourist attraction, but the share of Iran from income of tourism industry in the world, is just 0.04% (Jam, 2006).

Iran is one of the five countries that have the highest level of physical variety in the world and it is one of the



Figure 1. Map of Iran.

ecotourism prominent poles in the world but at present it is at the level of 120th among the other countries of the world (Zirakbash, 2007). One third of this country is located in desert area. Esfahan region being the second developed region after Tehran, is made up of three sub-regions such as the mountain region, central region and desert region including the city of Naein, Kashan, Ardestan and Natanz. Notably, Iran is one of the world's favourite desert tourist destinations and so faces considerable challenges in making its tourist industry more environmental friendly (Faghri, 2007).

It is worth noting that Naein city has rich cultural and natural heritages. Tourism in this region has enough resources like tourist and cultural resources that can help the growth of economic equivalences (Faghri 2007). So, if tourism development is able to create potential rural job opportunities and rural area growth, then this activity is beneficial for Naein. With regards to tourism development in Esfahan, few researches and studies have been done and pointed out at how tourism can bring in international tourists. The development of desert tourism regions is crucial when at the point of economy may be declining. Consequently, creating new job avenues and developing second resources can make it possible in idealizing rural life. With all of the above concerns lead to the question of whether desert tourism is an area worthy of research in Iran? Yes indeed, the desert tourism development in Iran at large and Naein city in particular need to be researched and investigated further to help boost the tourism industry in the region of Esfahan.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

Desert economies in most countries are characterised by trivial lands for conservative agriculture, and a high proportion of economic activity in the tourism and service industries. The far-off distance of desert area from the city limit and the relatively small population has resulted in relatively high service delivery costs. Desert business is known to be operating in small scale, experiencing high transport costs, and concentrating on products which ultimately lead to the natural resources available.

According to Tremblay (2006), wildlife-viewing issue can play a greater role than first assumed in explaining the attractiveness of desert locations to specific market segments. Another issue, one not mentioned by Weaver (2001), is that many wild animals in desert environments are nocturnal, and this, twinned with the low climatic resilience, patience and ability of tourist-viewers to 'relate to them' beyond the superficial, makes marketing the desert difficult (Tremblay, 2006).

2.1 *Service quality (SERVQUAL) and (REQUAL)*

Gronross (2001) offer a comprehensive definition of services where service is 'an activity or series of activities of a more or less intangible nature than normal, but not necessarily, take place in the interaction between

the customer and service employees and/or physical resources or goods and/or systems of the service provider, which are provided as solutions to customer problems'.

The quality of service involved with tourism plays an important role in the process of delivery (Wyllie 2000) and thus is the standard used to assess the effectiveness of a particular leisure service agency, including the tourism service sector (Godbey 1997). Therefore, service quality is an intangible, but crucial, area of interest to travel service providers.

SERVQUAL is based on the proposition that service quality can be measured as the gap between the service that customers expect and the performance they perceive to have received. The major concern about the SERVQUAL was its use of measurement with different scores which resulted in different numbers of factor dimensions, improper managerial approaches, and conceptual problems (Brady, 1997).

In addition, Crompton et al. (1991) stated that SERVQUAL cannot be used to evaluate service quality in the different types of recreation services sectors and suggested the need to develop a new scale to fit tourism or other recreation services sectors. MacKay and Crompton (1990) proposed a conceptual framework for studying service quality in the recreation and leisure industries—the REQUAL model. REQUAL focuses on the five dimensions of service quality (assurance, responsiveness, participant, reliability and tangibility) reported by Parasuraman et. al. (1991), but was developed within the context of recreation services. In sum, the findings from current empirical studies suggest that REQUAL can serve as a skeleton for other researchers to use in their investigations of recreation service quality.

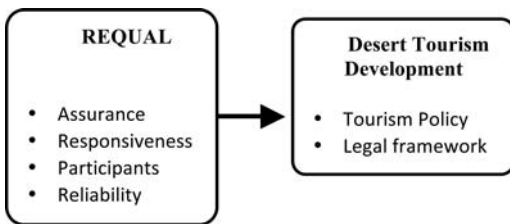
2.2 *Desert tourism development*

Tourism is increasingly seen as a key community tool, with the recognition of its economic contribution in bolstering stagnating economies and its ability to unify local community residents (Fennell, 2003). At community levels, tourism offered opportunities for direct, indirect, and induced employment and income, spurring regional and local economic development (Coccosis, 2004).

Globally tourism development is seen as an ongoing process. It is no economic panacea, and is best suited as a supplement to a local community for achieving development (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000). The process of desert tourism development is an important tool in community development. Indeed tourism plays a role in facilitating community development through business mentoring and educational opportunities that contribute to local communities in increasing skill and knowledge in local communities and local residents as well as improving the community's economic level (Bushell & Eagles, 2007). Hence local communities have to turn to tourism development to provide economic, social, cultural and overall development of the community.

Within the academic tourism literature itself, very few references are made to ‘deserts’ or ‘arid environments’. Examples can be found within collections which encompass elements of places classified (for the sake of case study) as either ‘remote’, ‘peripheral’ or ‘fragile’ environments and point at issues linked with the combined remoteness, fragility and highly distinct attributes of such places. At other times, they are classified by government and tourism management agencies within the heading of ‘regional tourism’ which can be defined in many ways depending on national context. Usually it amalgamates non-urban – statistically ‘peripheral’, rural, administratively disconnected – forms of tourism across all types of environments: coastal, island, mountain, tropical and desert, as in Australia (Tremblay, 2006).

Based on the literature, the following theoretical framework and hypothesis was formulated



H1: There is a significant relationship between REQUAL and development of desert tourism.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participants and procedures

The respondents of this study comprised of tourists who had visited the desert in Naenin, Esfahan. Prior to the survey, an interview was carried out to several independent organizations, travel agencies in Esfahan city, and private investors in rural area of the desert.

3.2 Measures

A close-ended questionnaire using a numerical 5-point Likert Scale was utilized. The dimensions of REQUAL were assurance, responsiveness, reliability, tangibility and participants.

3.3 Data analyses

The demographic information obtained was only used to provide an overview of the respondents’ profile. The regression analyses were conducted to assess the relationship between the independent variables of REQUAL towards the criterion variable of desert tourism development.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Profile of sample

67.9% ($N = 57$) of the respondents were male with a remaining of 32.1% ($N = 27$) females. 17 respondents (20.5%) are those aged between 21 and 25, while 28 (33.7%) of them are those aged 26 and 30.

The age between 31 and 35 make up to 21.7% ($N = 18$) of the population; and the age group between 36 and 40 accounted for 6% ($N = 5$), while the age of 41 and above made up a total of 18.1% (15 respondents).

In terms of education level 83.3% ($N = 70$) hold a degree; while 10.7% ($N = 9$) had diploma and 6% ($N = 5$) are PhD holders. In term of marital status, 38.1% ($N = 32$) were unmarried while 61.9% (52 individuals) of the respondents are married.

4.2 Hypothesis testing

Table 1 and 2 illustrate the reliability test and the results of the correlation of recreational quality for developing and improving the desert tourism destination in Esfahan. The results indicated that REQUAL positively effect desert tourism development. However, three of the sub hypothesis (**H1b**, **H1d** and **H1e**) were not supported although the overall REQUAL variable had positive effect on desert tourism development (DTD).

Table 1. Reliability coefficient of the variables.

Variables	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
<i>REQUAL</i>		
Assurance	9	0.911
Responsiveness	4	0.992
Participants	6	0.536
Reliability	5	0.943
Tangibility	3	0.945
<i>Desert tourism development</i>		
Scope of Tourism Policy	6	0.950
Legal Framework	5	0.945
Total	38	

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Matrix for Sub Variable of REQUAL to Desert Tourism Development (DTD).

Step	Measures	B
1	REQUAL	.396**
1a	Assurance	.473**
1b	Responsiveness	−0.057
1c	Participant	.546**
1d	Reliability	−0.053
1e	Tangibility	−0.212

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) or **($p < 0.01$).

5 DISCUSSION

As shown in Table 1 the cronbach's alpha coefficient for independent variable of REQUAL includes 5 dimensions, such as assurance (9 items) had a value 0.911, responsiveness (4 items) had a value 0.992, reliability (5 items) had a value 0.943 and tangibility (3 items) had a value 0.945. Generalizing from the result, the Cronbach's alpha values for the internal consistency were considered excellent and accepted. The dimension of participants (6 items) had a value of less 0.536. This indicated an acceptable minimum reliability level (Blaikie, 2003; Hinton, 2004). The dependent variable of desert tourism development (DTD) includes two dimensions namely; scope of tourism policy and legal framework. The reliability coefficient scope of tourism policy (6 items) was 0.950 and legal framework (5 items) had a value 0.945. Therefore, according to the strength of the Rules of Thumb these values are excellent internal consistent reliability.

The Pearson Correlation showed that REQUAL had a significantly positive influence on desert tourism development (DTD). The five dimensions of REQUAL such as assurance ($\beta = 0.473$), participant ($\beta = 0.546$) had the largest influence and significant unique contribution on desert tourist destination. While responsiveness ($\beta = -0.057$), reliability ($\beta = -0.053$), and tangibility ($\beta = -0.212$) had lowest influence and no significant contribution on DTD. However the overall REQUAL had a significant positive effect and influence on DTD. In determining the strength of the relationship the correlation between REQUAL and DTD ($\beta = 0.396$) is significant and positive. These probable explanations show REQUAL is indeed significant to DTD.

6 IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

This preliminary study is able to assist other tourist destinations in Iran to become aware of the critical factors such as recreational and leisure quality that can have a significantly unique contribution and positive influence for developing most tourism destinations in Iran.

The result of this study contributes several theoretical and practical implications. Specifically, this study confirmed the relationship between REQUAL and desert tourism development. Furthermore, this study provides definite evidence that REQUAL is important to desert tourism development at present and for the near future. Although several of the dimensions of REQUAL have negative relationship but the overall effect showed a positive influence on desert tourism development. This implied that monitoring quality in recreational and leisure areas is crucial to the developers and local government specifically.

7 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted under several constraints; the major limitation was (after choosing desert area in Naien) accessibility of going and visiting to this destination. The Farahzad, Mesr and Garmeh villages are about 400 km from Esfahan city and the main problem was the transportation system whereby individuals visiting this area need to change several mean of transportation before reaching the destination. On the other hand, telecommunication is also a limitation in this desert area. After passing the Jandagh area the mobile did not have transmission line. Next, the low number of tourists' arrival has resulted in the slow development of this desert tourism. It is a fact that desert tourism is unfamiliar and unattractive to local tourists since they register in minds that desert is part of their live and homeland, unlike the international tourists who appreciate this area. Though with some limitations, this study has high potential value in providing a foundation for future research. There are several opportunities to extend this study and the following are the recommendations that can be considered for future research. Decisions can and should be made not to change the desert, but to live with it and preserve its resources for the future. It is recommended that the future studies of tourism quality should evaluate the tourist's experience together with the five dimensions of REQUAL. Additionally, purposive study such as focus group can be utilized in getting more information from the service providers in the desert areas. Recreational quality will be one of the crucial issues in the tourism field in the future to be able to comprehend better about the situation in hand.

8 CONCLUSION

Deserts have much to offer for ecotourism, the fastest growing sector of the tourism market in many countries. Desert tourism is one of the opportunities for development in Iran, as long as the risks and dangers associated with political conditions, energy and resources (water and electricity), damaged beauty, nature's value are recognized and addressed explicitly in policy. Based on the findings of this present study, the desert tourism in Iran is unfamiliar for domestic tourists while the percentage of international tourists is low.

Desert tourism in Iran has not been highlighted by tourism organizations as the unique and fascinating tourist attraction. This study has found REQUAL with five dimensions (assurance, responsiveness, participants, reliability and tangibility) had significant effect due to the fact that tourists felt that there is lack of responsiveness, reliability and tangibility in the quality of service provided. One of the weaknesses includes the modern techniques of information dissemination on useful guides on tourism along with shortage of higher education providers for training

skilful labour force in all the levels has resulted in a “none presenting” of work force percentage.

On the other hand, shortage of suitable accommodation facilities for travellers has resulted in less quality services being rendered to tourists in the desert areas. In conclusion, desert tourism in Iran can be one of the famous tourist destinations if the government, tourism organization, tour operators and travel agencies focus and solve the problems in desert tourism and utilize human resources for developing and improving the tourism industry.

REFERENCES

- Blaikie, N. 2003. *Analyzing Quantitative Data: From Description to Explanation*. London: Sage.
- Brady, M.K. 1997. Re-conceptualizing Perceived Service Quality: Hierarchical model. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Florida State University.
- Bushell, R., and Eagles, P. 2007. *Tourism and Protected Areas: Benefits Beyond Boundaries*. London CAB International, UK.
- Coccosis, H. 2004. *Sustainable tourism and carrying capacity*. U.K: Ashgate Publishing
- Crompton, J.L., Mackay, K.J., and Fesenmaire, D.R. 1991. Identifying dimensions of service quality in public recreation. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 9(3), 16–27.
- Drucksache, B.T. 2005. Importance of Individual Tourism Sectors. *Tourism Policy Report of the Federal Government of Germany*, Editorial department Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology.
- Faghri, R. 2007. *Tourism planning and policy making of Islamic Republic of Iran. Analysis of the four Five-year Development Plans*. Published Master's Thesis, Lulea University.
- Fennell, D. A. 2003. *Ecotourism: an introduction*. (2 ed.): Routledge, UK.
- Godbey, G. 1997. Robert Crawford Lecture. Recreation and parks in A Changing World: becoming A health care Service. *Parks and Recreation*. pp. 91–99.
- Godfrey, K., and Clarke, J. 2000. *The tourism development handbook: a practical approach to planning and marketing*. London: Continuum.
- Gronross, C. 2001. The perceived service quality concept-A mistake. *Managing Service Quality*, 11(3), pp 150–152.
- Hinton, P.R. 2004. *Statistic Explained*, 2nd edition. London: Routledge.
- Jam, F. 2006. *Tourism, a Disturbed Industry*. Hamshahry News Paper.
- Leopold, A. 1949. *A Sand County almanac*. Sierra Club/Ballantine, New York, pp.295
- MacKay, K.J., and Crompton, J.L. 1990. Measuring the quality of recreation services. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 8(3), 47–56.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V., and Berry, L. 1991. Refinement and reassessment of the SERVQUAL scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 67(4), 420–450.
- Tremblay. 2006. *Desert Knowledge CRC: Desert Tourism Study*.
- UNEP. 2006. Summary of supply, trade and demand information on mercury. Analysis requested by UNEP Governing Council decision 23/9 IV. United Nations Environment Program, Chemical Brand Geneva.
- Weaver, D.B. 2001. 'Deserts, Grasslands and Savannahs', In Weaver (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism*, Wallingford, UK, CABI Publishing.
- Wyllie, R.W. 2000. *Tourism and Society*. State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- Zirakbash, D. 2007. *Analysis for tourism markets of Esfahan city and its development strategies (foreign tourists)*. Published Ph.D.'s dissertation, Esfahan University.

This page intentionally left blank

Religious tourism: Shiite shrine a powerful tool for regional development for Mashhad City, Iran

R.S. Hosseini

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia
National Center for Globalization Studies, Religion & Globalization Department, Iran

A. Zainal

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Religious tourism is one of the oldest types of tourism that has a significant contribution to tourism activities. In fact, this type of tourism experience is religious history; this issue is not specific to any particular religion and religious history has been a global phenomenon. Religious tourism differs from other types of tourism, by a forceful facet such as a journey away from home and movement to a temporary stay in another place. Both the aim and the purpose of the journey are a change in environment, at least for a limited period of time, which for the tourist is for divine and personal devotion and not for professional endeavor. It is noted that modern religious tourists are more able to visit holy cities and holy sites around the world. This is particularly important for Mashhad city of Iran as the second most important Shiite shrine in the world after Karbala in Iraq. Notably there are around 70,000 shrines and tombs in Iran which belong to grandsons of Shiite Imams. Some of these shrines are popular among all Shiite Muslims around the world but others are only popular among local people. Outside of Iran there are nearly 250 million Shiite Muslims. Nearly 25 million international and local pilgrims annually flock to Mashhad each year, the holiest city in Iran and the location of the shrine of Imam Reza (Mehrnews, 2011). So there is a high potential for expansion of pilgrimage tourism in Iran. The research with a library resource to check descriptive and analytical data pilgrimage tourism based on the concepts and dimensions of religious tourism in Iran is highlighted as baseline information for monitoring the factors that affect the religious tourists in Mashhad city. Finally it is hoped that with attention and action with regard to these suggestions, the tourism related organizations in the country will provide better facilities for tourists to visit and enjoy these places.

Keywords: Facets of religious tourism, Islamic countries, Mashhad City of Iran, Shiite shrines, tourism development

1 INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is modern and sophisticated industry, and grows and expands rapidly. It is one of industries that contribute to creating jobs and new careers. Tourism activities covers variety of segments and contribute significantly to national income as a result of marketing and product development to meet the changing needs of customers (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2004, p. 2). The tourism industry seeks to achieve satisfaction for the guests through a variety of services that are intangible in many cases.

One facet of tourism that is known today is religious tourism which is exclusively or strongly motivated for religious reasons. One of the oldest types of tourism and a worldwide phenomenon of religious history, it can be differentiated into various forms. The short-term religious tourism is distinguished by

excursions to nearby pilgrimage centers or religious conferences. The longterm describes visits of several days or weeks to national and international pilgrimage sites or conferences (Rinschede 1992).

Religious tourism distinguishes itself, as do all other types of tourism, by a dynamic element-movement in space, a journey-as well as by a static element-a temporary stay at a place other than the place of residence. Both the aim and the purpose of the journey are a change in environment, at least for a limited period of time, which for the tourist is of personal, not professional, interest. Religious tourism has a strong affinity with social and group tourism as well. For many tourists today, it is very important to travel with a group of believers who think similarly and who are consequently in the same age division. In developing countries, family groups define the combinations of pilgrims more than friends do (Morinis 1984).

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON IRAN

Iran was known as Persia till 1935, and is at a crossroads between the East and the West. The country is the second largest in the Middle East (1.65 million square kilometres) and inhabited by over 70 million people (SCI, 2007). According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Iran is ranked as one of the world's top countries in terms of the number of ancient and historical sites. To date, 13 historical sites have been listed under the World Heritage list and fifty-nine sites are tentatively listed (UNESCO, 2011a). Iran has also seven World Intangible Cultural Heritages (NowRuz, the Radif of Iranian music, the music of the Bakhshis of Khorasan, the Pahlevani and Zoorkhaneh rituals, the ritual dramatic art of Ta'z_iye and traditional skills of carpet weaving in Fars and Kashan regions) (UNESCO, 2011b). Despite these attractions, political orientation may have limited the country's tourism growth. Furthermore, the lack of information and advertising renders the country remaining relatively less explored by the outside world.

Iran is a country that is rich in diversity in cultural and historic terms, representing a recorded human history that stretches back some 10,000 years. The people who inhabit this country have a long history of involvement in tourism. Today, Iran's heritage draws both on indigenous histories and cultures as well as the impact of waves of invaders, notably the Greeks of Alexander the Great, the Arabs who introduced Islam to the country, the Mongols from the east and in the twentieth century, the influence of the west (Britain, France and the US). Iran's tangible cultural assets include seven ancient locations recognised by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as World Heritage Sites as well as a range of renowned Islamic shrines and cultural sites. Iran's natural heritage is also diverse, including desert, mountains and coasts across climatic zones from temperate to sub-tropical (Farahani & Ghazali 2012).

There are around 70,000 shrines and tombs in Iran which belong to grandsons of Shiite Imams. Some of these shrines are famous for all Shiite Muslims around the world but others are only famous for local people. Outside of Iran there are nearly 250 million Shiite Muslims and that 25 million of them travel each year. So, there is a high potential for expansion of pilgrimage tourism in Iran. The existence of the Imam Reza shrine in Mashhad, shrine of Masoome in Qom, shrine of Imam Khomeini in Tehran and others indicate the high potential for Iran to develop the pilgrimage tourism.

2.1 Mashhad city, Iran

Mashhad is one of the largest cities in Iran. It is located 850 kilometers East of Tehran, Iran, and the center of the province of Khorasan. Mashhad has a population of more than 2.5 million. It is the capital



Figure 1. Location map of Mashhad city in Iran.

of Khorasan province. Mashhad is the second religious city in the world which welcomes an enormous number of tourists in each year which average to about 25000000 persons per year. With respect to the increasing large number of interested tourists who visit Mashhad each year, in this paper the religious tourism potentials of Mashhad has been studied by focusing on special Imam Reza Shiite. To this extent, in this paper, an effort was made to introduce the Religious tourism and Mashhad religious tourism potentials for an extension in tourist development. This advantage is resulted from the development of Mashhad city and geopolitically speaking, it is the second religious city in the world and the religious capital of Iran.

Mashhad city is one of the most attractive locations for religious tourists, with respect to the existence of the tomb of 8th Shiism Imam. It has a high tourism potential such as different types of accommodation facilities including hotels, an advanced transportation systems including international airport, railways, buses terminals, etc. Mashhad area is about 10329.28 square kms. Because of the increasing large number of tourists, the city is developing each year.

3 RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Islamic religiosity

Religion is one of the major elements of the development of human history and civilization (Vukonic, 1996). It defines the ideas for life, which are reflected in the values and attitudes of societies and individuals (Fam, Waller, & Erdogan, 2004). Such values and attitudes shape the behaviour and practices of institutions and peoples. In sociology, religion is a system of ideas by means of which individuals represent themselves to the society whose members they are, and the obscure but intimate relations that they have with it (Durkheim, 1915). Religiosity is known as one of the most important cultural forces and a key influence on behaviour (Delener, 1994; Essoo & Dibb, 2004; Sood & Nasu, 1995). Thus, religion influences the interaction among

people, which has a huge ramification on the perception of people towards others. Thyne, Lawson, and Todd (2006) stated that according to the Social Distance Theory, people are more tolerant to others who are socially and culturally similar to themselves. In support of this, several studies have shown that religious people are more intolerant of others of different background than themselves.

In line with religiosity, religious tourism, a form of tourism, whereby people of faith travel individually or in groups for pilgrimage, missionary, or leisure (fellowship) purposes are massively taking place in Iran. Local and international tourists travel as pilgrimage; a journey or search of great moral or spiritual significance. Typically, these tourists make a journey to a shrine or other location of importance to their beliefs and faith. According to the World Tourism Organization, an estimated 300 to 330 million pilgrims visit the world's key religious sites every year (Washington Post.com). The world's largest form of mass religious tourism takes place at the annual Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Just like the Hajj pilgrimage in the month of Zulhijjah (the eleventh month of Islamic calendar), Mashhad city is visited by shi'a muslim pilgrims implicitly from Iran and explicitly among shi'a muslims from other parts of the world.

The history of Mashhad as a pilgrim' city dates back to the death of Imam Reza in 817. Imam Reza; a more specific meaning of Imam is defined by the shi'ite sect of Islam and refers to the leaders appointed by God, was buried here and a shrine was built around his grave in the village of Sanabad. Pilgrims started coming to the grave, and since then the shrine has gradually enlarged to the current day Haram complex. Imam Reza was the seventh direct descendent of the holy Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and the eight Imam of Shi'iet sect. Pilgrims began to visit his tomb and the central part of the village of Sanabad was established (Alizadeh 2011). According to historians, overtime the number of pilgrims increased in Mashhad and the village of Sanabad became known as the city of Mashhad al-Reza which means the place of martyrdom of al-Reza (pbuh).

Nearly 25 million pilgrims annually flock to Mashhad, the holiest city in Iran and the location of the shrine of Imam Reza. The city serves as a pilgrimage site as well as a jumping off point for excursions into Khorasan or onward travel to Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. Mashhad is connected to other cities in Iran by bus, and most bus stations are located far from the city's central area. Most flights to Mashhad originate in the Arabian Gulf or the Central Asian cities of Bishkek, Dushanbe and Kabul (World Tourism Organization2010). As illustrated in Table 1 and Figure 3 an influx of tourists come to visit Mashhad city for the purpose of religious tourism or specifically pilgrimage tourists are undeniable. Basically a larger percentage of the locals from the nearby cities come in their own vehicles, while those pilgrims from farther distances either come to pay respect to the late Imam's grave and

Table 1. Comparison of incoming passengers through the bases of entry to Mashhad city.

Terminals	2011	2010	2009	2008
Airport	1776068	163995	140769	176649
Railway	3608606	365531	345442	453698
Terminal	7649955	739444	766772	598532
Personal vehicles	14805325	15030896	13013447	9842833
Total	2783995	2772199	25544680	22133028

Source: Khorasan's Cultural Heritage – *Handicrafts* and *Tourism Organization* (2012).

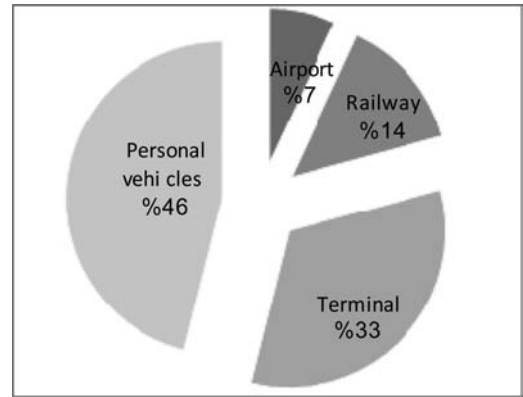


Figure 2. Incoming passengers to province through the bases of entry. Source: Khorasan's Cultural Heritage, – *Handicrafts* and *Tourism Organization* (2012).

the place of worship by public transportation such as by bus, train or plane.

4 PILGRIMAGE TOURISM IN IRAN

Iran has tourist attractions based on natural and human resources. There is hardly any country in the world containing such elements of Iran's tourism. It is a land of history of the oldest human civilizations that dates back thousands of years, added to that the existence of shrines and religious sites of different religions as important source of religious tourism. The shrines and religious sites are distinctive and unique to the tourist arrivals. Iran assumes prestigious status among Islamic countries. Its abundant sacred regions include remains of infallible Shiite Imams who could attract million Muslims around the world (Gado Kana, 2011).

With expansion of Islam in Iran, the tombs of Imams (descendants of Islam prophet andreligious leaders in Shiite) are gradually changed to places of pilgrimage and shrines. Subsequently, people and religious leaders constructed suitable and outstanding buildings in these places. These buildings or Imamzadehs have unique architectural styles. The most famous artists of

Table 2. Number of pilgrims at the shrine.

Year	2011	2006	2000	1986	1983	1978
Million population	27	20	16	9.74	6.44	6.28

Reference: Alizadeh (2011).

the time, with making use of existing possibilities, portrayed their skills, arts and genius in construction and ornament of these places. These genius and talents are reflected in most of such buildings.

Notably, the places of pilgrimage in Iran are divided into two categories such as (1) the places with international fame like the sacred Shrine of His Holiness Imam Reza in Mashhad city and the shrine of Her Holiness Masoomeh in Qom. The social and economic life of these two cities is interlocked with the existence of these shrines. (2) The places with local and regional fame. These places of pilgrimage are scattered in different parts of the country, of which the most important ones are: the Shrine of His Holiness Ahmad-ebn-Moosa famous as Shah Cheraq in Shiraz; the Shrine of His Holiness Abdol-Azim in Shahr Ray (south of Tehran city); and Mausoleum of Danial in Susa (Shoosh).

According to statistics obtained from the Population and Housing census, which was held in 2011, the number of pilgrims of the city of Mashhad with 2.5 million population was 27 million people or six times more than the city population, and it is estimated this number would increase to 35 million up to next five years. So every three years each Iranian will visit Mashhad.

The bright economic future of the service sector in Mashhad due to the great interest of the people to visit the holy shrine on the one hand and capital accumulation in this city on the other hand, would justify the trust and interest of people for investing in the project. Resulting from the presence of pilgrims at Mashhad is such that the service sector in the economy of Mashhad is completely revolves around providing service to pilgrims and travelers. Providing residential areas, construction of appropriate hotels are the most beneficial service that economic departments of the city can provide many related jobs for the locals.

5 CONCLUSION

The Holy city of Mashhad and its historical, recreation, abundance cultural and religious attractions is one of the significant economy centers of the country. The city which has a special place in religious and belief memory of the country people and Muslims of the region and the world, owes its current economic situation to the shrine of Imam Reza (pbuh).

Religious tourism development in Iran can move towards globalization. Scheduled to a wide scale in

Mashhad city, according to its high potentials in the diversity of its sites, applying different facilities such as accommodation requirements, roads, other public facilities would lead to larger number of interested tourists.

This goal can be achieved by applying an efficient management and a comprehensive planning, in addition to the training, civilizing, advertisements and stable development of religious tourism in this city. For better management and efficient services to pilgrims and travelers the following strategies are recommended. First it is necessary to increase the effectiveness of programs and earn the maximum economic benefit for Mashhad city by integrating modern management and consistent uplift of brand equity among international pilgrimage tourists. Second, the tourism agencies should pay attention to vigorous plan for providing accommodation to necessitate pilgrimage tourists and importance of increasing awareness among service providers in providing quality service to these tourists. Third, the local government should develop more precise criteria for historical-religious preservation site as invaluable and unique heritage for the future of Mashhad city. Fourth, to look.

Thus, different solutions can be applied to develop Iran as religious tourism country, with respect to its high potential. These solutions are included in providing religious tourism data banks, recognizing of talented sites for investment, preparing comprehensive religious tourism plans, considering the potential of procurement of required hardware and software for tourist entrance, forming of NGOs (which are active on religious tourism and organizing of special expertise tours), introducing of sites by applying advertisements, websites, civilization and governmental supports.

REFERENCES

- Alizadeh, K. 2011. The Role of Historic-Religious Monuments in the Future Economy of Mashhad City.
- Azimi Hashemi, M. & Azam Kari, F. 2011. Review challenges management destination in the pilgrimage city of Mashhad.
- Clift, Jean Dalby; Clift, Wallace 1996. The Archetype of Pilgrimage: Outer Action With Inner Meaning. The Paulist Press.
- Delener, N. 1994. Religious contrasts in consumer decision behavior patterns, their dimension and marketing implication. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28(5), 33e36.
- Durkheim, E. 1915. The elementary forms of religious life: A study in sociology of religion. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Essoo, N., & Dibb, S. 2004. Religious influences on shopping behaviour: an exploratory study. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 20(7e 8), 683e712.
- Fam, K. S., Waller, D. S., & Erdogan, B. Z. 2004. The influence of religion on attitudes towards the advertising of controversial products. *European Journal of Marketing*, 38(5/6), 537e555.
- Gado Kana, A. 2011. Religious Tourism in Iraq, 1996-1998: An Assessment. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*.

- Gisbert, R. 1992. Forms of religious tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 19, pp. 51–67.
- Hayes, David K. and Ninemeier, Jack D. 2002. *Hotel Operations Management*. (1st ed). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Khorasan's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization 2011.
- Morinis, E. A. 1984. *Pilgrimage in the Hindu Tradition: A Case Study of West Bengal*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- O'Gorman, K., McLellan, L.R. & Baum, T. 2007. Tourism in Iran: central control and indigeneity.
- Sood, J., & Nasu, Y. 1995. Religiosity and nationality, an exploratory study of their effect on consumer behavior in Japan and the United States. *Journal of Business Research*, 34(1), 1e9.
- Shojaee Siuki, H & Rasoul Dakhili, R & Ghahremani, N. 2010. An Introduction to Mashhad Suburbs' Geosites and Considering the Development Solutions of Regional Geotourism.
- Thyne, M., Lawson, R., & Todd, S. 2006. The use of conjoint analysis to assess the impact of the cross-cultural exchange between hosts and guests. *Tourism Management*, 27(2), 201e213.
- Vukonic, B. 1996. *Tourism and religion*. New York: Pergamon.
- UNESCO. 2011a. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. World heritage. URL. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list> Accessed 29.8.11.
- UNESCO. 2011b. Representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity of Iran. URL. [http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg¼400311&cp¼IR](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=400311&cp¼IR) Accessed 20.04.11.
- UNWTO 2011. *Tourism Highlights*, United Nations World Tourism Organization.
- Zamani-Farahani, H. & Ghazali, M. 2012. The relationship between Islamic religiosity and residents' perceptions of socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Iran: Case studies of Sare'in and Masooleh. journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/tourman.

This page intentionally left blank

Exploring nature based hiking experiences at the Mount Datuk in Malaysia

Norazlisham Mohd Amin

Faculty of Business & Accountancy, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Prem Chhetri

School of Business IT and Logistics, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

ABSTRACT: This paper explores the characteristics of hiking experiences at one of the nature-based tourist destinations in Malaysia. A theoretical ‘*visitor experiences*’ model based on experiential surrogates in natural landscape developed earlier is empirically tested on a different tourist destination with similar biophysical attributes. This study captured *in situ* experiences encountered by a group of university students at the Mount Datuk in Rembau, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. In addition to landscape views, the experiential surrogates were also evaluated against different types of terrain conditions. Outcomes of the study enable objective assessment on ‘*visitor experiences*’ of landscape against terrain conditions of the nature-based tourist destination among young hikers to be compared. The findings also provide evidence base to enhance hiking experience and the management of nature based tourist attractions including the ecological design of hiking trails.

Keywords: Hiking experiences, nature landscapes, and tourism

1 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is known for its rainforest mountains including the highest mountain in the Peninsular, Mount Tahan in the state of Pahang and the highest mountain in Malaysia, Mount Kinabalu in the state of Sabah. Mount-climbing is one of the main recreational activities at these nature-based tourist destinations. Besides these two well known nature-based destinations, there is Mount Datuk, located in the district of Rembau in the state of Negeri Sembilan. This mountain is well known to the ‘*daypack*’ climbers, where the trip to the site can be completed in a single day, between four to six hours. The journey enables visitors to experience nature that elicits a multitude of feelings and emotions in response to natural stimuli.

In conjunction with the concept of eco-tourism, adventure tourism and sports tourism, mount-climbing are other recreational activities to cater the needs and interest of hikers.

The purpose of this paper is to report part of the study results to reflect the characteristics of hiking experiences and variegated response to variability in natural settings such as landscapes and terrain conditions. In this study, visitor experiences in natural-based tourist destination were tested using local university students as surrogate hikers.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

“There is no single theory that defines the meaning and extent of tourist experiences. . . .”
(Chhetri, et al., 2004, p. 34)

A number of prior attempts have been made in addressing the above statement and yet this area is still relatively underexplored. In experiencing nature, Chhetri, et al. (2004) analyzed a number of studies (Hetherington, Daniel, & Brown, 1993; Hull & Harvey, 1989; Hull & Stewart, 1995; Kroh & Gimblett, 1992) that show experiences in nature based tourism destinations are complex and compounded in nature by represent some commonality and recurrent patterns.

Recognizing the complexity, uncertainty and multi-dimensionality of human experiences in nature-based tourist destination, Chhetri & Arrowsmith (2002; 2008) argued for the use of biophysical information to conceptualize and measure hiking experience, using fifteen experiential variables as a proxy for experiences. Based on this conceptual framework, part of the approach in the prior study (Chhetri, et al., 2004) was applied and tested locally among the local university students.

In addition to the landscape views, visitor experiences were also tested against terrain condition types to

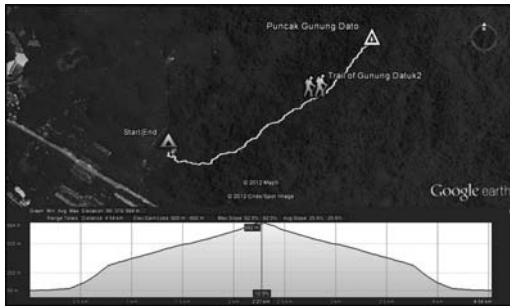


Figure 1. Climbing track of Mount Datuk.

evaluate their impact or association with hiking experiences. Terrain condition types in this study are defined as the surface condition of the track that the respondents traverse through the natural settings along the hiking trail.

Principal components analysis (PCA) (Chhetri, et al., 2004) have been applied to the survey data to determine the underlying dimensions of respondents' experiences reported by participants during the fieldtrip.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Data collection

Survey instruments based on Chhetri et al. (2004) were used to explore experiences of 'hiking subjects', which consists of 29 university students from 3rd Residential College, University of Malaya, Malaysia.

Data of the study was collected via questionnaires that were completed at designated check points along the track. Five-point Likert scale (from highly positive to highly negative), were used to record subjects' state of emotions and feelings. A total of 696 observations were recorded in the field.

Location-based data logged in GPS receivers were also collected for analysis to ascertain its influence on the responses i.e. track pass through by the respondents was captured via GPS device.

Landscapes and terrain types were identified and subjectively categorized for analysis. Scenic views, open space and forest stand are the three landscape categories tested by Chhetri, et al. (2004) were retested in this study. The three terrain condition types identified and tested in this study are rugged, almost flat and steep.

3.2 Instrument and statistical analysis

The development of instrument and its administration are closely adhered to the prior study (Chhetri, et al., 2004), to ensure consistency of approach for discussion including 15 mood parameters tested in the said study (refer to Table 1).

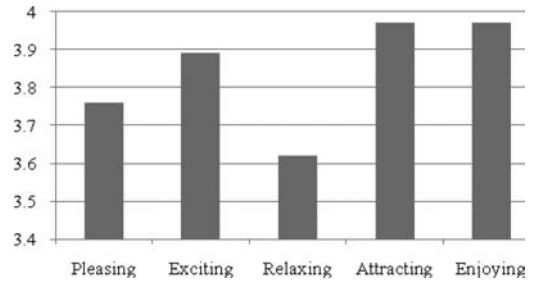


Figure 2. Mean responses of selected experiential variables.

This study reapplied the principal components analysis (PCA) and ANOVA to determine the underlying dimensions of participants' experiences captured during the field trip.

4 RESULT AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Respondents' background

The respondents are undergraduate students from University of Malaya, involved in their residential college activity. They have participated voluntarily in this study. A total of 696 observations were analyzed from 29 respondents, aged between 19 to 26 years-old (with a mean age of 21.34). 28% were male and 78% were female.

4.2 Experiential components

In this paper, the mean value calculated for the selected variables that heavily loaded component 1 are listed in Figure 2.

The calculated Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) figure for collected data of this study is 0.894. The same acceptance level of (at 0.5 levels) was used in the prior study (Prem Chhetri, et al., 2004) for the data to be considered acceptable for the use of principal components analysis (PCA). In this study, the figure of the KMO clearly met the acceptance level.

Three components were extracted based on PCA, with an eigenvalue greater than 1. These components explain 65.9% of the variability in observations, based on varimax rotation. A component less, as compared to the initial result of study done by Chhetri, et al. (2004).

Result of PCA revealed that the first component is heavily loaded with relaxing, exciting, pleasing, attracting and enjoying. This component therefore is termed consistent with the prior study (Prem Chhetri, et al., 2004) as a "desirable hiking experience". Component 1 of this study accounts for 30% of variability in observations.

Component 2 accounts for 21.4% of the variability in observations and are heavily loaded with depressing, isolating, tense and crowding and negatively loaded with pleasing and attracting. Isolating

Table 1. Rotated factor matrix.

	Desirable experience	Apprehensive experience	Stimulating experience
Pleasant	.816	-.230	-.143
Exciting	.822	-.116	.247
Relaxing	.847	-.155	-.029
Attracting	.776	-.190	.388
Enjoying	.748	-.180	.393
Frustrating	-.285	.632	-.409
Boring	-.314	.644	-.417
Motivating	.644	-.053	.520
Stimulating	.647	-.055	.498
Tense	-.032	.730	.270
Isolating	-.079	.732	.036
Enclosing	.395	-.178	.585
Challenging	.021	.259	.711
Crowding	-.035	.707	-.056
Depressing	-.315	.751	.065

Table 2. Experiential surrogates and means for three landscape types.

Experiential	Landscapes	Means	SD
Pleasant	View	4.03	.955
	open space	3.93	.906
	forest stand	3.66	.959
Exciting	View	4.31	.777
	open space	4.05	.885
	forest stand	3.78	.930
Relaxing	View	3.79	1.022
	open space	3.83	.928
	forest stand	3.52	.992
Attracting	View	4.45	.730
	open space	4.10	.900
	forest stand	3.86	.939
Enjoying	View	4.50	.822
	open space	4.08	.952
	forest stand	3.87	.965

and crowding are among the experiences that involve interaction with others. Hence this component formed the “apprehensive hiking experience”.

Lastly, component 3 represents 14.5% of the total variation. It represents the experiences associated with enclosing, challenging and motivating. These are collectively labeled as “stimulating hiking experience”.

4.3 Experiences in relation to landscapes

In understanding the surrogate experiences, selected variables from component 1 were analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The five variables were then tested against the type of landscapes. The mean of the responses was tabulated in Table 2 below.

Means scores were graphed in the radar chart with markers type in Fig. 3 for easy understanding and visualization of information. This view provided a more

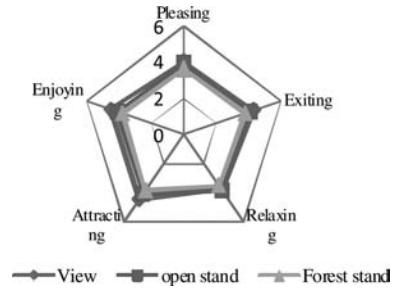


Figure 3. Means responses of selected experiential variables mapped with landscape types.

Table 3. ANOVA statistic for selected variable for three landscape types (selected).

		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Pleasant	Between groups	13.611	2	6.806	7.609	.001
	Within groups	619.837	693	.894		
	Total	633.448	695			
Enjoying	Between groups	23.180	2	11.590	12.823	.000
	Within groups	626.354	693	.904		
	Total	649.534	695			

holistic and multi-variables dimension as compared to the use of bar chart.

The results indicate that landscapes with a view tend to be more pleasant, attracting and enjoyable for hikers as compare to open space or forest stand. Result of Bonferroni test for all the five selected variables in components 1 shows significant difference in responses to the feeling of enjoyment for all landscape types. Details of the results are shown in Table 3.

Significant differences were detected between forest stand and view landscapes, and between forest stand and open space landscapes both for pleasant, significant at 0.05 level (refer to Table 3, selected variables). It was also noted that between view and open space landscapes for pleasant there was no significant differences.

4.4 Experiences in relation to terrain conditions

In this study, information with regards to the terrain conditions that the respondents encountered was also reported. The five variables from component 1 were tested against the terrain condition, classified into three types namely “rugged”, “almost flat” and “steep” surfaces. Result of Bonferroni test for the selected variables shows no significant difference in responses to

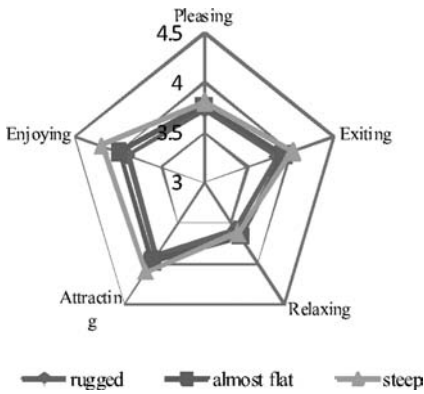


Figure 4. Means responses of selected experiential variables mapped with terrain condition types.

the different terrain condition types, with the exception of enjoying (between steep and rugged terrain conditions) in Table 4 (selected variables).

Additionally, it was also noted that the mean for terrain condition (refer to Fig. 4) is lower, compared to the mean of experience with landscape (Fig. 3).

This study examined the relationships between ‘experiential surrogates’ discussed by Chhetri, et al. (2004) in the local natural-based tourist destination among university students. The PCA results showed three components identified as compared to four components in the prior study (Chhetri, et al., 2004), that described three visitor experiences i.e. “desirable, apprehensive and stimulating experiences”, which provide a theoretical framework for assessing the local youth visitor experiences such as among the university students.

It is also noted that the mean responses of the selected variables i.e. relaxing, exciting, pleasing, attracting and enjoying, in this study were not extremely different compared to the prior study (Chhetri, et al., 2004).

Comparison of results on the Bonferroni test on landscape and terrain condition types provide an opportunity to understand the visitor experiences to the biophysical attributes of the nature based hiking destination. Information and knowledge generated from this study are useful to understand the characteristics of the specific market segment of tourist i.e. nature-based lover visitor, especially in promoting the country nature-based tourist destinations (Volo, 2009).

In this study, we acknowledged the limited target respondents type where it focuses on teenager i.e. university students. Further studies need to be conducted with a more diverse group such as among foreign visitors. Such information would lead to in-depth study in identifying the visitor’s feelings and the motivating factors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Authors would like to acknowledge the management of 3rd Residential College, University of Malaya for their kind approval to allow this study being conducted in conjunction with the residential college program under the “JKP Sukan & Rekreasi”. Special thanks also to Committee Members of “Kembara Amal” for their assistance in administrating the study questionnaires. Errors and omissions are solely the author’s responsibility.

REFERENCES

- Chhetri, P., & Arrowsmith, C. 2002. Developing A Spatial Model Of Probable Hiking Experiences Through Natural Landscapes. *Cartography*, 31(2), 87–102.
- Chhetri, P., & Arrowsmith, C. 2008. GIS-based Modelling of Recreational Potential of Nature-Based Tourist Destinations. *Tourism Geographies*, 10(2), 233–257.
- Chhetri, P., Arrowsmith, C., & Jackson, M. 2004. Determining hiking experiences in nature-based tourist destinations. *Tourism Management*, 25(1), 31–43.
- Hetherington, J., Daniel, T. C., & Brown, T. C. 1993. Is motion more important than it sounds?: The medium of presentation in environment perception research. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 13(4), 283–291.
- Hull, R. B., & Harvey, A. 1989. Explaining the Emotion People Experience in Suburban Parks. *Environment and Behavior*, 21(3), 323–345.
- Hull, R. B., & Stewart, W. P. 1995. The Landscape Encountered and Experienced While Hiking. *Environment and Behavior*, 27(3), 404–426.
- Kroh, D. P., & Gimblett, R. H. 1992. Comparing live experience with pictures in articulating landscape preference. *Landscape Research*, 17(2), 58–69.
- Volo, S. 2009. Conceptualizing Experience: A Tourist Based Approach. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 18(2–3), 111–126.

Sustainable tourism development and stakeholders' networking: A case study on medical tourism in Malaysia

K.M. Azmi & K.W. Awang

Graduate School of Management, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This paper studies how sustainable tourism policies could best be developed and ultimately implemented in medical tourism sector. In order to achieve this goal, the study will examine how the concept of sustainable tourism is interpreted in medical tourism as well as investigate the existing pattern of relationships and current networking system among medical tourism stakeholders in order to determine roles and potential influences of legitimate and powerful stakeholders in tourism policy making. The success of achieving sustainable tourism industry depends on full support and commitment from all stakeholders is highly needed. Thus, this is only a conceptual-based paper and future work will broaden the study context by including analysis of stakeholders networking in medical tourism in Malaysia.

Keywords: tourism, sustainable tourism, medical tourism, stakeholders networking.

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism and travel is now considered as one of the world's largest industries. World Travel and Tourism Council (2006) declared that tourism industry has generated an estimated gross output of US\$3.5 trillion and employing 207 million people in 2001 and has increased to US\$7.0 trillion of gross output and employing 260 million in 2011. The UNWTO's (United Nations World Tourism Organization) *Tourism 2020 Vision* forecasts that international arrivals are expected to reach nearly 1.6 billion by the year 2020 (UNWTO, 2008). Not only it influence the development of industrialized nations like North and America Western Europe, tourism has also expanded and becoming an important sector in many developing countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa (Pearce, 1989). According to Rostow (1960), in several South-east Asian countries, tourism has been used to spread economic activity and in some developing countries, including Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, they have pursued national integration by means of economic development. This includes elimination of poverty and the distribution of income and wealth among citizens which results in economic integration.

Tourism industry plays a major role in any nation's growth and consequently, holds the key to economic development especially in Asia Pacific and specifically in Malaysia. Even though Malaysia can be considered as a relatively new 'participant' in tourism activities as compared to its ASEAN neighbors like Indonesia and Thailand, the industry has developed enormously over the years (Siti Nabiha et al, 2008). Following the economic downturn in the late 1990s, the government has identified tourism as one of the

economic sectors to be developed in order to bring the nation to economic recovery (Chong et al, 2005). Remarkably, by 2005, tourism industry became the key foreign exchange earner for Malaysia, contributing to over 40% of the country's balance of payment (EPU, 2006).

Within tourism, the health sub-sector or also known as medical tourism is singled out as the most promising and lucrative area for the development of the industry in the Malaysia (Dewi, 2003; Ormond, 2011). While tourist arrivals increased by 300% from 5.5 million in 1998 to 22.1 million in 2008, medical tourist arrivals increased by 856% from 39,114 to 374,063 over the same period (Tourism Malaysia, 2008; Leonard, 2009; Dhesi, 2009).

Malaysia has become a prime destination for medical tourists seeking safe and affordable medical attention. Presently, the government and related stakeholders have been making efforts to develop the country's infrastructure, facilities, and services to be positioned as a preferred health tourism destination in the region (Musa et al, 2011). As said by Enderwick and Nagar (2011), Malaysian specialists are ranked among the best in the world in terms of training and expertise, and medical tourists are attracted to the country due to its favorable exchange rate, political and economic stability and high rate of literacy.

1.1 Issues

It is apparent that Malaysia relies profoundly on tourism industry in order to ensure that the country's earnings keep flowing in. However, a poorly planned and managed tourism development, besides being harmful to the environment and the local communities,

could result in decrease in market share (APEC, 1996). In addition, tourism is an economic sector which depends more and more each day on nature to survive, and the greatest current danger is to look at tourism as a remedy against all evils worrying municipalities and develop it without planning (Tojeiro, 2006). The same goes to medical tourism industry. Even though medical tourism is beneficial for developing destinations in economic terms, it may be unfavorable for the general health systems of those destinations. If the medical tourism industry grows dramatically, then the physical and socio-psychological well-being of the local population may be placed at risk (Tan, 2007; Burkett, 2007). Another negative effect of growth in the medical tourism sector may be the diversion of infrastructure building funds from other areas of the economy. Although the costs of medical procedures in a given destination may be reasonable for individuals from developed countries or regions, they may be prohibitively expensive for the local people (Awadzi and Panda, 2006).

It is by some means essential to sustaining the industry while not sacrificing the nature, environment, people's needs as well as our culture. As a result, a more sustainable tourism development is needed. Above all, sustaining what has been developed in tourism has been a challenge due to a number of reasons. According to Bowman (2011), "achieving sustainable development proves to be complicated because there is a bounty of advice for stakeholders but a shortage of resources, excessive pressure from demand, and a hedonistic philosophy among tourism operators despite increased awareness of local community". Referring to Bowman's statement, the reasons can be classified as challenges to achieve sustainable development, which directly reflects the challenges in sustainable tourism as well.

Apart from the difficulties of achieving sustainable tourism, there are four approaches to the sustainable tourism as proposed by Clarke (1997) which involves four main approaches; polar opposite, continuum, movement and convergence. Having recognized these four approaches to sustainable tourism, the author began to realize that how can sustainable tourism be truly achieved, and how do the four approaches proposed by Clark can be implemented? Briassoulis (2002) and Robson & Robson (1996) mentioned that for sustainable tourism development to be successful, stakeholders must be involved in the entire process (further discussion will be presented in the next section). According to Byrd (2007), more research needs to be done on methods and techniques to identify stakeholders and Byrd also suggested that future research needs to explore how stakeholders are segmented and why they are segmented in such trend.

Accordingly, there are three specific questions to be answered, which include; 1) who should be considered as stakeholders in sustainable tourism development, and 2) how stakeholders are segmented and why they are segmented in such a fashion and 3) what are the methods and tools to identify the stakeholders'

level of knowledge about sustainable tourism development.

According to Donaldson and Preston (1995), all stakeholders do not need to be involved equally in the decision making process, but it does require that all interest are identified and understood. Plus, failure to identify the interest of even a single primary stakeholder group may result in the failure of the process (Clarkson, 1995). Thus, the ultimate questions to be answered are; what are the roles of multi-stakeholders in tourism such as customers, local community, tourists' agents, retailers, resorts operators, and local authority in developing sustainable tourism? Additionally, stakeholders in the tourism industry cooperate with each other to resolve their different business objectives across different operating systems thus the potential benefit of considering not only individual enterprises but also the tourism value chain becomes evident (Xinyan et al, 2009). Referring to Scott et al (2008), though one of the key determinants of the sustainable growth of the tourism industry is the development of effective networks and partnership between actors or stakeholders, research on the topic has been sparse. Thus, one more question arises; how do the networks among stakeholders help in creating a sustainable tourism industry? Consequently, it is very much vital to discover all stakeholders involved in tourism industry (particularly medical tourism) and understand the whole decision making process by the stakeholders in order to successfully achieve sustainable tourism industry or specifically medical tourism in Malaysia.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Sustainable development*

Initially, during the 1950s and early 1970s, a handful of studies were conducted regarding the effects of negative practices of development (Dowling, 1992). As a result of the UN's Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, more attention has been given towards recognizing environmental protection as an international concern, and the conference led to the formation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Brundtland Commission's report on "Our Common Future" for sustainable development (WCED 1987). The Brundtland Report by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) has been initiated due to the growing use of the term 'sustainable development' and the adoption of sustainable development in the field of tourism has also greater than before.

The concept of sustainable development has now been broadly accepted and although there are more recent modification made to the original definition, but many authors (e.g. Hardy and Beeton, 2001; Slocum, 2010) still refer to the definition introduced by WCED. Based on the definition, it is apparent that the concern is placed on the future, and we should

not just bother care about fulfilling our current needs and wants. Butler (1991, 1993, 1997, 1998) is the main critic of sustainable development, stating that it is necessary to define and manage the base of sustainability and there are certain limitations in achieving it (Butler, 1996, 1997, 1998). Thus, it is clear that there is an urgency to describe and discuss the concept of sustainability or sustainable development in tourism industry.

Sustainable tourism is often regarded as part of sustainable tourism development, or used simultaneously by tourism practitioners without any clarification of the similarities or differences between these concepts (Inskip, 1991; Farrell, 1992; WTO, 1993; Gilbert et al. 1994; Muller, 1994; Wahab and Pigram, 1997) and the WTO defines sustainable tourism or sustainable tourism development as follows: "Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems." (WTO, website) However, the definition is sufficiently flexible to allow a variety of approaches and interpretations of the concept. For instance, in the WTO annotated bibliography, within the "sustainable tourism" catchphrase are included issues connected to environmental impact, rural development, ecotourism, cultural and natural heritages, urban development, alternative tourism, and so on. This diversity of views on sustainable tourism and the complexity of the concept have led some tourism academics and practitioners to even question its utility (e.g. Middleton and Hawkins, 1998). Nevertheless, there are quite a number of authors that proposed the definition and guiding principles on sustainable tourism (Inskip, 1991; Bramwell and Lane, 1993; Butler, 1993, 1999; Gunn, 1994; Bramwell and Henry, 1996; Miller, 2001; Sirakaya, Jamal, and Choi, 2001) and it is often regarded as part of sustainable development insight.

2.2 Stakeholders in tourism

According to Freeman (1984) a stakeholder is identified as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives" or in this particular study is referred to tourism industry. Nevertheless, there is still no generally accepted definition has been constructed yet. Following Freeman's first work on stakeholder theory, stakeholder theory has been incorporated into business management literature (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Clarkson 1995) and to further elaborate, Donaldson and Preston (1995) introduced three aspects of stakeholder theory; 1) the descriptive/empirical, 2) the instrumental, and 3) the normative. Descriptive/empirical aspect of stakeholder theory is used to describe attributes and features of and organization, which is used to examine and explain

the past, present and future state of affairs of an organization and its stakeholders (Donaldson and Preston, 1995), while the instrumental aspect of stakeholder theory identifies the connections, or lack of connections, between stakeholder management and the achievement of the organization or development's objectives and goals (Donaldson and Preston, 1995). Lastly, normative aspect is the vital core of the stakeholder theory where it is "used to interpret the function of the corporation, including the identification of moral or philosophical guidelines for the operation and management of corporations" (Donaldson and Preston, 1995). Donaldson and Preston (1995) view the three aspects of the theory as being "nested within each other" and they indicate the need of to identify the interest of all stakeholders. And as mentioned earlier, all stakeholders do not need to be involved equally in the decision making process, but it does require that all interest are identified and understood. Failure to identify the interest of even a single primary stakeholder group may result in the failure of the process (Clarkson, 1995).

2.3 Stakeholders and networking

A lot of sustainable development situations, including tourism development, are characterized by a complex network of interests and trade-offs between interacting sets of various stakeholders (Timur and Getz, 2008). According to Timur and Getz (2008), the aim of adapting the network perspective to tourism and hospitality industry comes from the recognition that a tourism destination is a system which consists of relations that are likely to influence tourism destination stakeholder's opportunities, constraints, behavior or values. There are three concepts which are of vital importance in understanding social network analysis (SNA) (Timur and Getz, 2008), where the 'nodes' or 'actors' are entities, persons, organizations or events and 'links' are the relationships, of any kind, between the actors, whereas 'networks' are the patterns formed from the combination of all actors and links within the system. Stakeholder theory has been applied as a planning and management tool (Jamal and Getz, 2000; Yuksel et al, 1999) as well as for stakeholder recognition (Hardy and Beeton, 2001), while the network approach has been used in tourism and hospitality (Cobb, 1988; Park, 1997; Pforr, 2002, 2006), leisure and recreation (Blackshaw and Long, 1998; Stokowski, 1994) and in event management (Larson, 2002; stokes, 2004) in order to examine interactions among actors, identify the actors in the network, or to examine the function of the network as a whole.

3 METHODOLOGY

The analysis of this paper will be based on a primary data collection that focus on the relations among different actors or stakeholders in tourism development, or specifically, medical tourism sector, which will reveal

detailed information on the nature of the networks. The main stakeholders include hotels, hospitals, travel agencies, tour operators, and tourism associations. This study involves two stages:

Stage 1: Defining the number of different actors in tourism development in Malaysia (in two different cities; Penang and Melaka) using data to be collected from Ministry of Tourism Malaysia, Tourism Malaysia, as well as Ministry of International Trade and Industry.

Stage 2: A field study will be carried out to identify the type and level of network relations through face-to-face in-depth interviews. The interview is used to uncover the nature of networks and relationship between stakeholders, as well as to understand the stakeholders' role in sustainable tourism development.

Stage 3: For the evaluation of data, all of the data collected will be categorized to facilitate further analysis. Social network analysis (SNA) will be employed to identify the networks between tourism actors. The SNA is employed to reveal the pattern of relationships in a visual way. UCINET 6 software will be used to analyze the network data.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Given the complexity of the issues surrounding the concept of sustainable tourism, this paper aim to uncover how sustainable tourism policies could best be developed and ultimately implemented in medical tourism sector. In the nutshell, the success of achieving sustainable tourism industry depends very much on how we define issues, their scope and importance and full support and commitment from all stakeholders is highly needed. Joint efforts between the various levels of government, the private sector and the local communities need to be well-planned and carried out to maximize the economic, socio-cultural and environmental benefits. The process should begin at the national level, and must be communicated to the state level, to the industry (tourism industry) and ultimately to the tourists. According to network theory, in order to create an atmosphere in which collective action can be realized, more connections have to be established. Thus, there is a need for sustainability networks, where the term sustainability network is used to indicate the communications of manifold stakeholders with varying degrees of interest in sustainable (medical) tourism development. The interconnectedness of diverse stakeholders representing governmental bodies, business firms, persons or other entities on sustainability dimensions is expected to improve the process of sustainable (medical) tourism development.

REFERENCES

Abidin, Z. Z. 1999. The identification of criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of ecotourism

in Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia: A Delphi consensus.

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Team Working Group (TWG). 1996. Environmentally Sustainable Tourism in APEC Member Economies, APEC Secretariat, Singapore.

Awadzi W. & Panda D. 2006. Medical tourism: Globalization and the marketing of medical services. *Consortium Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*, 11(1), pp. 75–81.

Bookman, M. Z. & Bookman, K. R. 2007. Medical tourism in developing countries. New York: Palgrave Mc Millan.

Bowman, K. S. 2011. Sustainable tourism certification and state capacity: keep it local, simple, and fuzzy. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 5 (3), pp. 269–281.

Bramwell, B., & B. Lane 1993. Sustainable Tourism: An Evolving Global Approach. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1 (1): 1–5.

Bramwell, B., & I. Henry 1996. A Framework for Understanding Sustainable Tourism Management." In Sustainable Tourism Management, Principles and Practice, edited by Bramwell, B., Straaten J. V. D., and Prat, A. G. Tilburg, the Netherlands: Tilburg University Press, pp. 23–71.

Briassoulis, H. 2002. Sustainable tourism and the question of the commons. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29 (4), pp. 1065–1085.

Bristow, R. S., Yang, Wen-Tsann., & Lu, Mei-Tsen, 2011. Sustainable medical tourism in Costa Rica. *Tourism Review*, 66 (1/2) pp. 107–117.

Burkett, L. 2007. Medical tourism: Concerns, benefits and the American perspective. *The Journal of Legal Medicine*, 28, pp. 223–245.

Butler, R. W. 1998. Sustainable tourism – looking backwards in order to progress? In C. M. Hall and A. A. Lew (eds), Sustainable Tourism: A Geographical Perspective. Harlow: Longman, 25–34.

Butler, R. W. 1990. Alternative tourism: Pious hope or Trojan Horse? *Journal of Travel Research* (3), 40–5.

Butler, R. W. 1991. Tourism, environment, and sustainable development. *Environmental Conservation*, 18, 3, 201–209.

Butler, R. W. 1996. The concept of carrying capacity for tourism destinations: dead or merely buried? *Progress in Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 2, 283–293.

Butler, R. W. 1997. Modeling tourism development: evolution, growth and decline. In S. Wahab and J. J. Pigram (eds). *Tourism Development and Growth: The Challenge of Sustainability*, London: Routledge, 109–125.

Butler, R. W. 1999. Sustainable Tourism—A State of the Art Review. *Tourism Geographies*, 1, 7–25.

Byrd, E. T. 2007. Stakeholders in sustainable tourism development and their roles: applying stakeholder theory to sustainable tourism development. *Tourism Review*, 62 (2), 6–13.

Cernat, L. & Gourdon, J. 2007. Is the Concept of Sustainable Tourism Sustainable? Developing the Sustainable Tourism Benchmarking Tool. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: New York and Geneva.

Chong, W. Y., Boey, T. S., & Vathsala, N. 2005. *Promoting health tourism in Malaysia*. Unpublished paper to APacCHRIE conference, Kuala Lumpur.

Clarke, J. 1997. A framework of approaches to sustainable tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 5, 224–233.

Clarkson, M. B. E. 1995. A stakeholder framework for analyzing and evaluation corporate social performance. *The Academy of Management Review*, 20(1), 92–117.

Cobb, M. 1988. Influence and exchange networks among tourism oriented business in four Michigan communities.

- Doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.
- De Kadt, E. 1990. Making the Alternative Sustainable: Lessons from Development for Tourism. Sussex: Institute of Development Studies (DP 272).
- De Kadt, E. 1992. Making the alternative sustainable: Lessons from the development of tourism. In V.L. Smith and W.R. Eadington (eds) *Tourism Alternatives: Potentials and Pitfalls in the Development of Tourism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press and the International Academy for the Study of Tourism.
- Dewi, K. K. 2003. Hospital set fees for health tourism. The Star Online. Retrieved from: <http://hospitalmalaysia.org/newsmaster.cfm?andmenuid=38&parentid=28&action=viewandretrieveid=259/>
- Dhesi, D. 2009. Medical tourism arises in Malaysia despite economic downturn. The Star Online. Retrieved from: <http://www.malaysiahealthcare.com/>. Accessed on September 2011.
- Donaldson, T. & Preston, L. E. 1995. The stakeholder theory of the corporation: Concepts, evidence, and implications. *The Academy of Management Review*, 20 (1), 65–91.
- Dowling, R. 1992. Tourism and environmental integration, the journey from idealism to realism. In C.P. Cooper and A. Lockwood *Progress in Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality Management* (vol. 4) (pp. 33–46). London: Bellhaven.
- Economic Planning Unit (EPU) Malaysia. 2006. Economic Instruments for Environmental Management in Malaysia. Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, Kuala Lumpur.
- Enderwick, P. & Nagar, S. 2011. The competitive challenge of emerging markets: the case of medical tourism. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, 6 (4), 329–350.
- Farrell, B. 1992. Tourism as an Element in Sustainable Development: Hana, Maui. Smith, V and Eadington, W. (Eds.), *Tourism Alternatives*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia (1992), pp. 115–132
- Freeman, R. E. 1984. *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Boston, Pitman.
- Gilbert, D. C., Penda, J. & Friel, M. 1994 Issues in sustainability and the national parks of Kenya and Cameroon. In Cooper, C. P., and Lookwood, A. (Eds.), *Progress in tourism, recreation, and hospitality management*, (6) Wiley, New York, 30–45.
- Gunn, C. A. 1994. *Tourism Planning: Basics, Concepts, Cases*. 3rd ed. Washington, DC: Taylor and Frances.
- Hardy, A. L. & Beeton, R. J. S. 2001. Sustainable tourism or maintainable tourism: Managing resources for more than average outcomes. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 9, 168–192.
- Hardy, A., Beeton, R. J. S., & Pearson, L. 2002. Sustainable tourism: an overview of the concept and its position in relation to conceptualizations of tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 10(6), 475–496.
- Heung, V. C S., Kucukusta, D. & Song, H. 2010. A conceptual model of medical tourism: Implications for future research. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 27 (3), 236–251.
- Hunter, C. 1997. On the need to reconceptualise sustainable tourism development. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 3 (3), 155–165.
- Inskip, E. L. 1991. *Tourism Planning: An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Jamal, T. & Getz, D. 2000. Community roundtables for tourism related conflicts: the dialectics of consensus and process structures. In Bramwell, B. and Lane, B (Eds), *Tourism Collaboration and Partnerships: Politics, Practice and Sustainability*. Channel View Publications, Clevedon.
- Leonard, T. 2009. Medical tourists to bring in RM 540 million by 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.malaysiahealthcare.com/>
- Leposky, G. 1997. *Globalization and Sustainable Development. Vocation Industry Review*. March/ April, 10.
- Middleton, V. T. C., & R. Hawkins. 1998. *Sustainable Tourism: A Marketing Perspective*. Oxford, UK: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Miller, G. 2001. The Development of Indicators for Sustainable Tourism: Results of a Delphi Survey of Tourism Researchers. *Tourism Management*, 22: 351–362.
- Moore, W. 1996. Address. Miami Conference on the Caribbean and Latin America. Miami, Florida.
- Musa, G. Thirumoorthi, T., & Doshi, D. 2011. Travel behavior among inbound medical tourists in Kuala Lumpur, Current Issues in Tourism, iFirst article, 1–19 DOI:10.1080/13683500.2011.626847
- Ormond, M. 2011. Medical tourism, medical exile: Responding to the cross-border pursuit of healthcare in Malaysia. In *Real tourism: Representation, practice and the 'material' in contemporary travel*, Edited by: Minca, C. and Oakes, T. 143–161. London: Routledge.
- Pearce, D. W., Markandya, A. and Barbier, E. B. (1989). *Blueprint for a Green Economy. ('Blueprint 1')*, London, Earthscan.
- Pearce, D.G. 1992 Alternative tourism: concepts, classifications, and questions. In V.L. Smith and W.R. Eadington (eds) *Tourism Alternatives: Potentials and Problems in the Development of Tourism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press and the International Academy for the Study of Tourism.
- Pfarr 2002, The "Makers and Shapers" of Tourism Policy in the Northern Territory of Australia. *A Policy Network Analysis of Actors and Their Relational Constellations Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 9, 134–151.
- Robson, J. & Robson, I. 1996. From shareholders to stakeholders: Critical issues for tourism.
- Rostow, W.W. 1960. *The stages of economic growth: A non communist Manifesto*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Scott, N. Cooper, C. and Baggio, R. 2008. Destination Networks: Four Australian Cases. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(1), 169–188.
- Sirakaya, E., T. Jamal, & H. S. Choi 2001. "Developing Tourism Indicators for Destination Sustainability." In *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism*, edited by D. B. Weaver. New York: CAB International, pp. 411–32.
- Siti Nabihah, A.K, N. Abdul Wahid, Azlan Amran, H, Che Haat & I. Abustan, 2008. Towards Sustainable Tourism Management in Malaysia, *LEX et Scientia International Journal*, 15 (2), 301–312.
- Slocum, S. L. 2010. Sustainable community tourism development: The case of Tanzania. Doctoral Dissertation. UMI Number: 3402555.
- Stabler, M. J. 1997. *Tourism and Sustainability: Principles and Practice*. CABI Publishing, UK.
- Swarbrooke, J. 1998. *Sustainable Tourism Development*. CABI Publishing, UK
- Timur, S. & Getz, D. 2008. A network perspective on managing stakeholders for sustainable urban tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 20(4), pp. 445–461.
- Tojeiro, M. C. 2006. Welcome to Brazil, Amazon Region, the green center of the world: a strategy for sustainable tourism and eco-tourism. In *Sustainable Tourism II*, ed Brebbia, C. A. and Pineda, F. D. WIT Press, UK.

- Tourism Malaysia. 2008. Profile of tourist by selected markets 2008. Kuala Lumpur: Tourism Malaysia.
- United Nations World Tourism Organization UNWTO. 2008. UNWTO Future Vision: Tourism Towards 2030. Retrieved at <http://www.eturboneews.com/6333/unwto-future-vision-tourism-towards-2030>. Accessed on October, 2011.
- Wahab, S., & Pigram, J. J. eds. 1997. *Tourism Development and Growth: The Challenge of Sustainability*. New York: Routledge
- Wall, G. 1997. Sustainable tourism-unsustainable development. In S. Wahab and J. J. Pigram (eds). *Tourism Development and Growth: The Challenge of Sustainability*, London: Routledge, 33–49.
- World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). 1987. *Our Common Future*, The World Commission on Environment and Development. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- World Tourism Organization. 1993. World Tourism Organization (WTO)—International Working Group on Indicators of Sustainable Tourism (IWGIST) (1993). *Indicators for the sustainable management of tourism*. Winnipeg: WTO.
- World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). 2006. The Global Travel & Tourism Summit, Washington DC, 10–12 April 2006. Retrieved from <http://www.globaltraveltourism.com/previous-summits/2006/default.html>. Accessed on November 2011.
- Xinyan, Z., Haiyan, S. & Huang, G. Q. 2009. Tourism supply chain management: A new research agenda. *Tourism Management*, 30, 345–358.
- Yuksel, F., Bramwell, B., & Yuksel, A. 1999. Stakeholder interviews and tourism planning at Pamukkale, Turkey. *Tourism Management*, 20 (3), 351–360.

Assessment of the socio-cultural impacts of ecotourism development in Penang National Park, Malaysia

M.M. Huda Farhana, L.K.L. Vivien & M.A.A. Zaman
University of Technology MARA, Malaysia

Z. Noor Aini
Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM)

ABSTRACT: Ecotourism encourages responsible travel to natural areas that safeguards the integrity of the ecosystem and produces economic benefits to the host community. The paper aims to understand the host community's perception of the impacts of ecotourism development at Penang National Park (PNP). The paper explores the relationship between the degree of exposure of the host community to the ecotourism industry and their perceptions of the impacts of ecotourism development at PNP. The area of study comprised of five villages in Teluk Bahang, Penang. The data was obtained from the questionnaire surveys among 244 respondents in five villages. Findings indicate that the host community experienced both positive and negative impacts. It also discovers that there is a significant relationship between the degree of exposure in the ecotourism industry and host community's perceptions of the ecotourism impacts. Greater attention must be emphasized by the local authority to preserve the quality of life of the host community before embarking on any ecotourism development generally.

Keywords: ecotourism, impacts, Penang National Park, host community

1 INTRODUCTION

Penang National Park (PNP) or previously known as the Pantai Acheh Forest Reserve, harbors a wealth of 417 flora and 143 fauna species. Pantai Acheh Forest Reserve was declared the Penang National Park in April 2003, and it is the smallest national park in Malaysia (Tourism Malaysia, 2010). PNP is the only national park in Peninsular Malaysia with a coastal habitat. In July 2008, international recognition was given to Penang when George Town was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site and it is completely transforming local perception. Since that, ecotourism segment has been growing in Penang and indirectly promote Penang National Park (PNP) to the local and international tourists as new ecotourism products. This was indicated with the inception of the National Ecotourism Master Plan in 1997 where Pantai Kerachut in Penang National Park has been listed as one of the important ecotourism products among the 52 others project areas.

Ecotourism is one of the sustainable development strategy, protecting the ecosystem and at the same time serving as an income and employment for the host community. Tourism is expects to grow at a level of 4.0% per year over the next ten years, creating an opportunity for every country in the world to be part of this process and to share the

benefits (The Worldwide, Travel & Tourism, 2009). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Tourism 2020 Vision forecasted that international arrivals (worldwide) are expected to reach 1.6 billion by the year 2020 from 694 million in 2005. Yet, local people are the main focus of this study as they are the ones who receive direct and indirect impact. Research is essential to identify the possible impact and to ultimately grouped the various impacts into categories.

This study explores residents' host community's perception on the impacts of ecotourism development at Penang National Park (PNP). It focus on, the positive and negative evaluation of socio-cultural impacts and provides an assessment of the relationship between the degree of exposure of the host community to the ecotourism industry and their perception of the impacts.

2 METHODOLOGY

The sampling frame in this study includes host communities over 18 years of age and living more than a year in PNP. A stratified random sampling method is employed to select samples. The study covers five main villages in Teluk Bahang, Penang, Malaysia. The five

villages are the nearest village proximity to the PNP main entrance gate and assumed to have larger impacts than other villages. These villages are Teluk Awak, Pekan, Bangsal Rawai, Masjid and Tengah Resort. The total numbers of respondents involved in this study are 244 households with a 73.3% response rate. The interview session involved face to face approach with the host community to seek the validity of the respondents' answers. Personal interviews and questionnaire surveys were concurrently integrated to increase potential for understanding of the research problem and data validity (Pallant, 2007). The several variables were identified and taken from previous studies (Brunt, 1999; Akis, 1996; Alhasanat, 2010; Andereck, 2005; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997 and King *et al.*, 1993). The respondents answered to each statement based on five scales. The value of each response for these items on the questionnaire is as follows: 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = not sure 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree. In terms of the negative statements, scale was reversed (1 = 5, 2 = 4, 4 = 2, and 5 = 1) to generate composite mean values for consistency of direction in interpreting the results.

Validity in quantitative research as provided by Joppe (2000) is "validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are" (p.1). The importance of reliability in research should also be considered. The statements for socio-cultural, economic and environmental impacts were tested for their reliability by using Cronbach's alpha methodology. Hair *et al.* (2007) strongly urged that reliability is compulsory in order to evaluate the consistency of the research findings. Result of reliability test from the survey indicated that $\alpha = 0.65$ (19 items) which is acceptable. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient value indicates that all items in the questionnaire are reliable enough to measure the variables identified in the study.

In Section A, the questionnaire contained the ecotourism development through a level of exposure on the ecotourism industry. Section B is devoted to investigating the overall perception of the host towards the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The final part of the questionnaire is Section C, which contained questions about the socio-demographic characteristics of the hosts, such as gender, age, ethnicity, occupation, level of education attainment, length of residence and an average of the level of income before and after the establishment of PNP is also included in the survey. Based on the socio-demographic factors, readers will know the host communities' profile in PNP.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analyses using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 17.0) were undertaken to answer the research objectives of the study. The analyses are divided into two main sections. First section analyzes the host communities' perceptions on the

ecotourism development in PNP pertaining to socio-cultural impact. Next section determines the relationship between the degree of exposure in the ecotourism industry and host community's perceptions of the socio-cultural impact.

3.1 *The study sample*

Majority of respondents (30%) were between 48–57 years old. The host communities aged 38–47 years old are 22%, aged 28–37 are 18% and 15% of them are aged 18–27 and above 58 years old. Males respondents in the interview were (60%) and the females are (40%). This study is consistent with Suhaila's study (2008) which indicates that male respondents who are involved in the social activities in the villages are contributing more upon giving their opinions and ideas compared to the females. The host communities in Teluk Bahang are involved in private sector employment (28%) as their main occupation and 21% of the respondents are interested in handling their own business. The unemployed groups (students, housewives and retired persons) represent 28% of the total interviewed host. Additionally, there are only 9% of the total respondents who are involved in jobs related to the ecotourism industry.

About 38% of the hosts earned RM 501-RM 1,000 and the rest earned more than RM 1,001 and above. In other situations, 23% of the host has a lower income and earned less than RM 500 per month. Most of the hosts (93%) have lived for more than 10 years in the village. On the other hand, 6 hosts (3%) responded that they live in Teluk Bahang for less than 5 years. In fact, 65% of the host communities lived near to the PNP entrance gates' that is less than 2 kilometer (km), while the rest of the host communities (35%) lived more than 2 km from the park. The physical distance had a significant effect on how the costs and benefits of ecotourism impacts were evaluated (Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004).

3.2 *Host communities' perceptions on the ecotourism development in PNP pertaining to socio-cultural impacts.*

Table 1 indicates that based on the mean measure of impact item, the positive statement "the village becomes more cheerful with the arrival of tourists" has the highest score (4.20). This finding provides support for previous study by Nzama (2008) as the local people benefits the presence of tourists to their hometown and agreed that the outsiders is not a threat for the local. Majority of the host community's welcomed the arrival of tourists to their villages, nevertheless; hosts have no opportunity to learn on the foreign culture as the host is not fluent in English. Suppose, the host community's should be more educated especially when they are dealing with tourist especially businesses related communication. León (2007) agreed that individuals with foreign language competency,

Table 1. Mean Scores for respondents' perceptions towards socio-cultural impacts.

Socio-cultural statements (n=244)	Mean	Std. D
Communicate or deal with tourists almost every day in PNP.	2.71	1.09
Infrastructure and facilities have been enhanced generally (bus station, public transportation, dustbin, public hall, police station, cyber café & others).	2.73	1.04
Ecotourism development at PNP has increased the level of knowledge of local community towards PNP.	3.63	1.00
Ecotourism development at PNP improved my relationship with my society.	3.19	1.10
Ecotourism development at PNP encourages some immoral behaviors' of some people in my community.	3.32	1.18
Ecotourism development at PNP is the reason of some youngsters' misbehaving (Vandalism; illegal race, littering, drug trafficking)	3.46	1.25
The ecotourism resulted in PNP residents having greater range of choice with regard to shopping facilities, restaurants, or stalls	3.90	0.90
Ecotourism development in PNP weakens the social bonds and my family structure.	3.68	0.92
Earnings from ecotourism lure children in my community to drop out of school at an early age (doing part time job such as tourist guide or as boat drivers).	3.55	0.91
Ecotourism development at PNP has increased crime in the local community.	4.01	0.93
I have a positive experience when talking with tourists in PNP.	4.12	0.79
The village becomes more cheerful with the arrival of tourists.	4.20	0.73
Ecotourism has led to an increase in the availability of recreational activities (like swimming, campsite, bird watching, hiking; jungle trekking, canopy walkway and etc).	4.09	0.79
Ecotourism development in PNP brings changes to the traditions and culture of the community.	3.68	0.92
As a result from ecotourism development in PNP, the residents suffer from a lower quality of life as a result of tourist presence.	3.30	1.06
Tourists are interested in learning the history and culture of the local communities.	2.28	0.92
During the interaction with tourists I learn about their culture.	2.24	0.98
Culture is presented to tourists in an authentically way in my community.	3.71	0.85
In general, it is possible to conclude that tourism brings more positive than negative effects to local society.	3.78	0.85
Population mean	3.45	

who are relatively young, are more likely to have a tourism-related occupation.

Host communities recommended for English free classes or free daily training for them to interact and communicate with outsiders (tourists). This happened as the host community's felt that they possess the villages' identities. As León (2007) added that, majority of the residents expressed their frustration by misunderstanding the tourists and often expressed a willingness to learn a second language, particularly English, as most tourists would know at least elementary English. In terms of negative statement given for the socio-cultural impacts, hosts expressed their feeling on crime issues. The majority of host stated "ecotourism development at PNP has increased crime in the local community" with the highest mean score (4.01). Hosts agreed that since the ecotourism development in PNP has taken place, the crime cases has increased yet not in serious matters. The hosts believed that the crime is not due to the increased of tourist volume but, some of the outsiders taking the opportunities since the rising of ecotourism in PNP.

From Meera and Jayakumar (1995), they found that the crimes in Malaysia generally influenced by three categories of determinants; (1) deterrence and punishment; (2) economic or incentive of crime; and (3) socio-demographic. Hence, the head of villages are recommended to have proactive actions

to schedule a regularly night patroller among volunteer hosts to minimize the crime problems. Host community's expressed that generally it can be concluded that ecotourism development brings more positive than negative effects to local society ($M = 3.77$; $S.D = 0.83$).

3.3 Relationship between the degree of exposure in the ecotourism industry and their perception of the socio-cultural and economic impacts in PNP

In order to measure the degree of exposure on tourism, the measurement on the independent variables are length of residency, physical distance from the tourist activities, and host community's frequency deal with tourists (outsider). To achieve the research objectives, multiple regression analysis was employed.

3.3.1 Relationship between the degree of exposure in the ecotourism industry and host community's perception of the socio-cultural impacts in PNP

This result (Table 2) confirmed that (1) distance of the hosts' residence from the ecotourism area has an influence on host community's perception. As revealed by e.g. Weaver and Lawton (2001); Gursoy *et al.* (2002); Jurowski and Gursoy (2004), it is agreed that distance

Table 2. Multiple regression analysis of socio-cultural impacts of ecotourism development on degree of exposure characteristics ($n = 244$).

Degree of exposure in the ecotourism industry	Beta	R	R ²	F
Length of residence	0.10			
Physical distance of residence from park	-0.28****			
Frequency dealing or communicate with tourists (outsider)	0.45****	0.49	0.22	18.35****

Significant beta

* $P < 0.10$, ** $P < 0.05$, *** $P < 0.01$, **** $P < 0.001$.

has significant effect on the host perceptions. Residential areas of host which close to the ecotourism area or destination attraction are likely to have more negative view of ecotourism impacts. This findings support a research by Madrigal (1993) and Pizam (1978) who's argued that hosts who are living close to the ecotourism areas are more negative about the impacts of ecotourism. (2) The results revealed that host' perceptions of socio-cultural impacts in PNP are influenced by the frequency of host community's deal and communicate to the tourists in the ecotourism industry.

3.4 Discussion

Host community in PNP acknowledged the ecotourism positive's socio-cultural benefits such as the village becomes more cheerful with the arrival of tourists, while recognizing the negative impact of economic and natural environmental impacts. This finding should not be considered uncommon for an emerging destination (Wang et al., 2009). Residents believed that social and cultural life in PNP had improved. Host community felt that PNP authorities involved in planning and managing ecotourism are not giving much consideration to include hosts in their decision-making. Understanding host communitys' opinions of tourism has management implications. This suggests that host community may indeed learn to live with ecotourism environment. In future, the close-in host may evaluate the benefits higher because of the increase opportunities for employment. In addition, this group would benefit most from improvements in infrastructure and public services (Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004).

Secondly, those who regularly dealt and communicate with tourists are more likely to feel positive towards ecotourism impacts (see Table 2). This is confirmed by (Snaith & Haley, 1999) that the importance of communicating with the public (tourists) may raise host awareness of the ecotourism issues. Considering the findings of this study, it is presumed that a few recommendations would contribute to boost the ecotourism development in PNP and

assist the fulfillment of PNP's strategic objectives for ecotourism:

- 1) wider research and mass communication to remain informed on the actual impacts of ecotourism to the host community through internal programme. Local governments should increase frequencies of special events surrounding the park and strengthen cooperation with the mass and electronic media to highlight these events,
- 2) host community's should be involved in an integrated ecotourism system. This strategy could reduce conflicts between local governments, host communities and the DWNP.

4 CONCLUSIONS

This article presents the data set that confirms the residents in most destinations, either undeveloped, developed, or developing, can identify both positive and negative impacts of tourism development. The following conclusions can be drawn from the study. Data analysis supports the evidence that there are positive and negative socio-cultural impacts of ecotourism development at PNP. The hosts agreed that their villages become more cheerful with the arrival of tourists. Hosts have a positive experience they communicate with outsiders (tourists) in PNP. The findings of the present study could help us to understand the relationship between host communities' perceptions of socio-cultural impact and community support on ecotourism development.

A few of these negative impacts of tourism development was started to appear and it is interesting to identify in the early development stage of PNP. Finally, hosts reluctance to embrace the ecotourism industry calls for more research attention to tourism, safety, and security. Indeed, understanding the host perceptions and incorporating the views of host population within the management of their villages may enlighten the park as favorable destination area. The attention given by the park management to the hosts needs will delight the host in PNP as the best for living experience.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was made possible through funding from the Research Management Institute (RMI), UiTM, Shah Alam under Excellent Fund (Project No: 600-RMI/SSP/DANA/5/3/DSP (284/2009).

REFERENCES

Akis, S., Peristianis, N., and Warner, J. 1996. Residents' attitudes to tourism development: the case of Cyprus. *Tourism Management*, 17(7), 481-94.

Alhasanat, S. 2010. Sociocultural impacts of tourism on the local community at Petra, Jordan. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 44(3), 374-386.

- Andereck, K. L., Valentine K.M., R.C., & Vogt, C.A. 2005. Residents' perceptions of community tourism impacts. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(4), 1056–1076.
- Brunt, P., and Courtney, P. 1999. Host perceptions and socio-cultural impacts. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26 (3), 493–515.
- Faulkner, B., and C.Tideswell. 1997. A framework for monitoring community impacts of tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 5 (1), 3–28.
- Gursoy, D., C. Jurovski, & M. Uysal. 2002. Resident Attitudes: Astructural Modeling Approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29, 79–105.
- Hair, J. F. Jr., Money, A. H., Samouel, P., and Page, M. 2007. *Research methods for business*. John Wiley, England.
- Joppe, M. 2000. *The Research Process*. Retrieved November 16, 2010, from <http://www.ryerson.ca/~mjoppe/rp/html>
- Jurovski, C., & Gursoy, D. 2004. Distance effects on residents' attitude toward tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(2), 296–312.
- King, B., Pizam, A., and Milman, A. 1993. Social impacts of tourism: host perceptions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 20, 650–665.
- León, Y. M. 2007. The impact of tourism on rural livelihoods in the Dominican Republic's coastal areas. *Journal of Development Studies*, 43(2), 340–359.
- Madrigal, R. 1993. A tale of tourism in two cities. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 20, 336–353.
- Meera, A.K. and Jayakumar, M.D. 1995. Determinants of crime in a developing country: A regression model, *Applied Economics*, 27, 455–460.
- Nzama, A.T. 2008. Socio-cultural impacts of tourism on the rural areas within the world heritage sites-The case of KwaZulu, Natal (South Africa). *South Asian Journal of Tourism & Heritage*, 1(1), 1–8.
- Pallant, J. 2007. *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows*. 3th Ed. Open University Press.
- Pizam, A. 1978. Tourism Impacts: The Social Costs to the Destination Community as Perceived by its Residents. *Journal of Travel Research*, 16(4), 8–12.
- Snaith, T and Haley, A. 1999. Residents' opinions of tourism development in the historic city of York, England. *Tourism Management*, 20, 595–603.
- Suhaila, A. 2008. Perceptions of stakeholders towards attributes of the Penang National Park as a nature tourist destination. Msc, University Putra Malaysia, Serdang. (T FH 2008 9).
- Tourism Malaysia. 2010. *Destinations: Penang National Park*. Retrieved 18 October 2011, from Destinations website: <http://www.tourism.gov.my/>
- UNWTO Tourism Highlights. 2009. *Tourism and the world economy*. Retrieved 10 July 2009. <http://www.unwto.org>
- Wang, S., Bickle, M. and Harrill, R. (2009). Residents' attitudes toward tourism development in Shandong, China. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 4 (4), 327–339.
- Weaver, B., & Lawton, L. 2001. Residents' perceptions in the urban-rural fringe. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 28(2), 439–458.
- World Travel, Tourism Council, WTTC. 2009. Retrieved 14 November 2009. <http://www.wttc.org/eng/Home/>

This page intentionally left blank

The image representation of Taiwan: An analysis of a travel guidebook

Peishu Hsieh

National Dong-Hwa University, Hualien, Taiwan

ABSTRACT: Many travelers use travel guidebooks to mediate their experiences, gain perceptions of destination, and learn travel practices. A travel guidebook typically includes a large amount of photographs that may attract travelers' attention. Researchers have indicated that photographs are particularly powerful in communicating a particular representation of another culture. The purpose of the present study was to investigate representation of place images through an analysis of travel guidebook. A series of travel guidebooks, *Lonely Planet: Taiwan* (the first to eighth edition), was selected as a major source for data analysis due to its popularity among travelers. The analysis of semiotics and visual image identified four categories of themes: (a) religious culture; (b) aboriginal culture; (c) local life; and (d) traditional culture. Additionally, the photographs analysis of *Lonely Planet: Taiwan* suggested that this book presented a constructed representation of Taiwan.

Keywords: travel guidebook, image representation, Taiwan

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become a widespread, popular pastime and a significant component of modern life (Smith & Brent, 2001). For some destinations, especially those located far from one's home, travel literature can be the key information medium (Dilly, 1986). Many tourists use travel guidebooks to mediate their travel experiences, discover others' perceptions of destination and travel practices. It can be assumed that the importance of travel guidebooks has increased in recent years, since the experience of being a tourist has become consistently more individualistic (Ioannides & Debbage, 1997). It also may be argued that travel guidebooks are significant elements in the tourism infrastructure (Kosar, 1998) as they both provide tourists with spatial and social information, and identify and popularize places as tourist attractions. Travel guidebooks are thus depicted as mediators, interpreters, and communicators. They present information through text and photographs, creating vivid impressions and shaping perceptions of a destination. Researchers (Lutz & Collins, 1994; O'Barr, 1994) have indicated that photographs are especially powerful in communicating particular representations of other cultures. Thus, a travel guidebook not only constructs an image of a destination, but also variations within a city or country.

Previous studies on travel guidebooks have predominantly emphasized content and textual analysis of tourist destination (Lew, 1991; Bhattacharyya, 1997; Gilbert, 1999). Travel guidebooks as important tourist texts have been studied by Cohen (1985), while Dilly (1986) and MacCannell (1999) have focused on the German perspective of travel guidebooks. McGregor

(2000) and Therkelsen & Sorensen (2005) have analyzed the influence of travel guidebooks, and the different ways of reading them.

While most studies have found that travel guidebooks influence tourist behavior, little data exists about the construction of a travel guidebook. Such guides reflect the viewpoints and interests of their authors or editors through editing, selection and percolating to help travelers who use them to imaginatively construct their destinations. So what are travel guidebooks communicating about destinations? Are they simply introducing the destinations or is there something more? How does a travel guidebook represent the image of a place through its images? The aim of this current study is to investigate the representation of place images through an analysis of travel guidebooks.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *The importance of travel guidebooks for tourists*

Along with travel brochures or destination documentaries, travel guidebooks are a prominence medium for the delivery of information. In many cases the traveller's first contact with a sight is not the place itself, but a representation of the destination in a travel guide. For most of travellers, guidebooks have been shown to be the most significant source of neutral travel information. The travel guidebook communicates spatial and social information about particular attractions in a manner which identifies and popularizes them as tourist attractions. Hence the travel guidebook plays a

role in determining travel itineraries. In this way, travellers are given propositional presentations of what a place is like and which attractions are worth seeing and experiencing. Some studies (Lew, 1991; Scott, 1998; McGregor, 2000) revealed that if an attraction was not mentioned in travel guidebooks, that attraction might not be considered worth visiting. Travel guidebooks contribute to form the touristic main paths and tracks from the very beginning of a trip. Adler (1989) claimed that travel guidebooks are “scripts” or “bibles” for the travellers.

2.2 Theoretical framework: The tourist's gaze

Urry (1990) stated that tourism has played a significant role in shaping the experience of modern life, and Garlick (2002) indicated that photographic images represent a powerful parallel role in constructing experience. Urry developed the paradigm of the tourist gaze as a means of understanding how tourism is produced and reproduced as a socially constructed phenomenon. The tourists leave ordinary life for extraordinary circumstances that lead them to experience and feel things differently. These differences form the tourist's gaze. The construction of tourism is multi-faceted, being related to elements of society and cultures.

The tourist gaze is as a particular “way of seeing”, and the fundamental motivation of tourists presented as a yearning to gaze on the landscapes, buildings, people and other manifestations of places they have already viewed in tourism advertisements, movies, brochures, and most significantly with respect of this paper, travel guidebooks. Those things and places that are best represented assume an almost iconic status. The imagery is readily called to mind: the Great Wall of China, Taipei 101, the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty. Urry (1990) indicated that photography is intimately bound up with the tourist gaze. Photographic images organize our anticipations or daydreams about the places we might visit. Jenkins (2003) argued these photographic representations inspire tourists visit to a destination.

Many professional experts help to construct and develop one's gaze as a tourist. There are many ways of gazing on tourist sites, and the authors of travel guidebooks can offer a particular kind of tourist gaze. When they edit travel guidebooks, they may gaze on the destinations through a particular filter of ideas, skills, expectations and ideology, etc. Urry & Larsen (2011) indicated that the gaze is constructed through signs, and tourism involves the collections of signs. When a small village in England is seen, what they gaze upon is the ‘real old England’, and travel guidebooks typically include plenty of photographs of such signs.

3 STUDY METHOD

A series of travel guidebooks, «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» (the first to eighth editions), were selected as a major

source for data analysis due to its popularity among travelers. The publication periods of eight editions were from 1987 to 2011, and «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» were written in English. This study is qualitative in nature centered on semiotics analysis of the images on the cover pages of «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*». In semiotics analysis of «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*», the photographs on the cover page are viewed as signs to explore the representation of Taiwan in imagery. This study analyzed the images as portrayed on the cover page of «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*». These images are a summary of the country, the metaphors, and the starting point of the image that a destination wishes to project. Visually, it presents the first contact between travelers and their destination. The cover page of the first, third, sixth, and the latest editions feature temples and dragons; the second edition features aboriginal people; the fourth edition presents a book on clan history; the fifth edition shows a billboard in Changhua that proclaims it is open for business; the seventh edition is of members of a martial arts organization performing tai chi outside of the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei. In these eight editions four themes may be identified: (a) religious culture; (b) aboriginal culture; (c) local life; and (d) traditional culture.

4 RESULTS

The authors of «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» are all westerners, and based on the theoretical framework of the current study, present Taiwan through the “western gaze”. Religious culture is identified through images of a temple and dragons. The temples of Taiwan stand for both traditional and esthetic architectures. Dragons are a symbol for empires in ancient China that represent power, and it is very important that dragons are decorations for temples. In Taiwan, there are many temples that are related to the daily lives of Taiwanese citizens. Temple and dragons are a part of life for Taiwanese, but temples and dragons originated in China. The images of Taiwan thus mingle with many elements drawn from China, and the implicit narrative is bound up with that of a “greater China”. This is a stereotypical image of Taiwan commonly held among westerners. Aboriginal culture is identified with the image of two ladies wearing traditional dressing. There are 14 aboriginal tribes in Taiwan, some of which have made tourism a central part of their contemporary economies. Most of the aboriginal tribes still preserve their culture, and hold harvest festivals that attract visiting tourists.

Local life is identified by a business advertisement and by some people performing tai chi in front of Chiang Kei-shek Memorial Hall. The business advertisement is taken from a billboard in Chunghua, and includes imagery of red paper with black writing concerning employment or rental opportunities. If the company trademark and name of the destination were stricken from the book, it would be difficult to

recognize that this is a travel guidebook. The cover page is important to a book, and the images or photographs perhaps stand for a destination. Cohen (1985) suggested that travel guidebooks are similar to on-the-ground tourist guides, as they both lead and direct travelers to and through a variety of destinations. In this way, the fifth edition may confuse travelers with Taiwan's image. The latest category is traditional life. In this image, Taiwanese record names of a family from the ancients to modern descendants, presenting an overview of the history of a clan. Clan histories promote family cohesion and are another cultural artifact of China again invoking the ideology of "greater China."

For tourists, «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» provides guidelines to influence their behaviors; for locals, it mirrors images of Taiwan. The implicit message of «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» contains political meanings that related to China. When the Taiwan Tourism Bureau held an activity to vote for Taiwan's Image in 2006, the first image chosen was of Puppet Theater; the second was of Jade Mountain; the third was of Taipei 101; the fourth was of the Cuisine of Taiwan. Compared to these self-chosen images, the «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» cover images are reflective of western stereotypes and cultural imaginings. As Boorstin said, travel is a good way to experience and approach authenticity. But before traveling, the image of destination had already constructed through professionals to tourists. Therefore, the representation of travel guidebooks should be close to actual image of a destination.

5 CONCLUSION

Along with the analysis of a series of travel guidebooks «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*», it has been suggested that this travel guidebook presents a constructed image representation of Taiwan. «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» displays Taiwan as a sign through western gaze. The covers of «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» are carefully selected images, chosen to stand in for a destination, especially when that destination is far from the travelers' home. Travelers are most likely to use travel literature for trips involving a high degree of predictability with respect to expectations and costs (Etzel & Wahlers, 1985), and to construct and form images of a destination.

Furthermore, following the similar question in Bhattacharyya's study (1997) analyzing a travel guidebook, one ought to ask what is missing from the portrayal of Taiwan in «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*». At least three dimensions of images are not contained in «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*». The first is natural scenery. Taiwan is an island surrounded with oceans that are replete with beautiful scenery of mountain and sea. World famous vistas of Taiwan include Jade Mountain, A-li Mountain, and Toroko Gorge. The second images are of local life with cultural patterns. While one edition focused on people performing tai chi that is not a part of most people's ordinary life. There are some

local cultural elements, included Taiwanese folk opera, puppet theater, lanterns in Lu-gang, paper umbrellas in Kaohsiung and so forth. The third dimension is the modernity of Taiwan. To analysis «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» that more like look into a mirror to see ourselves.

This study is not intended to evaluate «*Lonely Planet: Taiwan*» but with critical in the analytical sense. Tourism develops its own images and geographies and travel guidebooks are central to this process by selecting, framing and constructing destinations. Travel guidebooks are written by persons who observe and approach the destinations individually. The authors should be serious and discreet to edit or write content and information. It may find out cultural changes, city transitions, and tourism development in a travel guidebook. In this study, the destination can profit by gaining an understanding that the image of Taiwan how to be represented in a travel guidebook. This can lead to more open discussion between tourism bureaus and major travel guidebook publishers.

This study has analyzed travel guidebook represent place images. The information is produced in travel guidebooks is a significant issue that also influence tourists' behaviors such as how to travel a destination or the first impression of destination. Further study could examine the effects of tourist behaviors with qualitative approach: What do tourists think about their trips with using travel guidebooks? It is possible to realize actual tourist behavior to investigate travel imagery before and after their trips. This also includes tourists use travel guidebooks to mediate relationship between tourist behaviors and the destination.

REFERENCES

- Adler, J. 1989. Travel as performed art. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94(6), 1366–1391.
- Bhattacharyya, D. P. 1997. Mediating India: An analysis of a guidebook. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24(2), 371–389.
- Cohen, E. 1985. The tourist guide: The origins, structure and dynamics of a role. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 12(1), 5–29.
- Dilley, R. S. 1986. Tourist brochures and tourist image. *The Canadian Geographer*, 30(1), 59–65.
- Garlick, S. 2002. Revealing the unseen: Tourism, art and photography. *Cultural Studies*, 16(2), 289–305.
- Gilbert, D. 1999. London in all it's glory-or how to enjoy London: Guidebook representation of imperial London. *Journal of Historical Geography*, 25(3), 279–297.
- Ioannides, D., & Debbage, K. 1997. Post-fordism and flexibility: The travel industry polyglot. *Tourism Management*, 18(4), 229–241.
- Jenkins, O. H. 2003. Photography and travel brochures: The circle of representation. *Tourism Geographies*, 5(3), 305–328.
- Koshar, R. 1998. 'What ought to be seen': Tourists' guidebooks and national identities in modern Germany and Europe. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 33(3), 323–340.
- Lutz, C. A. & Collins, J. L. 1994. *Reading National Geographic*. Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press.

- Lew, A. A. 1991. Place representation in tourist guidebooks: An example from Singapore. *Journal of Tropical Geography*, 12(2), 124–137.
- McCannell, D. 1999. *The tourist: A new theory of the leisure class*. London: University of California Press.
- McGregor, A. 2000. Dynamic texts and tourist gaze. Death, bones and buffulo. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(1), 27–50.
- O’Barr, W. M. 1994. Culture and the Ad: Exploring otherness in the world of advertising. Boulder CO: Westview Press.
- Scott, P. D. 1998. Guidebooks: Prewar to postwar imaging. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 25, 89–106.
- Smith, V. L. & Brent, M. 2001. Introduction. In Smith, V. L. & Brent, M. (Eds) *Hosts and Guests Revisited: Tourism Issues of the 21st Century* (pp. 1–14). New York: Cognizant Communication Corporation.
- Therkelsen, A., & Sorensen, A. 2005. Reading the tourist guidebook: Tourists’ ways of reading to guidebooks. *The Journal of Tourism Studies*, 16(1), 48–60.
- Urry, J. 1990. *The tourist gaze: Leisure and travel in contemporary societies*, 2nd ed. London: Sage Publication.
- Urry, J. & Larsen, J. 2011. *The tourist gaze 3.0*. London: Sage Publication.

Stakeholder engagement for sustainable tourism development: A study of local authorities in Malaysia

A.K. Siti Nabiha

Graduate School of Business, Universiti Sains, Malaysia

Nor Hasliza Md Saad & Rozaidy Mahadi

School of Management, Universiti Sains, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This paper explores sustainable tourism development practices of local Authorities (LAs) in Malaysia. A survey of all LAs in peninsular of Malaysia was undertaken to identify the focus of tourism activities, the tourism products and services, the formulation of tourism policies, and the stakeholder's engagement done in tourism development. The findings reveals that significant consideration about tourism activities has been made in developing policies at the local level, but that a number of constraints limit the LAs from integrating tourism in their planning process. There is significant variation in the sustainable tourism development practices across the LAs. In addition, a more comprehensive stakeholder engagement process is required.

Keywords: Stakeholder engagement, sustainable tourism development, local Authority, Malaysia

1 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia has identified the tourism sector as one of the key drivers of the economic growth and has continually emphasis on ensuring the sustainability of the industry. Local authorities is one the parties that plays a major role in ensuring sustainability of the tourism sector. They have to translate the principle of sustainable tourism into their strategy and planning processes. Given that, participation of local communities is a key principal to ensure sustainable tourism development; LAs have to start a consultative process with the stakeholders.

This engagement means working actively with local residents, community organizations, NGOs, businesses, unions, and other major groups (Vandegaer et al., 2008) Stakeholders engagement especially with the local community means a better governance process at the local level whereby other parties not only those elites with vested interests are given voice and stake in the tourism development. The engagement should have an impact on the way LAs conduct their day-to-day business and make their long term decisions.

However, there is limited research that examined the type and level of stakeholder participation of Malaysian LAs in ensuring a sustainable tourism industry. Thus, the aim of this research is to identify the focus of tourism activities in Malaysian LAs including the tourism products and services in their area. In addition, the formulation of tourism policies, the stakeholder's engagement and the challenges faced by the

LAs in integrating tourism in their planning process were also identified.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism and sustainable development are intertwined concepts since sustainability of the industry depends on the natural and cultural resources of the tourist destinations. As such, a balanced approach to tourism planning and development of the destinations is required (Inskeep, 1991) in order to maximize the associated benefits and minimize the negative impacts associated with tourism activities (Dredge & Jenkins, 2007). Even though has been argued that excessive tourism activities can lead to negative impacts, there is also the recognition that , tourism can help to promote and support conservation, restoration and economic development as well as improve the quality of life of visitors and host communities (Holden, 2008; Wall & Mathieson, 2006).

Consequently, the concept of sustainable development is now widely accepted as the basis for planning and managing current and future human activity. However, discussions on the application of sustainability have raised concerns about the effectiveness of the integration of sustainable principles and practices within planning policies and processes, including those pertaining to tourism activities (Hall, 2007).

The early debates in tourism literature during the 1990s were sensitive to associated environmental

issues and it emphasized on the increasing role of partnerships and networks of engagement as key factors in the resolving of environmental problems (Robert & Simpson, 1999). Consequently, the increasing importance of tourism collaboration and participation has rapidly sparked several descriptive case studies (see for example Jamal & Getz, 1995; Barrutia et al. 2007; Connell, 2009) and conceptual models (see for example Jamal & Getz, 1995; Selin & Chavez, 1995; Selin & Mayer, 1998), and studies in assessing the success stories and identifying key success factors in initiating and sustaining environmentally sustainable tourism development.

The insights from previous literature indicate that tourism policy and planning are formed out of need for cooperation and collaboration (Hall, 1994). Some researchers, for example, Hall (1994) and Bramwell & Lane, (1999) have argued that cooperation and partnerships are major issues in the tourism planning and have affected the growth of sustainable tourism development. For this reason, tourism planners and administrators at the national level are looking at new directions so as to facilitate collaboration and participation among related ministries and to work in partnership with range of actors, including non-governmental organizations, the private sectors, and professional and voluntary/community group to implement strategic tourism initiatives (Goymen, 2000).

3 METHODOLOGY

This study undertook a qualitative and quantitative survey to explore the sustainable tourism development practices in Malaysia at the level of local authority. In the first phase the qualitative data was gathered from the two local authorities. The purpose of this qualitative approach is to explore and gain a basic understanding of how sustainable development is incorporate in the tourism planning and strategy. In the second phase, those qualitative findings subsequently were used in the construction and validation of the questionnaire for the quantitative approach. In addition, the questionnaire from the survey also has been adapted from Connel et al. (2009) and Vandegaer et al. (2008). Since both researches' target group are LAs and both are using sustainable development as their main research issue.

Moreover, Vandegaer et al. (2008) findings were vastly adapted in designing the questionnaire due to similar research pattern. While contracting the questionnaire, a pilot study was carried out at three local councils in order to validate the content of the questionnaire. The interviews were done in November and December 2011 at three Municipality councils and three related officers were interviewed in the conjunction to enrich the questionnaire's covered issues and content validation.

In March 2012, self-complete questionnaires were mailed to all 99 authorities in peninsular of Malaysia. A pre-paid envelope was included for ease of return. The

survey design incorporated a combination of closed and open questions. Closed questions were utilized to gauge responses to straightforward questions, were a simple tick box suffices to assist in categorization of respondents. A range of simple open questions were included to generate a source of explanatory information that can add a richer dimension to understand responses.

The population comprised 12 states and covered all three types of LAs which are 34 Municipality Councils (Majlis Perbandaran), 8 City Councils (Majlis Bandaraya), and 57 District Councils (Majlis Daerah). The survey was distributed to all three types of LAs to ensure that the responses of related agencies in tourism development were represented. Survey was mailed directly to secretary of the councils, who have more experience and knowledge in knowing the right officer in charge in Local Agenda 21 and tourism development. Forty-seven completed and usable questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate 47%. Given that this figure represents near to half of all local authorities, the information that the survey yielded is considered to be valid in providing a general picture of public sector responses to sustainable tourism development and planning in Malaysia, although non-responses deserve further consideration.

The overall response rate is satisfactory (often a 30% response rate is deemed reasonable for such surveys) (Connel et al., 2009). However, it is difficult to assure the representative of the responses achieved. In terms of commenting on the non-respondents, the councils were spread throughout the country, some are secondary tourist routers. Overall, the responses received provide a satisfactory sample in relation to tourism areas, population size and geography, all which will be further elaborated in the findings.

4 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 *The demographical analysis*

The local government or local authority (is the lowest level in the system of government in Malaysia after federal and state. It has the power to collect taxes (in the form of assessment tax), to create laws and rules (in the form of by-laws) and to grant licenses and permits for any trade in its area of jurisdiction, in addition to providing basic amenities, collecting and managing waste and garbage as well as planning and developing the area under its jurisdiction (Ministry of Hosing and local government web page). LAs in Malaysia are generally under the exclusive purview of the state governments and headed by a civil servant with the title Yang Di-Pertua (President).

The patterns of response provide a useful geographical spread of data, and represent a good mix of areas in both urban and rural areas, areas with high and low tourism profile. The response rate of District Councils was the lowest at 45%. For both City Councils and

Municipality Councils, the response rates were over half of the population (50% each).

Analysis of the response from the survey shows it is possible that District Councils felt that the tourism focus of the survey was not relevant to their functions.

The descriptive statistical analysis shows, the respondent age is between 25 to 55 year old. Majority of the respondents who answered the questionnaire is the age of 25 to 35 years old (43%). Meanwhile, educational level of the respondent shows that most of the them have middle to high educational background, which 53% respondent have first degree and 32% at least have Diploma.

The respondents job position were scatted, with the highest rate of 15% represents assistant administrative officer, second highest belong to city planning officers (9%) and third goes to assistant chief of administrative officer and assistant urban and rural planning officer (6% each). As per respondent's job position, the respondent department post answers were also varies with most of the respondents working at management service department, community development and urban planning departments (11%, 4% and 4%, respectively). In general, the descriptive analysis shows, the respondent have adequate and sufficient educational background to be involved with tourism development and planning at the municipal or district councils and are the appropriate person to answer the questions.

4.2 *Tourism products and services in LAs*

Generally, all LAs are involved in tourism activities. 96% of LAs have tourism products and services in their area. The different is only in what extend they are view the tourism as their main focus. However, there are several LAs especially the District Councils which not have much tourist attraction due to the location of the councils. There are 10 popular tourism activities and attractions that directly or indirectly under local authorities' supervision. Among them, four tourist attractions have been identified, which are adventure tourism, agricultural, lakes and rivers, and art galleries (95%, 93%, 59% and 40% respectively)(as illustrated in table 1) have become the most popular tourist's attractions in the in the local authorities. The three highest tourist's attractions are due to the location of the local authorities. The agriculture, adventure and the beauty of river/lake based tourism were popular in district council's areas which are near to wild and natural locations such as rainforest and national parks and the galleries are located at municipal and city councils.

4.3 *Stakeholder engagement in tourism planning and development*

The formulation of policies related to tourism development always becomes the vital part in determining the organization's efficiency. Only 45% of the LAs have formulated policies related to tourism development in their master plan while 36% said that they have not

Table 1. Tourism products and services in LAs.

The main challenges	Percentage
Tourism has not been considered in the planning process	15%
Lack of expertise in tourism marketing program	53%
Lack of awareness about the benefits of tourism development to the area of jurisdiction	34%
Lack of understanding between the stakeholders to develop a tourism program	48%
Feel that tourism activities is less important contributor to the organization	26%
Lack of local community involvement in tourism planning process	40%
Time constraint	55%
High costs	72%
Others	2%

Table 2. The engagement of multi stakeholder in tourism development in local authorities.

Hotel associations	42%
Heritage associations	42%
State tourism councils	79%
Ministry of tourism	59%
Academician	29%
Tourist operators	26%
Others	6.40%

formulated policies related to tourism in their strategic planning. And the remaining said they are not sure or no answer for that particular question

Stakeholders' participation in the planning process of the LAs generally involves the participation with NGOs and community (Siti-Nabiha, 2010). However, the table 2 shows that LAs mainly conducted dialogue and discussion with related government agencies responsible with tourism. 70% and 60% of the LAs engaged with state tourism councils and ministry of tourism in strategizing its tourism development. Meanwhile, only 43% LAs engaged with hotel associations and cultural associations in their tourism planning process. And, among all, only 30% LAs involved academician in their tourism planning process. In may be due to lack of enthusiasm or seriousness among the LAs in urging other parties to participate in its tourism planning.

4.4 *The main challenges that hinder the process of tourism development*

There are various challenges that the LAs faced in integrating tourism in their planning process. High costs was identified by 72% of the LAs followed by time constraint (55%) and lack of expertise (53%) as the obstacles from integrating tourism in their planning process. The responses are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. The main challenges faced by the authorities in integrating tourism in the planning process.

Agricultural tourism	63%
Adventure tourism	65%
Marine tourism	31%
The beauty of rivers and lakes	59%
Aboriginal tourism	29%
geographical wonders	42%
Access to national/state parks	29%
Art galleries/attractions	42%
Heritage tourism	30%
Sport tourism	40%
*Others	2.10%

5 CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Since stakeholder engagement is the heart of sustainable tourism development, local and state government must take the lead in ensuring a meaningful engagement with various relevant parties. However, there is a lack of meaningful engagement with local community and NGOs in the LAs strategic planning and decision making processes. With the increase in demand for participation and transparency the LAs should introduce variety of accessible channels that to listen to the views of the wider stakeholders groups. Therefore, a wide range of stakeholders on board for discussion of sustainability is necessary with full partnership basis are needed.

At this juncture, a policy at a national level that assists LAs in dealing with visitor volumes and the distribution of visitor in a more systematic manner would enable a more proactive public sector approach to better off tourism planning (Connel et al., 2009). A step toward understanding the dynamics of tourism in Malaysia is crucial in establishing multi stakeholder engagement since knowing the background and challenges facing by the LAs in developing sustainable tourism plans may give constructive insights to them to design and structure their future tourism development plans. Besides that, the star rating criteria for the LAs should include more on stakeholder engagement. By doing so, the LAs will take proactive actions to obtain participation from the planning stage to the implementation stage in their tourism development plan for the local areas. From the findings, high cost and lack of expertise have become the main challenges for the LAs to integrate tourism in their planning process. Thus, further investigation should be carried out to identify what are the costs that have burden the LAs in integrating tourism in their planning process. Moreover, the identification the specific expertise are crucial in order to identify what are the related parties that should be included in local authorities' tourism planning boards.

More research in this area is needed especially comprehensive qualitative research or case study based research to obtain an understanding of the challenges

faced by the LAs in engaging with other stakeholders. By doing so, the data generated from this kind of research may provide more practical solutions and suggestions to the LAs in helping them to be more proactive in sustaining the tourism industry in their area of jurisdiction.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author(s) would like to extend their appreciation to the Universiti Sains Malaysia for the Research University Grant entitled 'Tourism Planning' [Grant No. 1001/PTS/8660013] that makes this study and paper possible.

REFERENCES

- Barrutia, M. J. et al. 2007. Networking for Local Agenda 21 implementation: Learning from experience with Udaltze and Udalsarea in Basque autonomous community. *Geoforum*, 38, 33–48.
- Bramwell, B., & Lane, B. 1999. Collaboration and partnerships for sustainable tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 7, 179–181.
- Connel, J. et al. 2009. Towards Sustainable Tourism Planning in New Zealand: Monitoring Local Government Under the Resource Management Act. *Tourism Mangment*(30), 867–877.
- Dredge, D., & Jenkins, J. 2007. *Tourism planning and policy*. Brisbane: John Wiley.
- Goymen, K. 2000. Tourism and governance in Turkey. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(4), 1025–1048.
- Hall, C. M. 1994. *Tourism and politics, policy, power and place*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Hall, C. M. 2007. *Tourism planning, Policies, processes and relationships* (2nd ed.). Harlow: Prentice Hall.
- Holden, A. 2008. *Tourism and environment* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Inskip, E. 1991. *Tourism planning: an integrated and sustainable development approach*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Jamal, T. B., & Getz, D. 1995. Collaboration theory and community tourism planning. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 22(1), 186–204.
- Roberts, L., & Simpson, F. 1999. Developing partnership approaches to tourism in Central and Eastern Europe. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 7(3–4), 314–330.
- Selin, S., & Chavez, D. 1995. Developing a collaborative model for environmental planning and management. *Environmental Management*, 19(2), 189–195.
- Selin, S. W., & Myers, N. A. 1998. Tourism marketing alliances: member satisfaction and effectiveness attributes of a regional initiative. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 7(3), 79–93.
- Siti Nabiha, A.k. 2010. Improving the Service Delivery: A Case Study of Local Authority in Malaysia. *Global Business Review* 11(1), 65–79.
- Vandegaer, B. et al. 2008. local Agenda 21: New package, same content? A quantitative study on sustainable development in Flanders (Northern Belgium). Department of Human Ecology, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Laarbeeklaan 103, 1090 Brussels, Belgium
- Wall, G., & Mathieson, A. 2006. *Tourism: Change, impacts and opportunities*. Harlow: Pearson. www.kpkt.gov.my

Foreign tourists' perception on the safety and security measures in Kuala Lumpur

Ahmad Fitri Amir, Mohd Noor Ismawi Ismail, Mohd Hafiz Mohd Hanafiah & Noradzhar Baba
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This paper explores sustainable tourism development practices of Local Authorities (LAs) in Malaysia. A survey of all LAs in peninsular Malaysia was undertaken to identify the focus of tourism activities, the tourism products and services, the formulation of tourism policies, and the stakeholder's engagement done in tourism development. The findings reveals that significant consideration about tourism activities has been made in developing policies at the local level, but that a number of constraints limit the LAs from integrating tourism in their planning process. There is significant variation in the sustainable tourism development practices across the LAs. In addition, a more comprehensive stakeholder engagement process is required.

Keywords: Stakeholder engagement, sustainable tourism development, Local Authority, Malaysia

1 INTRODUCTION

Safety and security are crucial aspects for the development of all tourism destinations (Barker, M. and Page S.J., 2002). It is natural to have anxiety typically with regards to our safety and security due to little knowledge we have on the destination we intend to visit as relatively compared to knowledge that we have about our home country. Many people including tourists are concerned that they might be in the risks of injuring their physical and health-being by becoming a victim of cases like crime, terrorism, road accidents etc.

Tourism is a fragile industry, very much depending on many encouraging or discouraging factors such as economic condition, political stability, provision of tourist facilities and services, and most importantly safety and security assurance (Baloglu, S., 2001). Image of a destination may be tarnished if it is perceived as dangerous to visit. According to Demos, E (1992), creating and managing an appropriate destination image is critical to an effective positioning and marketing strategy.

Kuala Lumpur is among top urban destinations in South East Asia. This vibrant city attracts millions of tourist locally and internationally. As an urban attraction, Kuala Lumpur offers a wide variety of tourism products ranging from heritage, urban social life, night entertainment, theme parks, MICE, shopping and many more. One of the prominent attractions in Kuala Lumpur is Bukit Bintang shopping district. It is a lively attraction for tourists who enjoy shopping and urban life style activities. Bukit Bintang possesses numerous mega shopping malls, luxury and budget accommodations, abundance F&B establishments, entertainment outlets etc.

As one of the busy areas in Kuala Lumpur with heavy human traffic flow and vehicle movement, tourists may face several safety and security issues. This was supported by Sidhu (2006) who stated that the total index crime in Malaysia for the years 1980 to 2004 showed an increased. Some factors identified to the increase in crime in Malaysia including population growth, macro-economic factors (i.e. unemployment rates), political instability, demographic variables and urbanization patterns and so on.

Managing safety and security is not an easy task. Destination management would need to tactfully handle the misconception and negative perception associated with the destination (Pizam, A., Tarlow, P. and Bloom, J., 1997). Thus, the study seeks to critically examine on the perceptions of safety and security by conducting a survey that tapped various aspects of safety among international tourists visiting Kuala Lumpur.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

When a destination thought to be unsafe and lacking security in ensuring the well-being of their visitors; probably through information disseminated by news and reports in mass media, word-of-mouth and past experience as a victim, potential tourists may alter and cancelled their vacation plan to the destination. Several researchers have warned the tourism industry of the likely dramatic impact of natural or human-caused events that pose threats to the need for safety and security; natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, as well as human-caused disasters such as political

upheaval, riots, terrorism, insurgency, crime and war, are believed to have a suspending effect on consumer behaviour through a lasting and dramatic effect on a destination's image, especially when depicted in mass media (Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002 and Ferreira, S. and Harmse, A., 2000).

Barker, Page and Meyer (2002) in their study revealed that difference in ethnicity, age, accommodation choice, communication skills, and the number of traveling companions affects tourist perceptions and concerns regarding crime and safety. Similarly, differences in domestic/overseas status, age, accommodation choice, and the number of traveling companion affect the risk of criminal victimization of visitors.

Chon, K. S. (1990) found that safety appeared to be the top priority for both Hong Kong and Taiwan travellers. Fear of crime is still the main disappointment of a trip to South Africa, mentioned spontaneously by 26% of all foreign visitors over the periods from year 1996 to 1998. Crime continues to remain a threat to the development of tourism in South Africa (Ferreira and Harmse, 2000).

While increases in the numbers of tourists might lead to general increases in crime throughout the community by contributing to urbanization and other forms of social change, it is evident that the tourist industry itself is a factor in increasing crime rates (Milman, A., & Bach, S., 1999). Generally, most of the respondents perceived Thailand as a safe travel destination. In addition, they will not completely stop travelling if there was perceived risk of terrorism but rather travel to a less risky destination.

Tourists may perceive themselves as an easy prey for the criminals due to several reasons that they typically carry large sums of money; engage in "risky" behaviours (frequent nightclubs, consume alcohol, move through strange places, etc.); are ignorant of local languages, signs, and customs; and lack local support groups (Pizam, Tarlow and Bloom, 1997).

The demand for safety information was most apparent among visitors who were most at risk and concerned for their safety whereby information search is related to perceptions of risk (Roehl and Fesenmaier, 1992). This is an important finding because it implies that any stigma associated with providing safety information needs to be addressed, and correctly managed, and this has previously been shown not to increase concern for crime among visitors (Barker, 2000).

3 METHOD

The study is exploratory in nature as less is known regarding the perceptions of international tourists on their safety and security in Kuala Lumpur. The type of investigation for the study is correlation. The study seeks to find the relation between various identified demographic variables and perceptions of safety and security. As this study is correlation, it is conducted in the non-contrived setting that is natural environment

Table 1. Demographic profiles.

Demographic details	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	57	42.9
Female	76	57.1
Age		
18–25 years old	25	18.8
26–35 years old	52	39.1
36–45 years old	30	22.6
46–55 years old	11	8.3
56 years old and above	15	11.3
Education level		
Primary	2	1.5
Secondary	5	3.8
High School	17	12.8
Certificate	11	8.3
Diploma	13	9.8
Bachelor's degree	49	36.8
Master's Degree	25	18.8
PhD	5	3.8
Others: 6		4.5

with minimum interference of the researcher. Questionnaires were distributed to prospective respondents around Bukit Bintang, Kuala Lumpur area.

The study adopts convenience sampling technique and the survey was conducted through self administered face-to-face method. The data on number of foreigners who stayed in hotel in Kuala Lumpur in 2008 is considered appropriate for determining the sample size for the study because it provides a general insight on the demand of accommodation among international tourists visiting Kuala Lumpur. With consideration of various factors such as time and cost, the study adopt a sample size of not more than 157 based on Sekaran (2005) stated that a sample size larger than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate for most research.

Cronbach's alpha was used in the reliability analysis to check on internal consistency of the scale used for measuring perceptions of safety and security and evaluation of instruments or measures of safety and security in Kuala Lumpur. One-way ANOVA was performed to check the relationship between various variables in the study with perceptions of safety and security among the respondents.

4 ANALYSIS

4.1 Demographic profiles

A total of 150 questionnaires or survey forms were distributed to international tourists in Bukit Bintang area. However, only 133 forms (87 percent) were completed and legit to be analyzed. Female respondents comprises of 76 people or 57.1 percent of total respondents. The remaining are male respondents with 57 people or 42.9 percent of total respondents. In terms of

Table 2. Perceptions of safety and evaluation of measures/instruments.

General conditions and environment	Very Safe	Safe	Not Sure	Unsafe	Very Unsafe	Mean
Walking in the area during day time	51	70	9	2	1	1.74
Walking in the area during night time	18	64	43	6	2	2.32
Using public transportation in the area	29	63	36	3	2	2.14
Crossing roads in the area	7	51	39	27	9	2.85
Overall feeling on environment in the area	20	82	27	2	2	2.13
Safety and security instruments/measures	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Mean
Pedestrian design	13	58	47	13	2	2.50
Provision of closed circuit television (CCTV)	9	31	58	19	16	3.02
Signboard or direction board	17	55	40	18	3	2.51
Amount of lighting	19	71	38	5	0	2.22
Safety information	11	45	62	12	3	2.63
Number of police and security	19	42	49	23	0	2.57

age range, majority of respondents (39.1 percent) falls within 26–35 years old. It is followed by 22.6 percent of 36–45 years old. Senior generation only comprises of 15 respondents or 11.3 percent.

It can be assumed that younger generation is by majority prefers to travel to an urban destination like Kuala Lumpur due to fun, social activities and entertainment it offers. Older generation may prefer to travel to less congested and relaxed environment. By observation, Kuala Lumpur is mostly visited by younger people and this trend may also apply to tourists in younger age group.

More than half of the total respondents were highly educated. 74 respondents or 55.6 percent had their tertiary qualification of either Bachelor's Degree or Master's Degree. Demos (1992) claimed that visitors with higher educational status are more likely to report concerns about safety than visitors with lower level of education. The level of intellectual possessed by majority of respondents might reflect their sophistication of their needs, wants, attitudes and behaviours as tourists in foreign destination. For instance, they may learn or get information about destination they intend to visit and they certainly have a high expectation of the destination.

4.2 Assessment of safety and security

Overall, majority of respondents felt safe in Kuala Lumpur based on indication that all items were mostly rated 'Safe'. In addition, mean value for each aspect is not exceeding above 3.0, which considered within negative referral opinion. Large number of respondents which is more than 50 percents felt either 'very safe' or 'safe' in Kuala Lumpur for all items except 'crossing roads in the area' which has the lowest mean score of 2.85.

There were 27 respondents felt 'Unsafe' and 9 respondents felt 'Very Unsafe' when crossing roads in Kuala Lumpur area and 39 others were 'Not Sure'.

Certain geographical areas may have different safety perceptions among tourists and roads are among area that tourists reported as unsafe in study by Milman and Bach (1999).

Almost all of the respondents or specifically 91 percent stated that they felt it is either safe or very safe walking in Kuala Lumpur area during day time. In contrast, there was slightly decrease in perception of safety of walking in Kuala Lumpur during night time whereby only 18 respondents felt very safe and 43 respondents were 'unsure' whether it is safe or unsafe walking in the area after dark. Only 6 percent felt very unsafe or unsafe walking in Kuala Lumpur at night. Feelings of un-safety may cause tourists to avoid particular destinations and taking part in certain activities at a destination (George, 2003).

Based on the safety and security instruments listed in the survey, provision of CCTV was found to be the weakest aspect assessed by the respondents (mean = 3.02). Millman and Bach (1999) in their study of tourists' perceptions of safety in Orlando, Florida found out that the use of security devices like CCTV, improved lighting and the employing of hotel security staffs provide visitors with greater sense of security.

53 percent rated 'Good' for amount of lighting despite earlier finding that 51 respondents felt unsure or unsafe or very unsafe walking in Kuala Lumpur during night time. With exception of provision of CCTV, five other listed instruments were rated within the 'Good' and 'Average' range with mean from 2.0 to 3.0 for each item.

Most of the respondents in the survey were relatively satisfied with the particular safety and security instruments or measures. Nevertheless, in terms of number of police and security, 23 respondents rated 'poor' for this aspect. Also, 47 percent stated that safety information in Kuala Lumpur was average. Safety information is important to create awareness among tourists on risk that they might encounter in a destination and to take precautions.

5 CONCLUSION

From the survey done, it is evidently supported that majority of international tourists perceived Kuala Lumpur as a safe tourist destination. Safety concern is prominent among female tourists. It is by assumption that majority of female might feel physically vulnerable and thus perceive that they could be a prime target to criminals. Walking in Kuala Lumpur during day time was highly rated as safe but the perceptions were decreased slightly at night time. Needless to say that night time is considered a high risk period when crime activities are taught to be active. Favourable results were noted in terms of instrument or measures for safety and security in Kuala Lumpur. Being reputed as safe destination is definitely beneficial for Kuala Lumpur as tourist area. The findings have supported the fact that with a greater sense of security, tourists will most likely to return to Kuala Lumpur and recommend others too.

To enhance tourists' experience concerning their perceptions of safety and security in Kuala Lumpur, improvement should be made in area such as creating awareness on CCTVs availability, efficiency of traffic flow including pedestrian design, and policing strategies. The presence of beggars, homeless people, illegal traders, illegal immigrant and prostitutes may need to be addressed as it could affect the image of the country as a whole. It is recommended for future study of perception of safety and security to include investigation of various psychographic characteristics of tourists such as their personality traits and attitudes.

REFERENCES

Baloglu, S. 2001. Image variations of Turkey by familiarity index: informational and experiential dimensions. *Tourism Management* 22(2): 127–133.

- Barker, M. and Page S.J. 2002. Visitor Safety in Urban Tourism Environments: the case of Auckland, New Zealand. *Cities* 19(4): 273–282.
- Chon, K. S. 1990. The role of destination image in tourism: A review and discussion. *Tourist Review*, 45, 12–19.
- Demos, E. 1992. Concern for safety: A potential problem in the tourist industry. *Journal of Tourism Marketing*, 1 (1), 81–88.
- Ferreira, S. and Harmse, A. 2000. Crime and Tourism in South Africa: International Tourists' Perception and Risk. *South African Geographical Journal*, m.s. 80–85.
- George, R. 2003. Tourist's perceptions of safety and security while visiting Cape Town. *Tourism Management* 24: pp. 575–585.
- Milman, A., & Bach, S. 1999. The impact of security devices on tourists' perceived safety: The central Florida example. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 23(4), 371–386.
- Pizam, A., and A. Fleischer. 2002. Severity Versus Frequency of Acts of Terrorism: Which Has a Larger Impact on Tourism Demand?. *Journal of Travel Research*, 40, 337–339.
- Pizam, A., Tarlow, P. and Bloom, J. 1997. Making Tourists Feel Safe: Whose Responsibility Is It? *Journal of Travel Research* 3(3), 23–28.
- Roehl, W.S. and Fesenmaier, D.R. 1992. Risk perceptions and pleasure travel: an exploratory analysis. *Journal of Travel Research* 30(4), 17–26.
- Sekaran, U. 2005. *Research Methods For Business* Fourth Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Singapore.
- Sidhu, A.S. 2005. The Rise of Crime in Malaysia. *Journal of Kuala Lumpur Royal Malaysia Police College* 4.
- Sidhu, A.S. 2006. Crime Levels and Trends in the Next Decade. *Journal of Kuala Lumpur Royal Malaysia Police College* 5.

Strategies for sustainable wetland tourism in Iran and its environmental impact: A case study of Anzali Wetland

M. Khoshkam & A. Marzuki

School of Housing Building and Planning, Universiti Sains, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Fostering the connection between humans and nature makes up a major segment of the world's tourism industry. Ecotourism brings together fauna, flora, tourists and local communities and contributes to both positive and negative effects on each other. Nevertheless, in developing countries such as Iran, natural areas such as wetlands are facing with environmental degradation due to lack of awareness among local communities and also limitation in environmental policy and regulations. Wetlands in Iran provide considerable environmental benefits to the region as well as being unique natural attractions which has also bolster ecotourism. Such environmental pressures are also threatening the local community economic through wetlands tourism. Thus, this study presents strategies for the development of sustainable wetland tourism in the Anzali Wetland area of Iran. SWOT findings were conducted to assess the impacts of various tourism initiatives on the region and its residents. Careful examination of tourism strategies are critically considered when creating public policy that benefits the environment and the local community.

Keywords: Tourism, ecotourism, SWOT strategies, Anzali Wetland, environmental impacts

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the largest and most popular industries in the world contributing to the global economy as well as providing numerous job and socio-cultural opportunities (Sariisik, Turkey, & Akova, 2011).

With its unique natural resources, Iran is one of the most important, up and coming, tourist destinations in the developing world. Wetlands resources and their surrounding regions are increasingly attracting many domestic and international tourists each year. The Ramsar Convention of 1971 has been a powerful tool in the promotion of sustainability and conservation of wetlands. The definition of "wetlands" by Ramsar Convention is "Areas of marsh, fen, peat land or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static, flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water, the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six meters" (Silvius, Oneka, & Verhagen, 2000).

As a result, the value, structure and functions of wetlands are progressively recognized in local, national and international land use planning and management processes. Wetlands tourism is a relatively new but growing category of tourism that affords new opportunities for residents of the areas around the wetlands. These include environmental and economic opportunities as well as socio-cultural advantages and disadvantages. Sustainability has become one of the core issues in wetlands tourism development. The aim of this study is to evaluate current strategies for the

development of sustainable wetlands tourism in the Anzali Wetland area of Iran. An analysis was conducted to assess the impacts of a variety of tourism initiatives and their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities offered and potential negative threats, on the region and its residents.

1.1 Case study

The study was conducted in the Anzali Wetland area which is located in Guilan province in Iran and is one of the most popular wetlands in the country. This wetland covers 193 km² of the Guilan province of Iran on the southern coast of Caspian Sea. Its geographical position is North N 37°-23' to 37°-33' and East E 49°-15' to 49°-38' (Tahershamsi, Bakhtiary, & Mousavi, 2009) see Figure 1. The Anzali Wetland was recognized by Ramsar Convention in June 1975.

1.2 Methodology

The methodology of this study is based on descriptive methods and interpretation of survey responses regarding the environmental impact of wetlands tourism. In order to identify internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats) of wetlands tourism development that impact the environment, SWOT (acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was utilized.

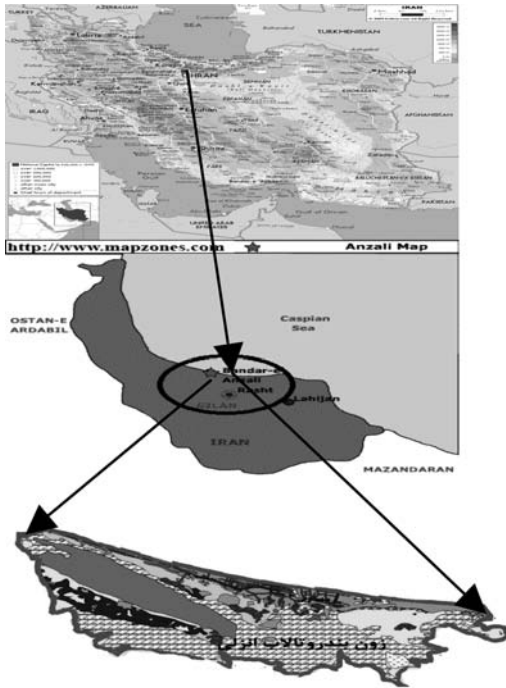


Figure 1. Location of the Anzali wetland in Iran.

The hypotheses arrived at the result are significant, such as: The Anzali Wetland provides many opportunities and strengths to help achieve sustainability as well as aiding in the reduction of weaknesses and threats in the area. SWOT analysis together with the accompanying hypotheses are critical elements in the development of a long term planning process for wetlands tourism and sustainability which integrates corporate and citizen stakeholders, missions, creation of objectives and policies and formulating appropriate strategies. Situational analysis beginning with SWOT is the basis for making strategic decisions in light of the current situation. (Wheelen & Hunger, 2004) see Table 1.

2 SWOT FINDINGS OF ANZALI WETLAND TOURISM

In order to assess the potential for sustainability of wetlands tourism in an area, it is first necessary to review its current circumstances and explore actual and possible impacts. Interpretation of this study's SWOT findings concerning the environmental impact of wetlands tourism development on the Anzali Wetland area is illustrated below in Tables 2 and 3.

2.1 Result and discussions

According to the SWOT analysis there are four major strategies which are relevant to the circumstances of

Table 1. SWOT matrix & determination of strategies.

SWOT	S	W
O	SO	WO
T	ST	WT

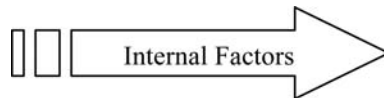
Determination of short term & long term development

Source: (Fazel Nia & Hedayati, 2010)

the study area. In accord with our earlier observations these include:

1. Competitive strategy: strengths and opportunities should be pointed out by this strategy for the creation of practical solutions (SO).
2. Diversification strategy proposes the use of inherent strengths to remove threats (ST).
3. Invasive strategy proposes to remove weaknesses and to use opportunities (WO).
4. Defensive strategy proposes to remove internal weaknesses and to avoid threats (WT) (Nouri, Karbassi, & Mirkia, 2008).

The matrix of SWOT methodology concerning Internal and External factors is presented as follows:



Strengths

- S1. Strong investment by the government and NGO's to revive the Wetland and eco-tourism in the region
- S2. Located near the Caspian Sea as a free trade-Industrial zone
- S3. Variety of fauna and flora in and around the Wetland
- S4. The Wetland's unique ecosystem's ability to attract tourists
- S5. The role of Nelumbo as a tourist attraction
- S6. Appeal of the Wetland as a tourist attraction in a vibrant natural landscape with migratory birds, unique flowers etc. (CENESTA, 2012).

Weaknesses

- W1. Lack of planning and management for tourism development
- W2. Lack of government investment to study the area
- W3. Lack of accommodation services for international tourists

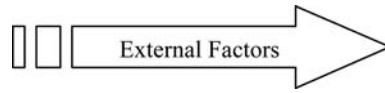
Table 2. Internal factors evaluation of Anzali Wetland.

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Government and NGO's invest to revive the ecology of the wetlands and the surrounding area.	1. Lack of planning and management for tourism development
2. Location near Caspian Sea as a free trade – Industrial zone.	2. Lack of government investment to study the area.
3. Diversity of fauna and flora in and around the Wetland	3. Lack of accommodation services for international tourists.
4. Unique ecosystem appeals to tourists	4. Increase in world diseases carried by migrant birds and reduction of hunting and sport tourism surrounding the study area.
5. Nelumbo as a tourist attraction	5. Fluctuation of Caspian Sea conditions and changing of the water's surface (Royan, 2006).
6. Appeal of the Wetland as a tourist attraction in a vibrant natural landscape with migratory birds, unique flowers, etc. (CENESTA, 2012)	

Table 3. External factors evaluation of wetland tourism development in Anzali wetland.

Opportunities	Threats
1. The growth of an economic role for wetlands tourism resources in the area	1. Loss of vegetation in the area
2. Strong government motivation for attracting international tourists	2. Lack of natural conditions in the Wetland
3. Increased attention to tourism planning and management	3. Increase in pollution, sewage and other toxic spillage from factories around the Wetland
4. The potential for boating, fishing, hunting activities	4. Threats for fauna and flora in the Wetland area
5. Increased government planning for long term investment in wetland tourism	5. Increased boating in the Wetland
6. Accessibility to small islands surrounding the wetland	6. NGO's and the public and private sectors lack coordination of planning and management
7. DOE planning for revitalization of the wetland through dredging	7. Decrease of the coordination and balance between economic and conservation activities due to tourism demand
	8. Pollution of the Wetland area and degradation of the Wetland ecosystem
	9. Increase of Azolla (aquatic fern) invading the Wetland

- W4. Increase in world diseases carried by migrant birds and reduction of hunting and sport tourism surrounding the study area
- W5. Fluctuation of Caspian Sea conditions and changing of the water's surface (Royan, 2006)



Opportunities

- O1. The growth of an economic role for wetlands tourism resources in the area
- O2. Strong government motivation for attracting international tourists
- O3. Increased attention to tourism planning and management
- O4. The potential for boating, fishing, hunting activities
- O5. Increased government planning for long term investment in wetlands tourism
- O6. Accessibility to small islands surrounding the wetland
- O7. DOE planning for revitalization of the wetland through dredging

Threats

- T1. Loss of vegetation in the area
- T2. Lack of natural conditions in the Wetland
- T3. Increase in pollution, sewage and other toxic spillage from factories around the Wetland
- T4. Threats for fauna and flora in the Wetland area
- T5. Increased boating in the Wetland
- T6. NGO's and the public and private sectors lack coordination of planning and management
- T7. Decrease of the coordination and balance between economic and conservation activities due to tourism demand
- T8. Pollution of the Wetland area and degradation of the Wetland ecosystem
- T9. Increase of Azolla (aquatic fern) invading the Wetland

These findings were obtained through descriptive analysis of SWOT findings factors for wetlands tourism in the Anzali Wetland area. The strategies formulated should not only increase national and international tourism activity for the Anzali Wetland but can potentially reduce some negative environmental impacts on the area.

2.2 Conclusion

The focus of this study is primarily on first round SWOT analysis which is necessary for sustainable wetland tourism development in the Anzali Wetland region. In light of the conclusions drawn here, careful examination of tourism development strategies is critical when determining public policy that benefits both the environment and the local community. Experts and local residents agreed that the majority of tourists arrive during the first and second quarter of the year and that the local community must rely on other sources of income for the autumn and winter seasons. It can be suggested that a long term development strategy for implementation of sustainable wetlands tourism through careful planning and management can attract tourists to the Anzali Wetland region throughout

Table 4. SWOT matrix: Derivation of the key strategies in the wetland tourism in the study area.

Competitive strategies on the basis of strength points and opportunities (SO)	Invasive strategies on the basis of the strength points and opportunities (WO)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enact guidelines for government and NGO investments regarding wetlands tourism (S1, O3). ● Increase economic relations with neighboring countries and creation of free trade-industrial zones (S2, O1). ● Provide information to increase local awareness around long term planning by DOE for wetlands tourism (S7, O2). ● Place more emphasis on dredging of the Anzali Wetland as a means of recuing local fauna and flora as unique resources (S3, O7, O5). ● Developers should consider integrating local tourist destinations (Anzali Wetland, nearby islands and Nelumbo) to capitalize on Nelumbo's popularity. (S4, S5, O6). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide adequate, quality, accommodation services on small islands surrounding the Wetland (W3, O6). ● Increase the government investment to improve boating, fishing, and hunting conditions (W2, O4). ● Review ecotourism planning and management guidelines to attract international tourists to wetlands tourism in the area (W1, O2, O3) ● Activities should be coordinated with local residents to allow eco tourists to assist in wetlands habitat and species conservation efforts (W4, O2).
Diversification strategies on the basis of the strength points and threats (ST)	Defensive the strategies on the basis of the weak points and threats (WT)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Introduction to the unique character and value of the wetlands ecosystem using accessible information for local residents (S4, T4). – Create special promotions for Nelumbo tourism to increase economic growth and demand for all regional attractions (S5, T7). – The exact area affected and impact of Azolla invasion should be studied by the government to act on reducing its negative impact in the Wetland area (S1, T9). – Focus on the development of high quality wetlands tourism which has the least impact on the fauna and flora of the region (S3, T4). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Use laws and guidelines to plan for and manage factory waste impacting the Wetland area (W1, T3). – Introduction of a proposal format for wetlands tourism projects will help avoid unplanned growth of economic and conservation activities (W1, T7). – Initiation of an integrated master plan by the government to control the growth of Azolla (invasive aquatic ferns) in protected wetlands areas (W1, T9). – Consistent use of environmentally appropriate technologies to reduce pollution in the region.

the year. As part of a strategy to reduce the negative impact of increased tourism, government agencies and NGO's could create an infrastructure which establishes adequate positive impacts to the local environment and community, therefore developing a system of sustainable wetlands tourism as well as environmental conservation for the study area.

3 PHOTOGRAPHS OF WETLAND TOURISM IN ANZALI

Number pictures from Anzali wetland and tourist attractions. See Figures 2, 3–4.



Figure 2. Landscape of lotuses Anzali Wetland (Captured by A. Bahri, 2012).



Figure 3. Boating in Anzali Wetland (Captured by author, 2012).



Figure 4. Boating in Anzali Wetland. (Captured by author, 2012).

REFERENCES

- Cenesta. 2012. Socio-Economic survey Anzali wetland Ecological Management Project (Part-2): Cenesta.
- Fazel Nia, G., & Hedayati, S. 2010. Suitable strategies for tourism development Case study: Zarivar Lake. *Journal of Geography and Development*, 19, 154–170.
- Nouri, J., Karbassi, A., & Mirkia, S. 2008. Environmental management of coastal regions in the Caspian Sea. *International Journal of Environmental Science and Technology*, 5(1), 43–52.
- Royan. 2006. *Master Plan of Anzali Wetland*. Iran: Handicraft, Tourism, and Cultural heritage organization.
- Sariisik, M., Turkay, O., & Akova, O. 2011. How to manage yacht tourism in Turkey: A swot analysis and related strategies. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 24, 1014–1025.
- Silvius, M., Oneka, M., & Verhagen, A. 2000. Wetlands: lifeline for people at the edge. *Physics and Chemistry of the Earth, Part B: Hydrology, Oceans and Atmosphere*, 25(7–8), 645–652.
- Tahershamsi, A., Bakhtiary, A., & Mousavi, A. 2009. *Effects of seasonal climate change on Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) concentration in the Anzali Wetland (Iran)*.
- Wheelen, T. L., & Hunger, D. J. 2004. Concepts in Strategic Management and Business Policy. *Pearson Education*, 110–114.

This page intentionally left blank

A study of international tourists' motivation, satisfaction and behavioral intentions to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry

Normaziah Che Musa & Misyer Mohamed Tajudin
University of Management and Technology (UMTECH), Malaysia

Mohd. Saeed bin Siddiq
Universiti Tun Abdul Razak (UNIRAZAK), Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This is an exploratory attempt to capture the underlying reasons for tourists' decisions to visit a destination. The main objective is to examine the influence of tourists' motivations to visit Malaysia, and their perceived value on the behavioral intentions to patronize the Malaysian hospitality industry, with satisfaction as the mediator. The study also assesses the moderating effect of geographic and demographic characteristics of the tourist in the relationship between satisfaction and behavioral intention. These variables should help in developing a framework for formulating appropriate marketing strategies to continue attracting tourists to Malaysia. Random sampling method was adopted to distribute questionnaires to tourists visiting tourist spots in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital city. There is insufficient tourism motivation analysis specific to Malaysia, thus this study aims to cover this gap, thereby contributing to new knowledge about the country's tourism sector. SPSS 18 is used to test the research model. The theoretical and managerial implications of the study are discussed.

Keywords: Travel motivation, perceived value, satisfaction, behavioral intention.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Malaysian tourism industry*

A total of 24.7 million tourists arrived in Malaysia in 2011, an increase of 4% from 2010, who spent about 3% more than the previous year. Over the last few years, Malaysia has given more attention to this increasingly important industry but the recent chain of dreadful events such as natural disasters in Indonesia and Japan, the Arab Spring, the American and European lackluster economy amid the worst debt crises in decades, the imminent threat of global terrorism, the new emerging economies, are all bound to affect the global tourism industry in certain ways, thus, intensifying the country's need for appropriate tourism strategies. As the country's export is slowing down due to unfavorable conditions faced by major importers, the manufacturing sector has been hit badly with news of downsizing aplenty. Malaysia's effort to inject funds into its economy now turns to the service sector, with tourism being a key player, hence the critical role it plays in stabilizing the country's economy.

There are, however, other issues to take into account that are pivotal to ensure continuous patronage to Malaysia as a tourist destination, such as heightened safety concerns following isolated incidents of attacks and violence involving terrorist groups and pirates, in addition to natural calamity and political instability surrounding the region. While Malaysia has been

spared from most of these occurrences thus far, it is fair to assume that these issues can act as sentiments that highly influence potential tourists' perceptions of Malaysian as an attractive and safe destination.

1.2 *Problem statement*

Given these points for concern, Malaysia needs to ensure that its tourism industry can continue to contribute to the nation's economy vis-à-vis the uncertainties, threats and challenges abound. As the tourism industry has proven to have a positive economic impact towards the country, notwithstanding the increase in employment opportunities in the tourism sectors and foreign exchange earnings, research work in areas that will lead to sustainable tourism in Malaysia should be encouraged. This exposes a dire need for research to study the tourists thoroughly and try to effectively understand the tourist's behavioral intention, travel motivation and their satisfaction towards Malaysian hospitality industry.

Another positive issue that has destined Malaysia as a global tourism spot is that it has been ranked by Global Peace Index (GPI) as the most peaceful country in South East Asia, and the fourth safest in Asia Pacific behind New Zealand, Japan and Australia, and ranked as the 19th safest and peaceful country out of 153 countries in the world. Perceived value, as found in many researches in marketing, can help induce customer's

positive behavioral intention, in terms of willingness to revisit and recommend to others. As such, the study would like to further refine the travel satisfaction theory by adding this new dimension as an antecedent to travel satisfaction.

2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Consumer behavior study is much more complex for services than for goods, due to their intrinsic characteristics, such as intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1985). According to Seabra, Abrantes & Lages (2007), tourist behavior is particularly complex because the final decision of buying tourist services and destination presents distinctive aspects. First, the acquisition process has a strong emotional component for consumers. Second, purchasing is often the culmination of a long process of planning, choice, evaluation and assessment of alternatives by a large number of people. More importantly, this intangibility of tourist services creates uncertainty and perceived risk in the consumer's mind (Zeithaml, 1981). So, before committing to a tour destination, consumers acquire a large quantity of information and anticipate the outcome of consumption, creating images and expectations.

2.1 *Tourists' behavioral intention*

A review of the literature depicts that researchers in the field of tourism have often interpreted behavioral intentions as the intention to revisit/repurchase and willingness to recommend the tourism product to others. Cronin & Taylor (1992), Homburg & Giering (2001) measured the construct "future behavioral intention" by using two indicators: the intention to repurchase and the intention to provide positive recommendations.

Swan (1981) defined behavioral intention as individual's anticipated or planned future behavior. It represents an individual's expectancies about a particular behavior in a given setting and can be operationalized as the likelihood to act (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Boulding, Kalra, Staelin & Zeithaml (1993) stated that an indicator of favorable post-purchase behavioral intentions is positive word of mouth of the product to others. Reicheld & Sasser (1990) also regarded recommendation of the product to others as a specific indicator of future behavioral intent. Williams & Soutar (2009) argued that this is important in tourism since it relies on positive word-of-mouth. Tourists who had a satisfactory experience are more likely to recommend the destinations they have visited to friends and relatives (Beeho & Prentice, 1997). Hutchinson, Lai, & Wang (2009) argued that tourists who have revisit intentions are more likely to recommend the destination to others. In this study, behavioral intention is defined as a potential International tourists' anticipation of future trip(s) to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry. Behavioral intention seems to be

an important concept in understanding tourists' choice of tourism products and future motives and behavior. From this perspective, any attempt to understand behavioral intention will bring further contribution to the tourism knowledge base.

2.2 *Travel motivation*

Motivation is the impetus behind travel (Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011). Tourists are subject of investigation in terms of their preferences to visit certain destinations as knowledge of their travel motivations and its association with destination selection plays a critical role in predicting future travel pattern. Tourist motivation is very dynamic and covers a multitude of dimensions. People can choose one destination with a motive of relaxation in a pleasant safe place combined with visiting a local heritage. Another person may change his preferences and motives for choosing a destination as he moves through the family life cycle from a single-career person to a more family-oriented person.

Baloglu (1999) concluded that motivation is an antecedent of revisit intentions. Qu & Wong (1999) in their study of Hong Kong cruise travelers equally find that their motivation is an important determinant of their intentions to repeat cruise travel again. These results conformed to the study by Rittichainuwat, Qu & Leong (2003), which concluded that travel motivation is an important factor influencing travelers to revisit destinations. Hence, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H1: Travel motivation influences tourists' behavioral intention to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry.

2.3 *Perceived value*

Perceived value is defined by Zeithaml (1988) as the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given. Perceived value model, as proposed by Zeithaml (1988) suggests that perceived value positively affects consumers' purchase intentions. Subsequent researchers also provide empirical evidence to support the link between perceived value and behavioral intentions (Cronin, Brady & Hult 2000; Jen & Hu, 2003). Hence, we propose:

H2: Perceived value influences the tourists' behavioral intention to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry.

2.4 *Tourists' satisfaction*

In a study done by Spreng, Harrel & Mackoy (1995), they instigate that it is important for service providers to produce satisfied customers as it will affect customers' repurchase intention and positive word of mouth. This relationship between customer satisfaction and future intentions concurs with earlier studies (Oliver, 1980). However, there is uncertainty on the

basic notion that customer satisfaction is a necessary but a sufficient condition for future intention.

Beerli & Martin (2004) proposed that 'motivation is the need that drives an individual to act in a certain way to achieve the desired satisfaction' (Beerli & Martin, 2004: p626). Motivations can be intrinsic (push) or extrinsic (pull) according to Crompton (1979). Pull motivations represent the attributes of the destination to be visited that appeal to tourists, while push motivations depict personal urges or desires to be fulfilled by visiting a particular destination. Yoon & Uysal (2005) concluded that travel motivation affects feelings of satisfaction, which in turn, influences future purchase behavior, rendering tourist satisfaction as a mediating variable between motivations (pull and push) and destination loyalty.

Rust & Oliver (1994) noted that value, is an encounter-specific input to satisfaction, which implicates the positive link between perceived value and satisfaction. Lapierre, Filiatrault & Chebat (1999) also found empirical support for the positive effect of perceived value on customer satisfaction. On a study by Jen, Tu & Lu (2010), they found that perceived value plays an important role in predicting satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Based upon these research results, we propose that:

H3: The relationship between the tourists' motivation and perceived value with the behavioral intentions to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry is mediated by tourists' satisfaction.

2.5 Proposed framework for the study

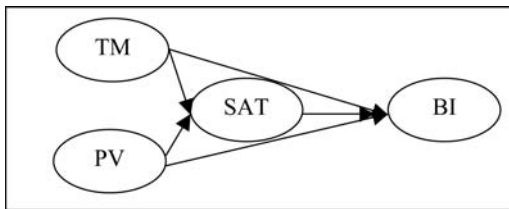


Figure 1. Proposed framework for the study.

3 METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was developed to measure the travel motivation, perceived value, satisfaction and behavioral intention of international tourists to Malaysia. The questionnaire is adopted from various sources; travel motivation (Kau & Lim, 2005; Yoon & Uysal, 2005), perceived value (Hutchinson, Lai & Wang, 2009; Jen, Tu & Lu, 2011), satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Data were collected in Kuala Lumpur with a random sampling method. A total of 104 usable questionnaires were collected during the self-administered survey. Data were analyzed using SPSS 18. First, the

items were factor analyzed using principal component method with Varimax rotation, and factor loadings of 0.55 and above, were run to determine the underlying structures, then, the reliability of each factors were calculated. In addition, Pearson correlation and hierarchical regression were used to study the relationship between the constructs.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Profile of the respondents

Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the demographic profile of the whole sample of respondents ($N = 104$). The sample profiled composed of 56.7% male and 43.3% females with most respondents (52.9%) age between 20–29. Others were in the categories under 20 (4.8%), 30–39 (23.1%), 40–49 (11.5%), 50 and above (7.7%). Most tourists were from Europe (58.7%), with England as the dominant market (14.4%), followed by Germany (11%) and Holland (9%). Almost half (42%) of the tourists were single, 34% were married or in relationship without children, 19% were married with children, and 5% were divorced. 43% are Christians, while 37% who are Atheist. Islam consists of 14% and Buddhist is 5% of the total respondents.

The social profiles of the respondents' revealed that they were white collar workers having diplomas (27%) or degrees (51%). Most of the respondents were on holiday (91%), anniversary/honeymoon (6%), and 3% visiting family and friends. 85% traveled together with families or friends, and 15% travel alone. More than half (66%) stayed more than 7 days, 28% stayed between 3-6 days, and 6% stayed between 1 to 2 days.

In terms of sources of information, 94% responded they referred to Internet for information about Malaysia, half of the respondent (52%) referred to their family or friends, 48% did refer to books on Malaysia. The rest of sources of information, such as travel agencies, advertisement by mass media, and trade shows were referred to by less than 2% of the respondents.

4.2 Factor analysis of the constructs

The result of the correlation analysis among each factor in each construct indicates the significant relationships between each other, except between TM 5 and TM7. Therefore, they were deleted from further analysis.

5 FINDINGS

Results show a significant relationship between travel motivation and behavioral intention to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry. The findings offer strong empirical support for the intuitive notion that travel motivation can influence favorable behavioral intention.

Table 1. Factor analysis using varimax rotation, means and total variance explained.

Construct	Cronbach	Means	Total variance alpha explained
TM1 (7 items)	.879	3.611	67.369
TM2 (6 items)	.731		2.558
TM3 (3 items)	.802		3.026
TM4 (3 items)	.770		2.715
TM5 (3 items)	.813		2.125
TM6 (2 items)	.796		3.188
TM7 (3 items)	.754		3.282
TM8 (1 item)			
<i>KMO .742, with significant Bartlett's test of sphericity.</i>			
PV 1 (5 items)	.760	2.888	58.387
PV 2 (4 items)	.792	3.072	
<i>KMO .831, with significant Bartlett's test of sphericity.</i>			
SAT (4 items)	.756	3.262	57.78
<i>KMO .721, with significant Bartlett's test of sphericity.</i>			
BI (3 items)	.716	3.179	64.02
<i>KMO .614, with significant Bartlett's test of sphericity.</i>			

Table 2. Results of hypotheses testing.

Hypothesis	Results	Not Supported/supported
H1 (TM-BI)	$\beta = 0.307, t = 3.263;$	Supported $p < 0.00$
H2 (PV-BI)	$\beta = 0.521, t = 6.170;$	Supported $p < 0.05$
H3a (TM-SAT-BI)		Supported
Model 1	$\beta_{TM} = 0.307, t = 3.263, p = 0.02$ $R^2 = .095, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .086, F = 10.645$	
Model 2	$\beta_{TM} = 0.124, t = 1.703, p = 0.92$ $\beta_{SAT} = 0.665, t = 9.121, p = 0.00$ $R^2 = .503, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .494, F = 83.187$	
H3b (PV-SAT-BI)	Partial	
Model 1	$\beta_{PV} = 0.521, t = 6.170, p = 0.00$ $R^2 = .272, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .265, F = 38.063$	
Model 2	$\beta_{PV} = 0.260, t = 3.453, p = 0.01$ $\beta_{SAT} = 0.583, t = 7.746, p = 0.00$ $R^2 = .543, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .534, F = 59.995$	

The second hypothesis is also supported with perceived value influencing the tourists' behavioral intention to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry.

The third hypothesis received mixed results. Satisfaction is found to be a full mediator for the relationship between travel motivation and behavioral intention. As shown in Model 2 of (TM-SAT-BI), all predictors contributed 49% percent of the variance in behavioral intentions. However, satisfaction only serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between perceived value and behavioral intention. Model 2 of (PV-SAT-BI) showed that all predictors contributed 53.4 % of the variance in behavioral intentions.

6 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study confirm the antecedents to the concept of behavioral intention in travel and tourism. Travel motivation influences tourist behavioral intentions to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry. Findings of this study are consistent with Yoon & Uysal (2005) and Ramkissoon & Uysal (2011). This emphasizes the importance of travel motivation as the function of behavioral intention.

The findings also confirm the influence of perceived value on behavioral intentions to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry. This is consistent with the findings by Jen et al (2011). From a managerial viewpoint, Malaysian hospitality providers who want to get favorable behavioral intentions should ensure that they can improve international tourists' perceived value of their services.

Additionally, the result of the hierarchical regression analysis supports hypothesis H3a showing the moderating effects of travel satisfaction on the respective relationship between travel motivation and behavioral intentions to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry. Therefore, Malaysian hospitality providers who want to get favorable behavioral intentions by providing better services should ensure that their services can enhance international tourists' satisfaction.

However, hierarchical regression analysis on hypothesis H3b concludes that satisfaction only serves as a partial mediator on the relationship between perceived value and behavioral intentions. Thus, it should be noted that there are other factors that mediate or possibly moderate the relationship between perceived value and behavioral intentions. To date, to the author's knowledge no research has explored the moderating effect of satisfaction on the relationship between perceived value and behavioral intentions. Therefore, this study is a fruitful attempt to investigate and contribute to the existing reservoir of knowledge on perceived value and behavioral intention and reinforces the importance of the concept in Malaysian tourism study.

Malaysian government should also improve the information available on the Internet and showcase the beautiful scenery and various activities available as much as possible Malaysia as most of them referred to Internet in their quest for information about Malaysia.

7 CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

This study developed and tested a model integrating constructs of travel motivation, perceived value, satisfaction and behavioral intention to patronize Malaysian hospitality industry. The proposed model provided insights on the respective relationships between these constructs. The model provided a comprehensive understanding of travel motivation, perceived value and travel satisfaction as salient factors influencing behavioral intentions to patronize

Malaysian hospitality industry and further offered reasonable explanations on the effect of geo-demographic characteristics on the relationship between travel satisfaction and behavioral intentions.

The model and related findings led to some important theoretical and managerial implications. Although the contributions of the study are evident, it is undeniable that it still has some limitations. To begin with, the model only incorporates three determinants of behavior. Future studies should consider integrating other potential determinants of behavioral intentions. For instance, the influence of information searches behavior on behavioral intention to patronize a destination may be examined. The context-specific nature of the study can also limit generalization of the study findings. Researchers should aim at further testing of the model in other destinations apart from Kuala Lumpur. Future researchers should also test the model using tourists consuming specific products or services, such as tourist consuming cultural products or destinations, tourists consuming medical tourism, tourist in the hunt for specific events, such as F1 and Batu Caves experience during Deepavali, or tourist consuming eco-tourism. Such approach in future studies could help to confirm the findings of the study. The study can also test the model using domestic tourists as well. It is also possible that with a different sample of tourists, the magnitude and direction of the proposed relationships can be changed. These aspects will further enlighten researchers on tourists' behavior as well as provide clearer relationships between the different constructs in the model.

REFERENCES

- Baloglu, S. 1999. A path analytic model of visitation intention involving information sources, socio-psychological motivations, and destination image. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing* 8(3):81–90.
- Beerli, A. & Martin, J.D. 2004. Tourists' characteristics and the perceived image of tourist destinations: a quantitative analysis – a case study of Lanzarote, Spain. *Tourism Management*, 25(5):623–636.
- Boulding, W., Kalra, A., Staelin, R. & Zeithaml, V.A. 1993. A dynamic process model of service quality: from expectations to behavioral intentions. *Journal of Marketing Research*. 30:7–27.
- Crompton, J.L. 1979. An assessment of the image of Mexico as a vacation destination and the influence of geographical location upon that image. *Journal of Travel Research*. 17(4):18–24.
- Cronin Jr., J.J., Brady, M.K., & Hult, G.T.M. 2000. Assessing the effect of quality, value and customer satisfaction on consumer behavioral intention in service environment. *Journal of Retailing* 76(2):193–218.
- Cronin, J.J., & Taylor, S.A. 1994. Measuring service quality: A re-examination and extension. *Journal of Marketing* 56:55–68.
- Fisbein, M & Ajzen, I. 1975. *Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: An introductory to theory and research*. Addison-Wesley, Boston.
- Homburg, C. & Giering, A. 2001. Personal characteristics as moderators of the relationships between customer satisfaction and loyalty: An empirical analysis. *Psychology and Marketing* 18:43–63.
- Jen, W. & Hu, K.C. 2003. Application of perceived value model to identify factors affecting passengers' repurchase intentions on city bus: a case of Taipei metropolitan area. *Transportation* 30(3):307–327.
- Jen, W., Tu, R., & Lu, T. 2010. Managing passenger behavioral intention : an integrated framework for service quality, satisfaction, perceived value, and switching barriers. *Transportation* 38:321–342.
- Kau & Lim. 2005
- Lam, T. & Hsu, C. H. C. 2006. Predicting behavioral intention of choosing a travel destination. *Tourism Management* 27(4):589–599.
- Lapierre, J., Filiatrault, P., & Chebat, J.C. 1999. Value strategy rather than quality: a case of business-to-business professional service. *Journal of Business Research* 45(2):235–246.
- Oliver, R. L. 1980. A cognitive model of the Antecedents and Consequences of satisfaction decisions. *Journal of Marketing Research* 17:460–469.
- Qu, H. & Wong, Y.P. 1999. A service performance model of Hong Kong travellers' motivation factors and satisfaction. *Tourism Management* 20(2):237–244.
- Ramkissoon, H., & Uysal, M. S. 2011. The effects of perceived authenticity, information search behavior, motivation and destination imagery on cultural behavioral intentions of tourists. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 14(6):537–562.
- Rittichainuwat, B.N., Qu, H. & Leong, J.K. 2003. The collective impacts of a bundle of travel determinants on repeat visitation. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* 30(4):507–516.
- Rust, R.T., & Oliver, R.L. 1994. *Service quality: insights and managerial implication from the frontier*. Sage publications, New York.
- Seabra, C., Abrantes, J. L. & Lages, L. F. 2007. The impact of using non-media information sources on the future use of mass media information sources: The mediating role of expectations fulfilment. *Tourism Management* 28:1541–1554.
- Spreng, R. A., Harrell, G. D., & Mackoy, R. D. 1995. Service recovery: impact on satisfaction and intentions. *Journal of Services Marketing* 9(1):15–23.
- Swan, J. 1981. Disconfirmation of expectations and satisfaction with a retail service. *Journal of Retailing* 57(3): 49–66.
- Yoon, Y. & Uysal M. 2005. An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: a structural model. *Tourism Management* 26(1):45–56.
- Zeithaml, V.A. 1988. Consumer perceptions of price, quality and Value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing* 52(July):2–22.
- Zeithaml, V.A., Parasuraman, A., & Berry, L.L. 1985. Problems and strategies in services marketing. *Journal of Marketing* 49:33–46.

This page intentionally left blank

Government's role in Malaysian homestay program

Y. Yusnita, I. Yahaya, M. Mohd Shaladdin & W.M.A. Wan Abd Aziz
Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Terengganu, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Priorities for the economic upgrading of rural tourism has been given attention in the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006–2010) to reduce poverty among rural communities and further identified as a major contributor in promoting eco-tourism in a sustainable manner for commercial value under the Tenth Malaysia Plan (2011–2015). One approach to community-based tourism to the rural community in Malaysia is practiced through the homestay program. The homestay sector began informally since 1970s with some minor involvement of local communities providing accommodation in their own homes to tourists with a very minimal charge. The Malaysian government also focused and encouraged local communities to develop and be directly involved in the tourism industry through the homestay program. The homestay program is said to have given returns in terms of household income and promote better awareness for the continued conservation of cultural heritage. The purpose of this paper is to explore the roles of Malaysian government pertaining to the development of homestay program. The roles have been tremendously important in sustaining this cultural rural tourism sector in order to capture more tourists and their expenditure, whilst at the same time engaging local communities in tourism industry.

Keywords: Community Based Tourism (CBT), homestay program, government role, rural tourism, community participation.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Tourism in Malaysia*

Tourism plays an important role in the economic growth for many countries. According to the United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) tourism sector is constantly growing since 1950s and has experienced diversified products to be one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world contributing a revenues of USD919 billion in year 2010, along with the increasing presence of new tourist destinations, especially in developing countries (UNWTO, 2011). Tourism contributes to the creation of job opportunities and plays important roles in efforts to reduce poverty gap and raise awareness for the management of environment in more sustainable manner (Airey, 1983; Dieke, 1993; Godfrey, 1998; Jenkins & Henry, 1982; Kunst, 2011; MacDonald & Jolliffe, 2003; Puppim de Oliveira, 2003; Wang & Xu, 2011; Ying & Zhou, 2007).

In the context of the Malaysian economy, tourism is the second largest contributor to the national income of the country totaling RM56.5 billion with 24.6 million foreign tourist arrivals in 2010 (Tourism Malaysia, 2011). This amount represents an increase of 31% of national income than in 2009. The latest data by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) stated that Malaysian tourism industry has contributed 14.8% to Gross National Product (GDP) with total of RM125.4

billion and provided 1.6 million employment opportunities which contributed 12.9% from total workforce in Malaysia (WTTC, 2012). An increasing number of foreign tourist arrivals since 1998 have proved successful in boosting tourism industry as shown in Table 1 below:

The Malaysian government has sped up the efforts and actively promoted domestic and international tourism since 2006 with its promotional tag line “Malaysia, Truly Asia” to showcase Malaysian multi-cultural diversity of the country (Mintel, 2011). These

Table 1. Total arrivals of foreign tourists and tourism receipts.

Year	Tourist arrivals	Receipts (%)
2010	24.6	56.5
2009	23.6	53.4
2008	22.0	49.6
2007	20.9	46.1
2006	17.4	36.3
2005	16.4	32.0
2004	15.7	29.7
2003	10.5	21.3
2002	13.2	25.8
2001	12.7	24.2
2000	10.2	17.3
1999	7.9	12.3
1998	5.5	8.6

Source: Tourism Malaysia (2011).

include developing and promoting niche tourism products such as medical and health tourism, educational tourism, rural tourism and homestay program. Tourism in Malaysia has been officially established back in 1959 when Tourism Department was launched to oversee tourism activities (Yau & Yee, 2007). Only two decades later has the tourism industry be well received and recognized by the government as income contributor when the old Tourism Department was upgraded to become Tourism Development Corporation in 1972, and the first ever national airlines i.e. Malaysia Airlines was introduced in the same year (The Financial Express, 2007). These moves marked the new beginning of tourism era which has seen more tourist arrivals to the country.

1.2 *Government's role in tourism industry*

The government is expected to play an enormous role in developing and managing tourism since they are holding the power for resource management and budget of the country. But the crucial question here is what kind of role the government has to play in order to successfully manage the tourism industry (Richter & Richter, 1985). The initial aspect to consider by the government is the responsibility of practicing good tourism planning which would eventually help tourism industry to grow sustainably (Godfrey, 1998). According to Jenkins & Henry (1982) government intervention is essential especially for developing countries where private sector involvement is still low, thus requiring the government to undertake initial entrepreneurial role in order to establish new initiatives or projects. Nowadays, government is also involved actively in investing and dedicating their resources to upgrade environmental protection since environmental degradation will cause the tourism industry to consequently suffer (Puppim de Oliveira, 2003). Government may take two kinds of involvement namely passive involvement and active involvement (Jenkins & Henry 1982). Passive involvement occurs when government introduce or undertake actions which may not be directly intended to influence tourism but may have implications for it such as legislative provision, investment incentives, and bilateral air services agreement. Meanwhile, active involvement such as managerial establishment and developmental operations under its agencies were the deliberate direct actions by government to favor the tourism sector.

1.3 *Malaysian government tourism initiatives and policy*

The government is optimistic about the growth of the tourism sector in Malaysia. In one article on economic development in Malaysia written by former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Abdul Razak Hussein in 1973, he expressed the desire and strong determination of the government at that time to ensure the success of the tourism sector, although there was an anticipation

that tourism industry cannot compete with neighboring countries and not much profit to be gained (Abdul Razak, 1973). But the expectation was utterly wrong for the tourism industry in Malaysia which is growing stronger until today. The government has focused and redoubled the efforts through an increase in budget allocation for tourism development each year which can be witnessed in Budget 2011 and 2012 (Office of the Prime Minister, 2011a; Office of the Prime Minister, 2011b).

The government also emphasizes the local communities especially in rural areas to participate in the tourism industry in order to enjoy this lucrative economic returns thus increase their household income. Priority to the upgrading of the rural tourism economy has been addressed in the 9th Malaysia Plan for year 2006 to 2010, to reduce poverty among the rural and urban areas (Yahaya & Abdul Rasid, 2010). National Tourism Policy was issued by the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia (2011), which is to make the tourism industry as one of the primary sector, sustainable, viable and quality in contributing to national development policies and one of the objectives is to "empower rural communities through rural tourism activities". Focus on the development of rural tourism as a major contributor in promoting eco-tourism is a trend today in an effort to preserve the sustainability of tourism which become the main focus of the government under the 10th Malaysia Plan for the year 2011 to 2015 (Economic Planning Unit, 2010). Awareness of the importance of developing rural tourism is based on natural tourism product offerings in rural areas such as eco-tourism, agro-tourism, historical sites, cultural and heritage, plus an unpolluted environment (MacDonald & Jolliffe, 2003; Yahaya & Mohd Sayuti, 2011). According to Nanthakumar and Yahaya (2010) there were 15% of foreign tourists who came to Malaysia and chose to live in rural areas. This means that there is relatively high demand from tourists to enjoy the natural and cultural heritage in the countryside, and this opportunity should be seized by the tour operator and local community to focus their tourism activities in the area. Rural tourism involving local community participation in the planning and developing tourism projects and activities is known as community-based tourism.

1.4 *Community based tourism in Malaysia*

Community-based tourism in Malaysia is not a new concept. Many local communities have long been working on tourism products such as accommodation, crafts, food and beverages, transportation services and the like (Yahaya, 2008). One of the community based tourism products as practiced in Malaysia is the homestay program. According to Amran (2008) homestay program is a form of holiday program involving tourists coming and staying with the families who rent their homes. It involves the interaction between tourists and hosts in a real environment and tourists get to be involved in the daily life of local communities

(Ismar Liza Mahani, Rosyidah & Nurulhuda, 2007). Such programs are vital in ensuring community participation in the tourism industry to generate income for their households. To ensure a sustainable tourism industry to be successful, community involvement has become one of the factors in achieving sustainable tourism practices.

The homestay program was officially launched in 1995 by the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia as one of the community based tourism program. Kalsom (2011) categorized the homestay program as one of the rural cultural tourism products. The government has given emphasis to the development of rural tourism as a tourism development strategy in the country. The word 'homestay' originally refers to the method of accommodation provided to students who engaged in student exchange program to foreign countries to live with the locals. The purpose of homestay accommodation is to increase the student experience in dealing with other cultures up close and at the same time to improve their communication skills. Such accommodation has been extended to all tourists as a concept living together with their hosts, especially foreign tourists to experience the true taste of other cultures and lifestyle in other part of the world.

This paper is concerned with the management of homestay program with the involvement of the government as major initiator. Since the program has been launched more than two decades ago, it is high time to explore to what extent this program has given impact to the homestay operators. The paper also aims to recognize the government's roles in managing and promoting homestay programs. Several roles have been highlighted which directly influence homestay program management such as government assistantship, infrastructure development, marketing and promotion, advisory services, training and suitable courses, policy implementation, and finally enforcement.

1.5 Methodology

This paper has adopted stratified random sampling technique when assessing sampling method. The questionnaire implemented using self-administered assisted by enumerators using face-to-face technique. The questionnaire has been distributed to five zones of the whole Malaysia consisting Northern, West, East, South, Sabah and Sarawak zones. 3 homestays were selected from each state. The total population is 3211 operators throughout Malaysia as of December 2011. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the suitable number of sample to be taken out of 3211 was 354 and this research managed to secure 346 respondents. For this paper, there were 340 respondents taken for analyses after going through normality test.

1.6 Respondent demographic profiles

The findings showed that respondents among homestay operators throughout Malaysia who were randomly selected consisted of 117 males and 223 females.

Table 2. Demographic profile of Malaysian homestay operators.

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender:		
Male	117	34.4
Female	223	65.6
Age:		
34 and below	17	5
35-44	49	14.4
45-54	120	35.3
55 and above	154	45.3
Race:		
Malay	297	87.4
Bidayuh	22	6.5
Kadazan Dusun	21	6.2
Marital Status:		
Single	17	5
Married	272	80
Divorcee	51	15
Education Level:		
No Formal Education	8	2.4
Primary School	100	29.4
SRP/PMR	62	18.2
SPM	135	39.7
STPM/Diploma	27	7.9
Bachelor & Above	8	2.4
Income (RM/Month):		
1000 and below	100	29.4
1001-3000	174	51.2
3001-5000	49	14.4
5001 and above	17	5
Involvement (Years):		
5 and below	206	60.6
6-10	92	27.1
11-15	38	11.2
16 and above	4	1.2

The total numbers of respondents are 340.

Majority of female homestay operators interested in this program since it was just a side income job in which most women do not work therefore they are taking advantage to involve in such program. 45% of operators have been aged 55 years and above. This is because most operators are those who have pension from their former jobs and want to venture into tourism to fill in the available free time while increasing their income. There were also young operators aged about 34 years and below who were either helping their parents or they do have interest in managing the homestay by themselves. Majority of homestay operators are Malays in Peninsular Malaysia while Kadazan Dusun initiated this effort in Sabah and Bidayuh in Sarawak. Most homestay operators are those who have been married which totaling 80% of them, only a small number of them are still single or divorcee.

The majority of homestay operators have at least secondary school education and primary education consists of 57.9% and 29.4% respectively. This is because most of them are origin inhabitants of their villages, located in rural areas and only received education at the primary and secondary school level.

Table 3. Results of Pearson Correlation between homestay operators satisfaction and government roles.

Variables		Satisfaction
Govt. Roles	Pearson correlation $r = 0.380^{**}$	Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

However, there were also homestay operators who have a diploma and bachelor degree. More than half of the operators i.e. 80.6% of them enjoyed total monthly income of RM3000 and below which includes a variety of sources including income from doing homestays. Although the homestay program has been introduced since 1995 the majority of them were new players whom only familiarized with the activity within 5 years and below.

Basically, the purpose of this paper was to measure the significant relationship of the government's roles towards homestay operator's satisfaction. In doing so, Pearson Correlation as an instrument to test the significant relationship between variables of government roles and satisfaction has been adopted. Table 3 showed that there was a statistically significant association between government roles and satisfaction with $r = 0.380$ and $p = 0.000$. The output for each variable from government roles were moderately correlated with operators' satisfaction.

1.7 Discussion and management implications

The homestay operators were basically comfortable with their life as far as homestay operation is concern. Overall they were quite satisfied with government's roles in upstaging homestay initial development and assistance. The homestay operators were mostly welcomed the infrastructure provided by government such as roads, community hall, mosque, clinic, schools, market, street light, and bus stop. Even though the infrastructure were not intended mainly for tourism purposes, the government has given priority for villages that support tourism activities by providing better accessibility and necessary services. Homestay operators also were grateful for the seed money granted by government for room and toilet renovation. The assistantship has allowed them to provide a special room with attached bathroom for the tourists. Nonetheless, other government roles such as marketing and promotion, advisory services, training, policy making, and enforcement have also benefited the homestay operators.

The Malaysian government has done good efforts in managing and promoting homestay program. The roles are appreciated by homestay operators in order to initiate the program and help promote the program. The moderately significant relationship between

government roles and homestay operators' satisfaction showed that there are rooms for improvement. The Malaysian Ministry of Tourism should double up the efforts in assisting the operators since most of them are lacking in providing capital and know-how knowledge in managing homestay operation. The government should also encourage younger generation to participate in homestay program since majority of the operators were 55 years of age and above. The homestay operation may cease or discontinued when the operator died. Another important aspect is monitoring the homestay after the establishment since quite a number of homestays could not sustain on their own. Homestay program has benefited majority of rural communities who willingly participate in the program. The intention of the Malaysian government to get local community getting involved in tourism has met its objective. Government has given priority to rural community to get involve in tourism activities. It's now entirely depends on the homestay operators to successfully operate their homestay. The Government still continuously supports the homestay program especially through their marketing efforts. Other agencies from private organizations and homestay operation management teams should also co-operate with strong back-up from government in ensuring more tourists flocking in to their homestay.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to thank the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education and Universiti Malaysia Terengganu for the research grant and scholarship that make this presentation possible.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Razak, H. 1973. Malaysia adjusts to the enlarged community. *World Development* 1(7): 43–49.
- Airey, D. 1983. European government approaches to tourism. *Tourism Management* 4(4): 234–244.
- Amran, H. 2008. Malaysian homestays from the perspective of young Japanese tourists: The quest for Furusato. In J. Cochrane (ed.), *Asian tourism: Growth and Change*. 193–207. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Dieke, P. U. C. 1993. Tourism and development policy in the Gambia. *Annals of Tourism Research* 20(3): 423–449.
- Economic Planning Unit (2010). *Tenth Malaysian plan 2011–2015*. Putrajaya: Jabatan Perdana Menteri.
- Godfrey, K. B. 1998. Attitudes towards 'sustainable tourism' in the UK: A view from local government. *Tourism Management* 19(3): 213–224.
- Ismar Liza Mahani, I., Rosyidah, M. & Nurulhuda, A. 2007. *Peningkatan taraf hidup masyarakat luar bandar melalui program homestay di perkampungan komuniti nelayan sekitar daerah di Terengganu*. Prosiding di Seminar Kebangsaan Sains Sosial, November, UPM, Serdang: UPM.
- Jenkins, C. L. & Henry, B. M. 1982. Government involvement in tourism in developing countries. *Annals of Tourism Research* 9(4): 499–521.

- Kalsom, K. 2011. *Homestay programme as a Malaysian tourism product*. Sintok: Universiti Utara Malaysia Press.
- Krejcie, R. V. & Morgan, D. W. 1970. Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 30: 607–610.
- Kunst, I. 2011. The role of the government in promoting tourism investment in selected Mediterranean countries – Implications for the Republic of Croatia. *Tourism and Hospitality Management* 17(1): 115–130.
- MacDonald, R. & Jolliffe, L. 2003. Cultural rural tourism: Evidence from Canada. *Annals of Tourism Research* 30(2): 307–322.
- Ministry of Tourism (2011). *Dasar kementerian*. Retrieved from <http://www.motour.gov.my/bm/profil-kementerian/dasar-kementerian.html>
- Mintel. 2011. *Travel and Tourism – Malaysia*. Country Report No. 2, Asia Pacific. London: Mintel International Group Ltd.
- Nanthakumar, L. & Yahaya, I. 2010. Forecasting international tourism demand in Malaysia using Box Jenkins Sarima application. *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage* 3(2): 50–60.
- Office of Prime Minister (2011a). *Budget speech 2011*. Retrieved from <http://www.pmo.gov.my/bajet2011/Bajet2011.pdf>
- Office of Prime Minister (2011b). *Budget speech 2012*. Retrieved from <http://www.pmo.gov.my/dokumenattached/speech/files/Belanjawan2012.pdf>
- Puppim de Oliveira, J. A. 2003. Governmental responses to tourism development: Three Brazilian case studies. *Tourism Management* 24(1): 97–110.
- Richter, L. K. & Richter, W. L. 1985. Policy choices in South Asian tourism development. *Annals of Tourism Research* 12(2): 201–217.
- The Financial Express. 2007. *Tourism industry in Malaysia*. Retrieved from <http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/2007/08/31/9636.html>.
- Tourism Malaysia (2011). *Facts and Figures: Tourists arrivals and receipts to Malaysia*. Retrieved from <http://corporate.tourism.gov.my/research.asp>
- UNWTO .2011. *UNWTO Tourism highlights 2011 edition*. Retrieved from http://mkt.unwto.org/sites/all/files/docpdf/unwtohighlights11enhr_1.pdf
- Wang, C. & Xu, H. 2011. Government intervention in investment by Chinese listed companies that have diversified into tourism. *Tourism Management* 32(6): 1371–1380.
- World Travel & Tourism Council (2012). *Travel & tourism economic impact 2012: Malaysia*. London: WTTC.
- Yahaya Ibrahim. 2008. *Pembangunan pelancongan dan perubahan komuniti*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Yahaya Ibrahim & Abdul Rasid Abdul Razzaq. 2010. Homestay program and rural community development in Malaysia. *Journal of Ritsumeikan Social Sciences and Humanities* 2: 7–24.
- Yahaya Ibrahim & Mohd Sayuti Hassan. 2011. Tourism management at Taman Negara (National Park), Pahang, Malaysia: Conflict and synergy. *Journal of Ritsumeikan Social Sciences and Humanities* 3: 109–122.
- Yau, L. R. & Yee, C. C. 2007. *Malaysian economy: An overview*. Retrieved from http://www.harwaimun.com/Tourism_Malaysia.html.
- Ying, T. & Zhou, Y. 2007. Community, governments and external capitals in China's rural cultural tourism: A comparative study of two adjacent villages. *Tourism Management* 28(1): 96–107.

This page intentionally left blank

The need and opportunity of establishing a tourism information and promotion center in Oltenia under the mountain

Enea Constanta, Enea Constantin & Stegaroiu Carina
“Constantin Brancusi” University of Targu-Jiu, Romania

Popescu Daniela
Craiova University, Romania

ABSTRACT: Currently, the access of information regarding data of general interest for Romania, through specialized tourism information and promotion centers (tourist attractions, cultural and business events, archaeological sites, accommodation structures, restaurants, facilities for leisure or any other facilities accompanying a tourist journey or of tourist interest or leisure facilities in short), is almost impossible due to the lack or sporadic existence of such centers. Tourist areas do not have a suitable network of multi-function centers specialized in tourism, allowing tourists access to information and information services as well as special events. In fact, the level of promotion and development of tourist information centers is now extremely reduced therefore, creating a National Network of Tourism Information and Promotion Centers (NCTIP) is extremely important for promoting the Romanian tourism.

Keywords: tourism, tourist attractions, promotion, development, opportunities

1 INTRODUCTION

Romania is a country with many tourist areas, cultural traditions and natural resources. Tourism provides an important contribution to the GDP and to employment. Tourism promotion offers new opportunities and alternatives for development of many regions in Romania. Currently, the access of information regarding data of general interest for Romania, through specialized tourism information and promotion centers is almost impossible due to the lack of existence of such centers. Tourist areas are not equipped with a suitable network of multi-function centers specialized in tourism. Therefore, having a national network of tourism information and promotion centers (NCTIP) is extremely important for promoting Romania's tourism. It is equally true for foreign tour operators in order to create their own travel programs for Romania as they need this information available on the web. After analyzing these data the following weaknesses have been identified: low promotion and development of tourism information centers and related services in this area of activity; tourist regions lack an adequate network of multi-function centers specialized in tourism, allowing tourists access to information, information services and specific events. Thus, the possibility to develop the Romanian tourism sector has been identified. The solution for accelerating this process is to create a national network of tourism information and promotion centers; such network could provide

useful services and promotional material in all tourist areas. Creating this network will provide the necessary logistics to facilitate the exchange of information in the tourism industry between institutions and information centers in the tourist areas. The introduction of modern information services and the development of a unified tourism information system will create better conditions for storing information and will enable sharing tourism activity data for local and foreign tourists. Such a system can be expanded and interconnected with other information systems such as for example on-line booking system, programs of conferences/international cultural events, etc. Specific objective: Promotion of the Romanian tourism potential by improving the country image in order to promote Romania abroad and to increase its attractiveness, and also by establishing an integrated system of the Romanian tourism offer. Contribution to NSRF [National Strategic Reference Framework] priorities: – Increase of the long-term national/Romanian competitiveness – Development and improvement of human capital in Romania.

Despite having many tourist areas such as the Danube Delta, the monasteries in northern Moldavia, Vidraru Dam, Maramures, Bran Castle, the Prahova Valley and the Black Sea (although in the case of the latter, foreign tourists would hardly find a place on the weekends), they are poorly promoted abroad thus, resulted in few visitations by foreign tourists. As an example, a family from Germany has the courage and

decides to visit Romania; they look for information on the Internet retrieving few pages, two or three, or not more, summarizing comments posted in forums by those who have visited Romania before. As a result, any travelers who wish to visit Romania with limited information will encounter problems as in the following scenario:

“With a heart full of wishes, but with the mind empty of information, our family gets in the car and quickly, quickly, in just a few hours, reaches the Hungarian border with Romania”.

Here starts the difficult part, but as in the story of Hansel and Gretel, the family in our example is resourceful. As in the story of Hansel and Gretel, they sprinkled crumbs along the path in order to trace their way back. The family under discussion remembers the trip of last year in Denmark, for example, in the island of Bornholm.

The family reflected on their past experience of the island which has all the information and physical facilities. This island is excellent for tourists who come to admire the wild birds or landscape. It is ideal not only for tourism but also for trade and business, being a real connection point between four countries. The establishment of a modern and high-performing information center was funded there from the Regional Development Fund (ERDF) since the early '90s. It was able to provide quality information to all those who arrived on the island, whether tourists or businessmen. In addition, this center had to ensure and promote the island in the Baltic region. The new Information Centre was to replace the existing one, which had been established for a small number of tourists and could no longer cope with them. The building of a new one (Velkomstcenter) was between 1991 and winter of 1992, and this center started its activity in the capital Ronne in June 1992. Now, the center is a real Danish tourism office, the employees speak three languages fluently and provide information not only on the island of Bornholm, but Denmark as a whole. Most requests addressed to the center were concerned with general information about the island, the sights to be visited and road access that are related to Denmark. Moreover, the center also provides assistance to tourists arriving on the island without prior reservations. The Information Center of Bornholm is managed by the local Chamber of Commerce and is funded by the municipality of Ronne and by the local council of Bornholm, being also sponsored by local firms. This center offers free brochures in which the local firms and travel agencies make their work known and it is also a sale center for the local handmade products.

2 CONTENT

In Romania, accessing information through specialized tourism information and promotion centers is almost impossible. Why is this happening? This is due

to the fact that we have very few of such centers, and the existing one provide limited information. Thus, a formal existence and functioning tourism information centers/points are crucial than having them presence and not contributing to the tourism community.

In Romania, tourist areas do not have a suitable network of multi-function centers specialized in tourism, allowing tourists access to information, information services and special events. In fact, promotion and the development of tourist information centers today are extremely minimal. Therefore, creating a national network of tourism information and promotion centers (NCTIP) is crucially important to promoting Romanian tourism.

The Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism (MRDT) launched on May 26, 2011. The second call for proposals to establish national centers for tourism promotion and information and their equipment, with the indicative value of financial allocation is worth EUR 17 million. The total value of projects to be funded through the Regional Operational Program managed by the institution may vary between at least 170,000.00 lei and up to 630,000.00 lei.

In the new call for proposals with rolling submission, the eligible applicants were territorial administrative units or tourist resorts of local and national interest. The projects that were funded had to include at least one of the following operations: construction/rehabilitation of buildings in which the tourism promotion and information centers will operate, software and equipment purchase, creation of data bases with tourist information and development of websites to promote tourism products.

Nonetheless, the greatest regret was that this fund had been spent unwisely. On the contrary, such money could have been spent diligently to create centers catering to national and international interests.

Romania has the resources and we would like to be known to the rest of the world. IMF and the World Bank have allocated funds but what have we achieved? In order to get a clear picture, let's take an example of county of Gorj where tourist information centers have been created in areas without tourism. A Romanian proverb that says “the only thing a bald man needs is a diamond cap”, is appropriate for information centers that have been established precisely in villages where no tourist have stepped foot in a lifetime. This unfortunate scenario was inspired by a real case. The two villages are Alimpesti and Calnic where the only ‘tourists’ who come to visit once in a blue moon are local authorities or grandchildren of inhabitants. Both villages were assigned 7.4, respectively 8.1 billion ROL for two investments that can only be considered as unnecessary, inappropriate and very expensive.

These two places in Gorj have established tourist information centers, given that nobody has ever heard of such activities in that region. However, both villages found it proper to spend huge amount of money to build buildings in non-existent tourist areas. Both projects were financed by the European Union, and the municipal administration of the above places who

thought it was a better idea to build a worthless tourist information center instead of useful roadwork or sewerage network. For example, up to 200,000.00 Euros are spent to build one of these centers in Calnic. The mayor of the village said he submitted a project and, as the center was deemed appropriate, he received funding. The mayor also has an explanation for building this center: it is not addressed only to tourism in the area, but to the county tourism! “We made the project and sent it to Bucharest. If they believed it was appropriate to build it in Calnic, they gave us the funding. It is not just a local center, as it will address all tourists looking for sights in the county”, said the mayor. Now that Calnic is hardly visited, is something else. And besides, if the money comes from the EU, it no longer matters how useful this center is. According to the documentation submitted to SEAP [Society for Excellence in Public Administration], the center value is 8.1 billion ROL.

Therefore, officially, there is no tourism in Calnic. Surprisingly, the fact that there is no tourism in the village of Calnic is confirmed precisely by the county's institution, namely the County Council of Gorj. A brief overview of Calnic village, from one of the pages of information on the county of Gorj, makes it clear that there is no tourism activity or attraction in this place. The only “tourist attraction” could possibly be the grove where the Miner's Day is organized.

However, the first place that had this initiative is Alimpești – Gorj. While the mayor of this village had no specific explanation as to the usefulness of this center, he merely said that “it enriches the municipal heritage of the village”. Moreover, the mayor of this village said that there is some utility of this center because it is close to Polovragi, which has “several tourist attractions”. Obviously, it matters very little that a potential visitor will not come in Alimpești to take leaflets. The acme of irony is however that on the website of Alimpești Mayorality, where there is a section dedicated exclusively to tourism in the village. Whoever serves this website; to the said section, will be surprised to discover a vastness of white? Not even an old church or anything else likely to attract any tourists wandering in Gorj can be found. Basically, this page confirms what we know quite well: there is no tourism and no chance to practice it very soon.

As we can see in the explanations of both mayors, the buildings were made only because the mayors wanted to grab some money from the EU, whether or not they did something useful with it.

There is another place where such a tourist information center will be established, but here, there is a justification, because it has a very important tourist attraction; Constantin Brancusi's native town. It is about the village of Pestisani, where amounts similar the above-mentioned will be spend to build an information point.

In Gorj region, we take as an example, works of sculptor Constantin Brancusi. Constantin Brancusi was a Romanian sculptor with overwhelming contributions to the renewal of vision and language arts in contemporary sculpture. Constantin Brancusi was

lected Member of the Romanian Academy posthumously. Brancusi's vision of life was influenced both by Plato and the concepts of Eastern philosophy. Constantin Brancusi sculpture granted mainly mechanical imitation of nature, refused figurative representation of reality, expressing expected essence of things, the dynamic form, united with spiritual sensitive.

In his work, Brancusi's way of thinking reflected the world of the peasants. With its peasant origin, his work has deep roots in the traditions, myths and magic function of Romanian folk art. Brancusi is, undoubtedly, with such an awareness of modern art, which focuses evolutionary meaning of an entire era of the creative spirit. Representative of modern artistic movement, Constantin Brancusi is considered by many to be the important sculptor of the twentieth century. His sculptures are distinguished by elegance of form and sensitive use of materials, combining Romanian folk simplicity with Parisian avant-garde sophistication.

Brancusi gave our world consciousness pure form, provided the transition from figurative representation of reality, the essence of things and expressing renewed revolutionary plastic language, adding a spiritual dimension. Verticality, horizontality, weight, density and importance given to light and space are characteristic features of Brancusi's creation. Studies on the work of Brancusi share, without exception, a conclusion made in unequivocal terms: art brancusiana is a source of essential ideas which builds visual civilization of the twentieth century. Brancusi highlighted the western world the sacred dimension of reality. From 1963 to today, all over the world have appeared in over 50 books and monographs and thousands of articles and studies on Constantin Brancusi, causing a decisive place of the brilliant artist and even as “one of the greatest composers of all time” (Jean Cassou).

However, the needs and opportunities are explained. The purpose of this activity center is to provide tourist information about the work, image and all related services composing the tourism product “Brancusi”, both to tourists and to economic entities and individuals who provide tourism services. It will also provide support and technical assistance to those who intend to start business in cultural tourism. The center will be also in charge for the publication of promotional materials and their distribution, intense promotion activities (application of an aggressive marketing) and strategic planning of marketing policies covering the tourism product “Brancusi”. Based on market surveys, its argumentation and identification of target markets, it is aimed at inducing the design of new cultural tourism products with Brancusi themes satisfying these markets. The web page of the center (www.e-probrancusi.ro) is an online travel guide that is mentioned in the most complex web portal in Romania – www.infotravelromania.ro. The tourism information and promotion Center “Pro Brancusi” offers promotion and information materials, tourist services and program packages, information about accommodation and food services and information about natural, cultural and historical sites.

The center provides tourists with a computerized database where they can find any information about the tourist area of Gorj, information by Internet and e-mail for holiday planning and bookings for travel services, tourist information about Romania. In addition, we should note that the tourism information and promotion Center "Pro Brancusi" offers tourism related services such as information, training, consultation and promotion. This is intended to determine the cooperation of the tourist information points and accommodation centers created in some tourist areas of the county of Gorj such as: Tg. Jiu, Motru, Novaci, Targu Carbonești.

3 CONCLUSIONS

For conclusion, any tourist who intends to make a trip to Gorj may obtain information and make reservations using the services of this center, located in Tg-Jiu and offices in the major tourist destinations of Gorj. The cooperation with other tourist information centers on cultural issues in Romania is beneficial for promoting the development of circuits linking neighboring tourist areas (e.g., a circuit in northern Oltenia, including Valcea, Gorj and Mehedinti in the itinerary).

It should and will provide visitors with information and promotional materials in particular cultural (guides, brochures, leaflets, booklets, maps, video tapes, CDs) on the tourist attractions (natural, cultural sights etc.), possible circuits and possibilities for accommodation, meals, transportation, recreation, therapy in the county of Gorj and the neighboring ones. These promotional materials must be diversified, with a special graphic, artistic and information quality and they must be provided free of charge.

The creation of such a center aims to promote tourism in the area through activities assisting and informing tourists about the places where Brancusi was born, lived and worked. Hence all travelers must be provided with useful information.

With a high influx of tourists, an ideal place should be visible and accessible. Regardless of the location, the center should include tourist guides, promoted by all tourism operators, and equipped with proper signage from the city entry gates, railway station, bus stations respectively for long distance and county trips.

Similarly, the information on the existence of this center, maps of Gorj and the data are to be published in international guides or in pages that have already published chapters about Romania. This center also needs the establishment of an electronic street tourist information point based on a tourism promotion software application. The pilot information point must be located in a place with maximum transit (Brancusi axis – the place where the influx of tourists is at the most). The point will provide information necessary for any tourist planning to visit the county of Gorj, in an original and simple presentation with a maximum impact concentrating all the necessary information to tourists.

The tourist information point could possibly be integrated to the planned center. It should be provided with a large monitor in a protected window and connected to a powerful computer. This monitor will run non-stop a presentation software application, which will group: the presentation of the main sights, roads and means of access, the possibilities for accommodation, food, complementary services, the tourist information points already existing in the rural area, train and plane schedule, information on exchange rates, useful addresses (hospital, police, travel agencies, currency exchange offices, etc.). This system will be placed in a clearly visible area and work round the clock.

The application must be spectacular (it will attract tourists), bilingual (Romanian and English) and will present the most important data (access roads, accommodation offers, food, etc.), in a simple manner, easy to remember. It will be designed in a modern manner (animation, special effects, sound), lasting about 15–20 minutes so as not to let tourists get bored.

This application will also run on the Internet and CD-ROM. The multimedia presentation will include sites that will provide detailed information on the major tourist attractions. The tourist information will be structured based on a geographical classification; the user may opt for a selection "by objective". The CD-ROM promoting tourism in Gorj may contain this multimedia application and the other sites of tourism presentation of the county of Gorj, providing full information about any point of tourist interest.

Another proposal on promoting tourism in Gorj consists in placing tourist information points (info-desks indicated by a sign with the already known international "I") in the accommodation units. Here tourists can find information on the area attractions, the calendar of cultural events (festivals, craft fairs, folk customs, destinations, accommodation, meals, recreation, therapy, museums, cultural centers, etc. Specific products, local or regional, will be also displayed here, such as folk art products, pottery, folk masks, wooden spoons and other handicrafts, that are marketable as well. The role is instructional, for education and cultural and aesthetic training.

In order to facilitate Gorj visitors' information on the locations of tourist attractions we believe it is essential to create a network of tourism signaling. In this respect there must be defined:

- the information to be provided (maps, view of sight locations and accommodation structures, addresses for direct contact with them, etc.) and the languages in which they will be provided;
- the levels of information (entrance in the territory, proximity to the areas mentioned);
- exact locations of the tourist information points;
- aesthetic of signs, graphic standards and materials used;
- organization of the implementation and maintenance of these signs.

We believe that one of the most effective ways of promotion is to invite representatives of tour operators

and travel agencies to come to Gorj and find themselves the features of this tourism product and eventually decide whether to accept it or not. Although this type of action is relatively expensive, experience has proven that foreign travel agents' documenting in the resorts and accommodation units is the best way to promote their services.

Performing cultural info-tours in Gorj with tourism journalists is a promotional action that could be undertaken by the Association for Tourism "Brancusi" which will be very successful, considering the articles published after the information visits, in the German and U.S media.

Given the fierce competition on the international tourism market, we believe it is necessary to participate with one's own stand in as many international fairs and exhibitions, both in the national pavilions and shops specializing in tourism issues, where the tourism product "Brancusi" must have an aggressive promotion.

REFERENCES

- A. Collins-Kreiner N., Kliot N. Pilgrimage tourism in the Holy Land: The Behavioural Characteristics of Christian Pilgrims, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2005, vol 50, No. 1, pp. 55–67, <http://titania.ingentaselect.Com>
- Niculecu, G. Al. Doru, ed. I. Vescu, Roads to monasteries Gorj, Ed Ager, Targu Jiu, 1997;
- Mary Lee Nolan, Nolan S. Religious sites as tourism attractions in Europe, Oregon State University, USA, 2002, www.sciencedirect.com
- Savin A., Tourism marketing strategies, House, Bucharest, 2000;
- Stancioiu A, Tourism Marketing Strategies, Economic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000;
- Westwood J., Marketing Plan Step by Step, Rentrop & Straton Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999;
- Forms of religious tourism Rinschede G., Universitat Regensburg, Germany, www.sciencedirect.com, 2002
www.infovacanþa.ro
- Development strategy has a socioeconomic County Gorj
www.cjgorj.ro/.../Strategia%20socio-economica
www.prefectura.gorj.ro
www.brancusi.ro
<http://www.structural-consulting.ro/media>

This page intentionally left blank

Goal programming model for self-drive tourism route selection: A case study in Langkawi

Zakiah Hashim

Quantitative Sciences Department, College of Art and Sciences, Universiti Utara Malaysia

Wan Rosmanira Ismail

Mathematical Sciences Department, Faculty of Science and Technology, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This paper discusses about finding the best possible route for self-drive tourism which focuses on road network using the goal programming method. The problem is formulated based on the model of a Travelling Salesman Problem (TSP). The model is constructed so as to connect all 19 tourism destinations in Langkawi by minimizing the travel times and travel costs. The study considers three model structures; each of them consists of three goal constraints which are subjected to four hard constraints. The results obtained from each model structure will be compared in order to get the most optimum route for the self-drive tourism. The results showed that the model structure that has the first priority of minimizing the total travel times, second priority of minimizing the travel cost and the third priority of minimizing the accommodation cost was the most suitable to used because this model structure gave the best result compared to other two model structures.

Keywords: Self-drive tourism; tourism route; goal programming; travelling salesman problem; Langkawi.

1 INTRODUCTION

According to World Tourism Organization (WTO) (Wikipedia), the terms of tourism refers to, “*Activities of an individual travelling to a place outside their original environment and living there for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.*” The main purpose of travel is to visit tourist attractions around the location.

In addition, the facility transport network and good relations have been shown to develop more attractive tourism destination in Malaysia. In line with these advances, self-drive tourism is gaining attention for the tourist expecting convenience and satisfaction when exploring the destinations of interest. Self-drive tourism has been defined by Olsen (2002) as travelling from home at least one night for the purpose of holiday or visiting friends or relatives by driving their own or rented vehicle as the primary mode of transport. Since there are many natural destinations, some tourists who drive their own vehicles can plan their own itinerary without being tied to a travel itinerary from a travel agency. This is one of the important features of self-drive tourism (Hsin, 2006).

Self-drive tourism is usually a free travel in accordance with the tourists, without depending on any party. Tourists can determine or choose their own preferred route from a destination to the next destination in accordance with the provisions on travel costs and time required. Normally, tourists will choose the best

route that connects a destination to the next as if looking for the route that has the shortest distance. A study by Wen (2004) interpreted the shortest path as the minimum total distance to be travelled from one node to another node. Best route selection is important for self-drive tourists because it will affect the amount of travel costs, time to travel and also the number of places can be visited. If the self-drive tourists make the mistakes in choosing a route to the destination, they will face the problem of rising costs and lack of time travel.

There are a variety of tourist destinations to visit in Malaysia. Langkawi Island is a popular tourist destination not only among international tourists but also locals. Self-drive tourism is already beginning to be a choice for travelers who want to explore all different facets at the legendary island. The Langkawi archipelago is a cluster of 99 islands just off the coast of Kedah, close to Perlis and just south of Thailand. Thus Langkawi is a world famous holiday destination, noted for its legends and beautiful views and a duty-free port, boasting fine beaches, abundant marine life, luxury resorts and unique natural attraction.

Langkawi is expected to become one of the world's ten best islands like Bali and Maldives and the local population will also benefit from an economic standpoint. Tourism and tourism-related Gross National Income (GNI) in Langkawi is expected to surge two fold, from RM0.8 billion in 2010 to RM1.9 billion by 2015 (The Borneo Post Online). By 2020, the tourism industry is expected to be accounted for

RM103.6 billion GNI, with tourists' arrivals increasing from 24 million in 2009 to 36 million in 2020.

Self-driving is an alternative way to facilitate the visitors to Langkawi. If they want to have a convenient trip and do not want to be bound by the travelling schedule, they can drive the car without the tourist guide or driver and as self-drive tourists can develop their own personal itineraries (Hsin, 2006). Self-drive tourism has advantages to tourist in terms of: greater control over itinerary; often greater comfort and lower cost (Carson, 2002).

As this type of tourist is considered an independent traveler, there is the possibility to influence their travel behavior towards less energy-intensive itineraries. According to Taplin (2000), for most holiday makers travelling by car, the pursuit of satisfaction and enjoyment is limited by the length of time available and by travel distance. One of four reasons for people engaging in multi destination trips that was identified by Lue et.al (1996) was that the multi destination trip is time effective.

The aim of this paper is to determine the best route of a self-drive tour in Langkawi Island, Kedah using a goal programming model. The tourists can visit interesting places around Langkawi with minimum amount of total travel time and total cost of travel, as well as the accommodation cost. Section 2 of this paper discusses about the transport perspective on self-drive tourism. Section 3 then discussed about the travel route data and goal programming model for self-drive tourism route selection. Section 4 shows the results and discussion with section 5 giving the conclusions.

2 TRANSPORT PERSPECTIVE ON SELF-DRIVE TOURISM

History has shown that the transport system was capable of causing a very deep impact in the development of the tourism industry since the ancient times (Kaul, 1985). For the tourism industry, transport is the key factor in enabling tourists to travel from their place of residence to the place where they wish to go. For the purpose of this paper, transport is the key that will enable tourists to travel from origin to interesting places by self-drive. According to Page (1994), the study of transport networks usually entails consideration of linkages and flows, location and places connected by linkages, and a system of catchments and relationships between places within a transport network. Transport provides the essential link between the tourism origin and destination areas and facilitates the movement of holiday makers, business travelers, people visiting friends and relatives and those undertaking educational and health tourism. In many tourism studies, the relationship between transport and tourism is defined in terms of accessibility; that is transport is seen as a link between tourist generating regions and tourism destination regions. Transport is seen as an enabler of tourism (Faulkner, 1989); a necessary precursor to tourism activity (Leiper, 1995); and as



Figure 1. Map of Langkawi Island.

serving as part of the attractions mix in some scenarios (Hall, 1998). The four main modes of transport are identified by Prideaux (2000) as: road, air rail and sea. For travelling to and within destinations, the choice of which mode of transport are used may depend on the travelers' evaluation of speed; carrying capacity; comfort; cost; and safety. Because this study is involved only with land and road links, the selection mode of vehicles used by tourists are only ground vehicles such as cars, vans and others.

3 TRAVEL ROUTE DATA AND GOAL PROGRAMMING MODEL

3.1 Travel route data

This paper involves only the actual 19 most attractive tourist destinations around Langkawi although there are more than 30 tourist destinations (refer Figure 1). The destinations were selected based on recommendations derived from the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia website. In addition, due to the scope of our study focused on self-drive tour, it involved only the tourist attractions that can be reached by ground vehicles. Table 1 shows the selected tourist attractions that were involved in this study.

In developing the goal programming model for this study, the total time allocated for travel was at least 10 hours per day. The reason for this allocation of only 10 hours a day was because the operation hours started from 8.00 am until 6.00 pm in many of the tourist attractions in Langkawi. Estimated travel time to visit interesting places that exist between origin and destination is obtained from the estimated time given by the Google Maps application for each selected path. The distance from one destination to another are also found

Table 1. Interesting places and estimated trip times (minutes).

Destination	Estimated times
Eagle Bay (DL)	30
Taman Lagenda (TL)	90
Langkawi Crystal (KL)	60
Mahsuri Mausoleum (MM)	90
Kampung Buku Malaysia, Langkawi (KBL)	90
Underwater World (UW)	120
Pantai Chenang (PC)	120
Paddy Rice Museum (LP)	90
Field of Burnt Rice (BT)	30
Oriental Village (OV)	150
Seven Walls Waterfalls (TT)	150
Crocodile Farm (TB)	120
Temurun Waterfall (ATT)	150
Langkawi Craft Complex (KKL)	90
Air Hangat Village (TAH)	120
Tanjung Rhu (TR)	90
Galeria Perdana (GP)	90
Mount Raya (GR)	90
Langkawi Wildlife Park (ZM)	120

using the Google Maps application. Table 1 shows the interesting places and estimated trip time in minutes that have been selected as the tour destination in this study.

3.2 Goal programming model

The earliest goal programming formulation was introduced by Charnes et al. (1955) in the context of executive compensation. Zografos (2004) have used multi-criteria analysis using goal programming to evaluate appropriate solutions to the problems of tourism. The study examined the issues related to strategic planning and management of tourism based on ecological using weighted goal programming.

In this section, there is a method which finds the best route for self-drive tour. The method is the goal programming model that is constructed based on the traveling salesman problem (TSP). The travelling salesman problem (TSP) is perhaps the most well known combinatorial optimization problem. The TSP finds the shortest route of a travelling salesperson that starts at his/her home city, visits a prescribed set of other cities and returns to the starting city in such a way that the total distance traveled is minimum and each city is visited exactly once (Gutin, 2004). The major transportation mode often used by tourists to Langkawi is the ferry, thus Kuah Jetty (JK), Langkawi was chosen as the depot in developing the TSP model. This means for every visitor who arrives in Langkawi, the first and final destination of their visit is the Kuah Jetty.

RON95 petrol type was selected in this study because it is are expensive at RM1.90 per liter compared to RON97 which is RM2.90 per liter. The

average estimate distance for one liter of petrol is 10 kilometers. This means that the fuel cost per kilometer is RM0.19. The cost of using petrol is calculated by multiplying the price of RON 95 petrol at RM0.19 per kilometer of distance data between tourist sites involved. Estimated cost of vehicle rental for a day (24 hours) is RM134.00.

3.3 Model development

3.3.1 Notation

i = index for the origin destination

j = index for the next destination

d_{ij} = travel distance (km) from tourist destination i to tourist destination j

t_{ij} = travel time (minutes) between tourist destination i to tourist destination j

h_{ij} = accommodation cost (RM) between tourist destination i to tourist destination j

c_{ij} = travel costs (RM) from tourist destination i to tourist destination j

m_{ij} = total travel between tourist destination i to tourist destination j and trip time (minutes)for each destination j

3.3.2 Decision variables

$$x_{ij} = \begin{cases} 1; & \text{if there is a path from tourist destination } i \text{ to } j \\ 0; & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

3.3.3 Constant

J_{max} = maximum travel distance (km) in 5 days (250 km)

T_{max} = maximum total travel time (minutes) in 5 days (300 minutes)

C_{max} = maximum travel cost (RM) in 5 days (RM100)

H_{max} = maximum accommodation cost (RM) in 5 days (RM500)

3.3.4 Model formulation

The model used is goal programming (GP) model that based on travelling salesman problem (TSP) method. The GP model is selected because it has three goals that are subject to four constraints. The three goals are:

1. Minimize the total travel times to visit all 19 tourist destinations in Langkawi.
2. Minimize the travel cost to visit all 19 tourist destinations in Langkawi.
3. Minimize the accommodation cost in Langkawi.

The constraints involved are:

1. Tourists arriving in each tourist destination only once.
2. Tourists leaving out of every tourist destination only once.
3. The number of days for the whole trip does not exceed the maximum number of days set for the whole journey.
4. Constraints to prevent the sub-tour. Sub-tour is a round tour that returns back to the starting destination but does not visit all the tourist destinations.

We can now formulate an linear programming (LP) that minimizes the cost incurred in deviating from the three goals, i.e. minimizing the function of the deviation variables. In this study, since we are not able to determine precisely the relative importance of each goal, pre-emptive goal programming is used instead. We must denote the most important goal as P_1 , the secondary goal as P_2 , and the least important goal as P_3 . We then develop an objective function where we put P_1 first being the priority level 1, P_2 priority level 2 and P_3 priority level 3. Since we cannot also determine the rank of each goal, we will use the different order of importance of each goal.

Hence, there are three model structures involved in this study. This means that for the model structure 1, the travel time constraint goals have to be at the level of priority 1 and for structural model 2, the travel cost constraint goal is to be at priority level 1. Next, the structural model 3, the accommodation constraints goal was set as the first priority.

Here is the goal programming model for structure 1:

$$\text{Min } Z = P_1 d_1^+ + P_2 d_2^+ + P_3 d_3^+$$

Subject to:

$$\sum_{i=1}^{20} \sum_{j=1}^{20} t_{ij} x_{ij} + d_1^- - d_1^+ = 300 \quad (1)$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^{20} \sum_{j=1}^{20} c_{ij} x_{ij} + d_2^- - d_2^+ = 100 \quad (2)$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^{20} \sum_{j=1}^{20} h_{ij} x_{ij} + d_3^- - d_3^+ = 500 \quad (3)$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^{20} \sum_{j=1}^{20} m_{ij} x_{ij} \leq 3000 \quad (4)$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^{20} x_{ij} = 1 \quad ; j = 1, 2, \dots, n; i \neq j \quad (5)$$

$$\sum_{j=1}^{20} x_{ij} = 1 \quad ; i = 1, 2, \dots, n; j \neq i \quad (6)$$

$$u_i - u_j + n x_{ij} \leq n - 1; \quad (7)$$

$$i \neq j; i = 2, 3, \dots, n; j = 2, 3, \dots, n \quad (8)$$

$$x_{ij} \in \{0, 1\}; \forall i, j = 1, 2, \dots, n \quad (9)$$

Constraint (2) shows that travel time for 5 days does not exceed 300 minutes. Constraint (3) means that travel cost for 5 days does not exceed RM100 and constraint (4) shows that accommodation cost for 5 days does not exceed RM500. Meanwhile constraint (5) shows that total travel and trip time for visiting all interesting places does not exceed 3000 minutes. Constraint (6) shows that tourists can arrive in each

Table 2. Travel route of structure model 1, 2 and 3.

Structure	Route
1	JK→TL→KL→UW→PC→LP→BT→MM→KBL→TR→KKL→TB→ATT→OV→TT→TAH→GP→ZM→GR→DL→JK
2	JK→TL→KL→UW→PC→LP→BT→MM→KBL→TR→KKL→TB→ATT→OV→TT→TAH→GP→ZM→GR→DL→ZM
3	JK→TL→KL→DL→TAH→GR→TB→ATT→OV→TT→LP→UW→PC→BT→KBL→TR→MM→KKL→GP→ZM→JK

Table 3. Summary of solutions for model structure 1, 2 and 3.

Structure	Travel time (minutes)	Travel cost (RM)	Accommodation cost (RM)
1	237	37	330
2	237	37	947
3	237	37	430

tourist destination only once and constraint (7) shows that tourists can go out at each tourist destination only once. Meanwhile constraint (8) is to avoid sub-tours. Constraints for structures 2 and 3 remain same with the structure 1, except for changing the objective function.

Objective function for structure 2:

$$\text{Min } Z = P_1 d_2^+ + P_2 d_3^+ + P_3 d_1^+ \quad (10)$$

Objective function for structure 3:

$$\text{Min } Z = P_1 d_3^+ + P_2 d_1^+ + P_3 d_2^+ \quad (11)$$

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To obtain results for the goal programming model, LINGO software version 12.0 was used. LINGO is a comprehensive computer software and effective way to solve the problem of modeling linear and non-linear with the faster, easier and effectively (Schrage, 2006). In addition, LINGO is also a mathematical modeling language that allows us to express the optimization problem in a similar form to standard mathematical notation.

Based on Table 2, Kuah Jetty (JK) is the starting and ending point for the trip of all the three structures. The total number of days to visit all the 19 selected tourist destinations in this study was 4 days. Since the time allocated per day for this trip is 10 hours, so tourists will stay overnight at the final destination that has reached 10 hours journey by staying at a nearby hotel with the lowest price. The accommodation was selected based on location that are closed to tourist

areas in a radius less than 5 km and spent less than 8 minutes to the tourist attractions. Accommodation varies for each day trip depending on time constraints provided 10 hours a day to travel. So, tourists do not stayed at the same hotel for the whole 4 days trip.

Based on the results obtained from the three model structures in Table 3, it shows that all the three model structures give the same result for the travel time and travel costs. However, for the accommodation cost, model structure 1 give the minimum cost compared to the other two models. Since the accommodation cost for model structure 2 exceeds the maximum allocation of accommodation cost, thus this proves that this priority level is not reached.

5 CONCLUSION

In this paper, the solution given by the three model structures shows that only one of the most appropriate model to use. The model is a model structure 1. This is because this model has proved to be minimum the total travel time, travel cost and accommodation cost for a selected 19 tourist destinations in Langkawi. Even though given the same amount of travel time and travel cost for all three model structures, the model structure one was then chosen as the best model because the roads used were not repeated and it was a round-trip.

REFERENCES

Carson, D., Waller, I., & Scott, N. 2002. Drive tourism: up the wall and around the bend. Melbourne: Common Ground Publishing.

Charnes, A., Cooper, W. W., & Ferguson, R. 1955. Optimal estimation of executive compensation by linear programming, *Management Science* 1: 138–151.

Faulkner, B., & Poole, M. 1989. Impacts on Tourism of the Disruption to Domestic Airline Services. Canberra: Bureau of Tourism Research.

Gutin, G., & Punnen, A. P. 2004. The Traveling Salesman Problem and Its Variations. New York: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Hall, C. M. 1998. Introduction to Tourism (3rd ed.) Longman.

Hsin, Y. S. 2006. Network characteristics of drive tourism destinations: An application of network analysis in tourism, *Tourism Management*, 27: 1029–1039.

Kaul, R. N. 1985. Dynamics of tourism: a trilogy (vol. III). New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.

Leiper, N. 1995. Tourism management. Melbourne: RMIT Press.

Lue, C.C., Crompton, J. L., & Stewart, W. P. 1996. Evidence of cumulative attraction in multidestination recreational trip decision, *Journal of Travel Research* 34: 41–49.

Olsen, M. 2002. Keeping track of the self drive market. In Carson, D, Waller, I., & Scott, N., *Drive tourism: up the wall and around the bend*. Melbourne: Common Ground Publishing.

Page, S. J. 1994. Transport for tourism. London: Routledge.

Prideaux, B. 2000. The role of transport system in destination development, *Tourism Management* 21: 53–63.

Schrage, L. 2006. Optimization modelling with Lingo (6th ed.) USA: Lindo System Inc.

Taplin, J. H. E., & McGinley, C. 2000. A linear program to model daily car touring choices. *Annals of Tourism Research* 27(2): 451–467.

The Borneo Post Online. 2011. Blueprint aims to make Langkawi a top 10 ecotourism destination. Retrieved March 28, 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.theborneopost.com/2011/12/09>.

Wen, L. Y. 2004. A comparison of two optimal approaches for the amcop problem, *Journal of Network and Computer Applications* 27: 151–162.

Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved March 28, 2012. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourism>.

Zografos, C., & Oglethorpe, D. 2004. Multi-criteria analysis in ecotourism: using goal programming to explore sustainable solutions. *Current Issues in Tourism* 7(1): 20–43.

This page intentionally left blank

The obstructions for sustainable tourism development in rural areas

M.S.M. Aslam, Khairil Wahidin Awang & Zaiton Samdin
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Nor'ain Binti Hj. Othman
Universiti of Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: Tourism is considered as one of the largest industries reference to volume of the business and employment generation globally. Yet, the eras of post World War II led the world to seek tourism as a strategic tool for development. Sustainable development recognizes tourism as a driving force and proclaims sustainability as a basic requirement of tourism planning and development. The needs of sustainable tourism development are well documented. However, the rural development process is still unable to incorporate sustainable tourism successfully. The major objective of the study is to identify the gap in existing literatures and the obstruction for rural community to understand sustainable tourism development comprehensively. A large number of published and unpublished documents either in the form of printed or electronic versions were solicited as sources for this study and they were critically reviewed. This enabled the researcher to encounter the problem and hypothesized it as: 'there is no sufficient accessible literature or informative guidance for rural communities to incorporate appropriate sustainable tourism development process.'

Keywords: Rural resources, rural development, sustainable tourism, alternative tourism.

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been recognized as one of the largest industries or major socio-economic activities in the world. United Nations World Tourism Organization-UNWTO (2011) noted tourism as a key driver for socio-economic progress as world tourism reached 940 million of total arrivals and US\$ 919 million of total receipt in 2010. Further, it employs one in nine workers and contributes 6% of global gross national profit (McMinn, 1997). Its expansion is the most remarkable socio-economic phenomena of the post-World War II eras (Weaver, 2006) in eliminating contemporary socio-economic, environmental crisis. Yet, Hall (1995) and Bandara (2001) argue that the potential contribution of tourism to economic development allows tourism to appear as a development strategy in developing countries. In parallel, Sharpley, (2003) indicates that tourism has been used as a vehicle for development. Today it's one of the major sources of foreign exchange earnings and employment generation directly and indirectly in the world (UNWTO, 2011). Long and Lane (2000) disclosed that tourism cannot be ignored by rural or urban community due to wealth transfer and employment, along with its multidisciplinary nature, complex sectoral integration, and income redistribution and multiplication effect. Further, UNWTO (2002a) has accounted that the primary source of foreign exchange earnings in 49 Least

Developing Countries' (LDC) is tourism and it is a principal export in 83% of developing countries.

However, over visitation, unlimited resource utilization and negative impacts of tourism have led the destinations to rethink about tourism development. In depicting the diversion of unplanned and unmanageable tourism towards an unexpected detrimental edge Kelly (1998) argues that the negative impacts of tourism overwhelm the positive economic impacts as similar to greediness in destroying the goose that lays the golden eggs. Thus, with the growth of tourism, it has brought together socio-cultural and environmental adverse effects. Apparently conventional mass tourism as hard tourism generates much greater negative impacts on the economies, socio-culture and environment of the destination (Stabler, 1997), even though headcount and large volume of mass tourists are recognized as a significant development indicator globally.

2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

In consequence, contemporary world had to search for a fundamental shift from exploitative to a sustainable approach in tourism development (Prosser, 1994). Whereas, Gezici, et al (2004) and Gössling, et al (2008) argued that the adverse affects generated from

mass tourism on socio-culture and environment, along with the pressure on economic return has required researches towards seeking solutions with the concept of sustainable tourism against all unfavorable development. Eventually, ensuring the sustainability of the economy, socio-culture and environment has become a burning need of tourism planning and development.

Subsequently, the need for sustainable tourism was well documented by many authors such as Inskip (1991), Stabler (1997), Hall and Lew (1998), Tribe et al (2000), McCool and Moisey (2008) along with many conference proceedings and reports (eg: World Commission on Environment and Development-WCED-1987 Brundtland Report; Commission on Sustainable Development, 1999; Tourism and Local Agenda-21, 2003). Choi and Sirakaya (2004) recognized that "Sustainable development" has become an internationally known term and the subject of thousands of books and papers. Besides, McMinn (1997) observes that sustainable tourism and ecotourism have become 'buzz words' of travel agencies, tour operating companies and governments due to its philosophical base and public acceptance.

When incorporating sustainable development into tourism, Butler (1999) argues that sustainable development is the single factor that has the potential to change the nature of tourism. Whilst, shifting paradigms for sustainable development encounters tourism as one of the major drivers and Sharpley, (2000) has reported that sustainable tourism has been widely accepted and inserted into development policy and practice. Constantly, World Travel and Tourism Organization – WTTO and International Hotel and Restaurant Association – IHRA (1999) registered tourism as the first ever industry to incorporate Agenda-21 to envisage sustainable development. Certainly, sustainable tourism development caters to the need of the present generation, who may be host or guest born anywhere in the world, while preserving and conserving environmental and other resources of the local community for the future generation (WCED, 1987; Sharma, 2000; Koeman, 2003). Hence, integrating sustainability into tourism development will testify inter and intra generational equity and survival.

However, D'Hautserre (2005) argues that conventional tourism does not resolve the challenges on sustainability and 'alternative' or 'soft' tourism is a path to sustainability. Whereas, some forms of tourism, which were much older than mass tourism, were rediscovered as alternative forms of tourism, with different labels in order to rectify and replace conventional mass tourism parallel to ensuring sustainability (Weaver, 2006). Since alternative tourism intends to use the resources only by the visitors who have higher interest and intention to pay higher economic value, (Roberts and Hall, 2001). This tends to protect and add more value for uniqueness and differences of countryside, in addition to providing a boost to the local economy (Long et al, 1990; Fagence, 1991; Page and Getz, 1997; Bandara, 2003; Briedenhann and Wicken, 2004; Aslam, 2005). In contrast to enclave conventional

tourism, alternative tourism has emerged within past two decades to rejuvenate destinations, while pushing tourism towards rural areas.

3 TOURISM IN RURAL AREA

Diverse and fragmented natural and human geography in rural areas envisage great potentials for alternative tourisms, nevertheless fragility and susceptibility nature of rural fabric is hesitant to accommodate large volume mass tourism. Yet, alternative form, special interest and active holiday have turned the rural areas into an important segment of tourism and recreation (Tribe, et al, 2000). Further, Lacher and Nepal (2010) commented that alternative forms of tourism promotes many visitors to rural areas in developing countries and motivate the industry to expand into more remote areas. While, decline in traditional farming agriculture and rapid degradation of natural resources have claimed a shift in rural economy and led the rural communities to seek nontraditional service oriented economic avenues to sustain rural livelihoods (Fleischer and Pizam, 1997; Tribe et al, 2000; Sharpley, 2002, 2003; Timothy, 2005). Subsequently, tourism, a non-traditional avenue has been frequently taken as: a complementary tool for economic and social regenerations in rural areas (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004; MacDonald and Jolliffe, 2003; Fleischer and Felsenstein, 2000); an effective catalyst of rural socio-economic development and regeneration (Sharpley, 2002); the lynchpin of many rural communities (Garrod et al, 2006). Further, Pearce (1989) has stated that tourism has long been recognized as a significant avenue to reach development objectives of rural areas, and de la Torre and Gutierrez (2008) observe rural tourism as a tool to enhance regional development, especially in the socio-economic unbalance areas to ensure the prosperous development. Eventually, Stoian and Stoicea (2011) argue that rural tourism is the most viable form of tourism to bring sustainability to rural areas.

Subsequently, an ever increasing private individual owned number of smaller often commercial recreation areas now dot the rural landscape, where 10–20 % of tourism activities are taken place approximately (Roberts and Hall, 2001), over 70% of all Americans participate in rural recreation (OECD, 1994) and 23% of European holidaymakers choose country side as their destination annually (EuroBarometer, 1998). Yet, Slee et al (1997) recognize that in Britain the well-being of rural residents depended more on tourism than farming and agriculture. Hence, capitalizing of countryside primary natural, built and socio-cultural resources (Garrod et al, 2006) in conjunction with increasing rural tourism demand engenders a variety of tourism concepts in rural areas under different terms such as agri-tourism/agro-tourism, farm tourism, rural tourism, soft tourism, alternative tourism, ecotourism, and several others, which provide different meanings

from one country to another or one user to another (Roberts and Hall, 2001). Whereas, Long and Lane (2000: 299–300) describes that ‘Tourism claims to be a fashion-driven industry: rural tourism has become part of a global shift in fashionable leisure patterns’. Allocentric perceptions (Plog, 1974) and attitudinal changes of tourists in the world heighten the demand for rural tourism (Davies and Gilbert, 1992). Yet, Cánoves, et al (2004) argue that rural tourism is an image or a set of images constructed by the tourists and sellers throughout the history, geography and culture of the territory.

However, many authors such as United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development Non Governmental Organization – UNCSDNGO Steering Committee (1999), Slee et al (1997), de la Torre and Gutierrez (2008), and Tribe et al (2000), critically analyse various negative impacts of tourism such as increasing competition and utilization of vulnerable resources, rural restructuring, raising cost of living, decrease in agriculture, invasion of urban population towards rural and areas. Controversially, Weaver and Oppermann (2000) illuminate mass tourism is unnatural and externally controlled, whereas alternative tourism is authentic and locally controlled. Yet, inventing and relabeling the side-shoots of mass tourism (Liu, 2003) as alternative tourism is demising up the authenticity further and ruining sustainability in the rural areas. Whereas, tourism establishments arbitrate and perpetrate demand and supply (Cohen, 1988). Subsequently, the outside entrepreneur, marketing agents, tour operators, travel guides mediate in order to cross tourists’ expectation rather than showing the real scenario (Hughes, 1995; Liu, 2003). As tourists and communities have fallen into a passive role, active local community participation is ruined and socio-culture and environments are manipulated by tour operators and other organizations.

4 DISCUSSION

In reviewing the desired goal of tourism in rural areas Swarbrooke, (1999) and McAreavy and McDonagh (2011) argues that tourism needs to be viable, but it should not harm the resources such as physical environment and social fabric of host community in order to ensure sustainable rural development. While, Mason (2003) reveals, as natural environment and tourism are inescapably linked, ensuring the preservation and conservation, avoiding pollution and overexploitation as result of tourism will be the inevitable tasks of tourism planners and managers, who need to manage rural resources for tourism and its implications for rural sustainability (McClinchery and Carmichael, 2010). This compels tourism entrepreneurs to integrate the environmental and social objectives more responsibly and distinguish from other entrepreneurs (Lordkipanidze et al 2004). Yet, for the preservation of agricultural based traditional livelihood Lee (2005) claims that

the development objective is to fasten agricultural and tourism in rural areas in order to utilize agricultural resources as a traditional economic base to promote and sustain rural development, in addition to contributing towards the tourism industry. Since both traditional and non-traditional avenues play an important role in rural development, a holistic approach to sustainability would be required to continue social, cultural and economic well-being of human communities as an integral part of environmental well-being (Roberts and Hall, 2001), rather than piece meal type development.

In reviewing the holistic process of sustainable tourism in rural areas, understanding and awareness of stakeholders including community is the primary requirement. Hence, Bramwell and Lane (2005) argue, there is much to do to understand and improve the awareness on the broad scope and importance of sustainable tourism, even though researches have been done widely on some related areas. Further, The Natural Step – TNS (2009) include awareness as the first step of sustainability and argues that the present system is not sustainable due to lack of common understanding and awareness on ‘what is sustainability’. Yet, UNCSD NGO Steering Committee (1999) states that the lack of common understanding on what sustainable tourism and ecotourism means have led to conflict between tourism development, local resources and community interests.

However, understanding and exploiting tourism is a difficult process for most of the rural communities (Long and Lane, 2000). Thus, inadequate capacity and understanding of tourism culture is a common problem in rural areas (Liu, 2006). In consequence, Mitchell and Hall (2005:4) have cited some major issues, such as lack of understanding and knowledge on demand factors, incapability of product presentation, and constraints in marketing, cooperation and networking in rural tourism development (Jenkins and Parrot, 1997). Moreover, one of the major debating aspects on tourism development is the contribution of tourism to improve rural livelihood, community-based conservation and capacity of local community to manage and engage with tourism in rural areas (Department for International Development – DFID, 1997).

However, the derived solutions from the study of UNCSD NGO Steering Committee (1999) includes principles and guidelines on natural resources utilization, pollution, cultural resource integration, capacity building, environmental protection, etc. generally for investors, but rural communities are not given any guidelines or direction on how to develop sustainable tourism. Yet, studies done on sustainable tourism extensively (Hunter-Jones et al, 1997) and in the last twenty years individuals, organizations and governments have made concentrated efforts to materialize sustainable tourism ideals and attempted to evaluate them in practice. But an ideological separation in productions, consumption and conservation is in the heart of these problems and has prevented a holistic approach, which is required by the strong sustainability (D’Hautserre, 2005). Gill and William’s (2008)

recommendations on Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW)'s Comprehensive Sustainability Plan (CSP), include the holistic approach, stakeholders integration, and community participation, long term strategic etc as strategic tools. Yet, certain inadequacies and irrelevancies in RMOW for rural spaces, led it to be unrealistic for rural areas.

In addition, The Natural Step –TNS (2009) developed premier guide book for sustainability, which is too inadequate to fulfill the needs of a sustainable tourism development process in rural areas. Moreover the principle document for sustainable development, the Brundtland commission report (WCED, 1987) has also not considered or included specifically rural areas, where the majority of the population and resources are found in the world. In addition, Tribe et al (2000) presented 'tourism and countryside symbiotic relationship model'; fails to show clear planning and development process; the management action is considered only after the negative or positive impacts generated; the participation and role of stakeholders; missing other major components of process.

Thus, contemplating Liu (2003:461) criticism on existing literatures of general sustainable tourism, rural sustainable tourism can be linked with many of his critiques such as; inadequacy information on demand and diverse utility of complex and dynamic concept of resources; insufficient empowerment for host community in development process; poor reflection on socio-cultural changes; less attention on absolute carrying capacity management; misconception and ill implementation of alternative tourism as a means and instrument to reach sustainable development goals. Further, Ruhanan's (2004), reasoning for the gap between sustainability doctrine and real world application recognizes that the sustainable tourism concept remains only among the academics but doesn't reach the destination planners, managers and industry operators who make day to day decisions and implement practically. However, her study also perceives only a part of sustainable tourism development.

5 CONCLUSION

In view of the above discussion, as tourism is the largest rapidly growing industry and a significant tool for sustainable development, sustainable tourism development in rural areas is an inevitable requirement to rebuild the socio-economy, while preserving and conserving socio-culture, environments and economy for future. Nevertheless many authors argue that sustainable tourism is unrealistic and isolated from the practical development process. None of the forum or literature has contemplated or discussed the complete process of rural sustainable tourism development as one rather different solution address different issue at different time. Consequently, there is no single document which includes all the necessary aspects and dimensions of the rural sustainable

tourism development process to direct and guide the rural mass comprehensively and sophisticatedly.

Generally it has been theoretically and conceptually well designed and technically verified as a vehicle to reach sustainable development. Further, researches and literatures are mystified and mounted up for further researches and academic references. Yet, people, who intend to practice sustainable tourism in the rural areas, are unable to access and interpret the knowledge and information. Often the majority of the literatures are in the English language and available only in the subscribed journals, expensive books and libraries and rural people are with poor economy and education, and speaking different native languages. In consequence, sustainable tourism development process is infringed due to: lack of know how; resources inventory and product development; poor community participation; inability to attract and integrate government and other stakeholders; shortcoming in policy-strategy setting; anticipating the financial needs; and marketing, networking and accreditation.

The above issues replicates exactly a situation, 'in which a machine is well designed, parts are identified for assembling and operators are also selected, but the operators are not skilled enough and not given a proper toolkit to assemble and operate it.' Similarly there is no problem or issues in definition and concept of rural sustainable tourism, but which are not accessible and interpreted for real rural practitioners.

REFERENCES

- Aslam, M. S. M. 2005. *An Empirical Study on Reasoning for and Determinants of Sustainable Tourism Development; A Case Study of Kandy*, M.Sc. Dissertation, Colombo: Sri Jayewardenepura University.
- Bandara, H.M., 2001. *Tourism Development Planning in Developing Countries: A Critique*, Colombo: Stamford Lake.
- Bandara, H.M. 2003. *Tourism Planning in Sri Lanka*, Colombo: Stamford Lake.
- Bramwell, B. & Lane, B. 2005. From Niche to General Relevance? Sustainable Tourism, Research and the Role of Tourism Journals Introduction, *The Journal of Tourism Studies*, 16(2): 52–62.
- Briedenhann J. & Wickens E. 2004. Tourism Routes as a Tool for the Economic Development of Rural Areas—Vibrant Hope or Impossible Dream? *Tourism Management*, 25(1): 71–79.
- Butler, R.W. 1999. Sustainable tourism: A state-of-the-art review, *Tourism Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment*, 1(1): 7–25.
- Cánoves, G., Villarino, M., Priestley G. K. & Blanco A. 2004. Rural Tourism in Spain: an analysis of recent evolution, *Geoforum* 35, pp: 755–769.
- Choi, H. C. & Sirakaya E. 2006. Sustainability Indicators for Managing Community Tourism, *Tourism Management*, 27(6): 1274–1289.
- Cohen, E. 1988. Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 15: 371–386.
- Commission on Sustainable Development, 1999. *Tourism and Sustainable Development: the Global Importance of Tourism*, 19–30 April 1999, New York, <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/iclei.pdf>, retrieved on February 22, 2012.

- Davies, E.T. & Gilbert, D.C. 1992. Planning and Marketing of Tourism: A Case Study of the Farm Based Tourism in Wales, *Tourism Management*, 13(1): 56–63.
- de la Torre G.M.V. & Gutiérrez E. A. 2008. The Demand of Rural Tourism in Natural in Southern Spain, in P. M. Burns, and M. Novelli, (eds.), *Tourism development: growth, myths, and inequalities*, pp: 113–125, CAB International: Wallingford.
- DFID, 1997. *Tourism – Key Issues for Sustainable Livelihood Resource, Department of Rural Livelihood*, UK, www.dfid.gov.uk, retrieved on February 11, 2012.
- D’Hautesserre, A.-M. 2005. Tourism, Development and Sustainability in Monaco: Comparing Discourses and Practices, *Tourism Geographies*, 7(3): 290–312.
- EuroBarometer, 1998. *Facts and Figures on the Europeans’ Holiday*, EuroBarometer DG XXIII, Brussels: European Commission.
- Fagence, M. 1991. Rural Tourism and the Small Country Town. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 16(1): 34–43.
- Fleicher, A. & Pizam, A. 1997. Rural Tourism in Israel, *Tourism Management*, 18(6): 367–372.
- Fleischer, A. & Felsenstein, D. 2000. Support for Rural Tourism: Does it make a difference? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(4): 1007–1024
- Garrod, B., Wornell, R. & Youell, R. 2006. Re-conceptualising Rural Resources as Countryside Capital: The Case of Rural Tourism, *Journal of Rural Studies*, 22: 117–128.
- Gezici, F., Gül, A.Y. & Alkay E. 2004. Potential, Thresholds and Threats of Tourism Development in Bodrum Peninsula (Turkey), in F.D. Pineda, & C.A. Brebbia (eds.), *Sustainable Tourism III*, 13–24, Boston: WIT Press.
- Gill, A. & Williams, P.W., (2008). From Fictions to Actions: Applying the Natural Steps to Sustainability Planning in the Resort of Whilster, British Columbia, in S.F. McCool, and R.N.Moisey, (eds.), *Tourism, Recreation and Sustainability*, 122–130, Wallingford: CAB International.
- Gössling, S., Hall, M., Lane, B. & Weaver, D. 2008. The Helsingborg Statement on Sustainable Tourism, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 16(1): 122–124.
- Hall, C.M. 1995. *Tourism, Ecotourism and Protected Areas*, Gland: IUCN Publication.
- Hall, C.M. & Lew, A.A. (eds.) 1998. *Sustainable Tourism: A Geographical Perspective*, Essex: Addison-Wesley Longman.
- Hughes, C.G. 1982. The Employment and Economic Effects of Tourism Reappraised, *Tourism Management*, 3(3): 167–176.
- Hunter-Jones, P.A., Hughes, H.L., Eastwood, I.W. & Morrison, A.A. 1997. Practical Approaches Sustainability: A Spanish Perspective, in M.J. Stabler, (ed.), *Tourism and Sustainability: Principles to Practice*, 263–274, Wallingford: CAB International.
- Inskeep, E. 1991. *Tourism Planning: An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*, New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Kelly, M. 1998. Jordan’s Potential Tourism Development, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 25(4): 904–918.
- Koeman A. 2003. Sustainable Tourism and Eco-tourism, A Project Report, http://www.mekonginfo.org/mrc_en/doclib.nsf/, retrieved on March 12, 2010.
- Lacher, R.G. & Nepal, S.K. 2010. From Leakages to Linkages: Local-Level Strategies for Capturing Tourism Revenue in Northern Thailand, *Tourism Geographies*, 12(1): 77–99.
- Liu, Z. 2003. Sustainable Tourism Development: a Critique, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 11(6): 459–475.
- Long, P. and Lane, B. 2000. Rural Tourism Development, in W.C. Gartner, and B.W.Lime (eds.), *Trends in Outdoor Recreation, Leisure and Tourism*, 299–308, Wallingford: CAB International.
- Long, P. T., Perdue, R. R. & Lew, A. 1990. Rural Resident Perceptions and Attitudes by Community Level of Tourism, *Journal of Travel Research*, 28(3): 3–9.
- Lordkipanidze, M., Brezet, H., & Backman, M. 2004. The Entrepreneurship Factor in Sustainable Tourism development, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 13(8): 787–798.
- MacDonald, R. & Jolliffe, L. 2003. Cultural Rural Tourism, Evidence from Canada, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30(2): 307–322.
- Mason, P. 2003. *Tourism Impacts Planning and Management*, Elsevier, Butterworth-Heinemann: Oxford.
- McAreevey, R. & McDonagh, J. 2011. Sustainable Rural Tourism: Lesson for Rural Development, *Sociologia Ruralis* 51(2): 175–194.
- McClinchey, K.A. & Carmichael, B.A. 2010. Countryside Capital, Changing Rural Landscapes and Rural Tourism Implications in Mennoite Country, *Journal of Rural and Community Development*, 5(1/2): 178–199.
- McCool, S.F. & Moisey, R.N. (eds.) 2008. Introduction: Pathways and Pitfalls in the Search for Sustainable Tourism, *Tourism, Recreation and Sustainability*, 1–15, Wallingford: CAB International.
- McMinn, S. 1997. The Challenge of Sustainable Tourism, *The Environmentalist* 17(2): 135–141.
- Mitchell, M. & Hall, D. 2005. Rural Tourism as Sustainable Business: Key Themes and Issues, in D. Hall, I. Kirkpatrick, and M.Mitchell, (eds.), *Rural Tourism and Sustainable Business*, 3–14, Clevedon: Channel View Publications.
- OECD, 1994. *Tourism Strategies and Rural Development*. In: *Tourism Policy and International Tourism*, Paris: OECD.
- Page, S. J. & Getz, D. 1997. *The Business of Rural Tourism: International Perspectives*, London: International Thomson Business Press.
- Pearce, D. 1989. *Tourism Development* (2nd edn), London: Harlow.
- Plog, S. C. 1974. Why Destination Areas Rise and Fall in Popularity, *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 14(4): 55–58.
- Prosser, R. 1994. Societal Change and the Growth in Alternative Tourism, in E. Cater and G. Lowman (eds.) *Ecotourism: A Sustainable Option*, 19–37, John Wiley: Chichester.
- Roberts, L. and Hall, D. (eds.) 2001. *Rural Tourism and Recreation: Principles to Practice*, Wallingford: CAB International.
- Ruhanen, L. 2004. Strategic Planning for Local Tourism Destinations: an analysis of tourism plans, *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development*, 1(3): 239–253.
- Sharma, J. K. 2000. *Tourism and Development: Design for Ecological Sustainability*, New Delhi: Kanishka.
- Sharpley, R. 2000. Tourism and Sustainable Development: Exploring the Theoretical Divide, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 8 (1): 1–19.
- Sharpley, R. 2002. Rural tourism and the challenge of tourism diversification: the case of Cyprus, *Tourism Management*, 23(3): 233–244.
- Sharpley, R. 2003. Tourism, Modernization and Development on the Island of Cyprus: Challenges and Policy Responses, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 11(2 & 3): 246–265.
- Slee, B., Farr, H. & Snowden, P. 1997. The Economic Impact of Alternative Types of Rural Tourism, *Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 48(2): 179–192.

- Stabler, M.J. 1997. *Tourism and Sustainability*, Principle to Practice, Wallingford: CAB International.
- Stoian, M. and Stoicea, P. 2011. The Best Practices in Greece Rural Tourism, *Agricultural Management/Lucrari Stiintifice Seria I, Management Agricol*, 13(4): 195–202.
- TNS, 2009. *The Sustainability Premier: Step by Natural Step*, The Natural Step: Canada <http://www.thenaturalstep.org/en/node/1166=9596>, retrieved on March 08, 2012.
- Tribe, J., Font, X., Griffiths, N., Vickery, R. & Yale, K. 2000. *Environmental Management for Rural Tourism and Recreation*, London: Cassell.
- UNCSD NGO Steering Committee, (1999). *Sustainable Tourism: A Non-Governmental Organization Perspective in Tourism and Sustainable Development*, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York: United Nation.
- UNEP, 2003. *Tourism and Local Agenda: The Role of Local Authorities in Sustainable Tourism*, Paris: UNEP, <http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/3207,TourismAgenda.pdf>, retrieved on March 10, 2012.
- UNWTO, 2002a. *World Tourism Day – 2002: Ecotourism is the Key to Sustainable Development*, Madrid: UNWTO, retrieved on January 10, 2012.
- UNWTO, 2011. *Why Tourism? Tourism – an Economic and Social Phenomenon*, Madrid: UNWTO, <http://unwto.org/en/content/why-tourism> retrieved on march 07, 2012.
- WCED, 1987. *Our Common Future*, World Commission on Environment and Development, Oxford University Press: Oxford. <http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm>, retrieved on January 18, 2012.
- Weaver, D. and Oppermann, M. 2000. *Tourism Management*, Brisbane: Wiley.
- Weaver, D. 2006. *Sustainable Tourism*, Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
- WTTO and IHRA 1999. *Tourism and Sustainable Development: The Global Importance of Tourism*, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York: United Nation, <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/iclei.pdf> retrieved on January 30, 2012.

Neighbouring countries tourism demand implication on Malaysia's tourism exports

Alfiq Roslan, Mohd Afandi Abu Bakar & Aw Yang Huey

Faculty of Business Management, MARA University of Technology, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The influence of neighbouring countries to Malaysia's tourism demand has yet to be tested. Thus, this paper aims to examine a significant determinant for Malaysia's tourism sector development that is the relationship between neighbouring countries tourist arrivals implication on Malaysia's tourism export. This paper verifies whether the neighbouring countries as substitutes or complementary destinations to Malaysia tourist arrivals. This study is restricted to foreign tourists and employed the quarterly data for the period ranging from 1999 to 2009. Econometric models are constructed and estimated on selected South-East Asia countries namely Singapore, Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia. The panel least square with pooled effect is employed and the empirical results show that Singapore is a complementary tourism destination to Malaysia for models, whereas Thailand is a competing tourism destination to Malaysia.

Keywords: complementary; substitute; tourism

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry could encourage and stimulate Malaysia's economic development through foreign exchange earnings and diversifying the national income base. Malaysia made the top 10 countries with the highest international tourist arrivals for 2009 (World Tourism Organization). In the Asian market, Malaysia is ranked second after China in terms of total tourist arrivals.

The World Tourism Organization statistics show that most of the tourists' arrival to Malaysia comes from the neighbouring countries namely Singapore (12.7 million), Indonesia (2.4 million), Thailand (1.4 million) and Brunei (1 million) (Tourism Malaysia). Does tourist arrival in neighbouring countries have any implication on Malaysia tourist arrivals? Thus, this paper attempts to identify the relationship of tourist arrivals to Malaysia with the selected South East Asia countries namely, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and Philippines (referred as SEA 4).

The objective of the study is to analyze whether the neighbouring countries are complementary or substitute to the total tourist arrivals to Malaysia. Furthermore, it seeks to examine and explain the relationship between the total tourist arrivals in Malaysia with the total tourist arrivals in Thailand and Singapore as an alternative tourist destination.

The significance of the study is to provide vital information to Malaysia's tourism sector regarding the factors that affect the tourism demand from South East Asian countries, which can be used in forecasting future demand from these countries. It is also

very useful to the authorities for planning, policies and strategies implementation as well as the tourism marketing activities. Besides, this study provides the information to the government about the influences of the neighboring countries on tourist arrivals in Malaysia.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The empirical models of tourism demand borrow heavily from the consumer theory, in which the level of consumption depends on the consumer's income, price of the goods, prices of related goods (substitutes and complements) and other determinants. Income and prices are the major factors influencing tourism demand (Kareem, 2005; Tingzhou et al 2007). The economic theory ensures that price must be included in any demand theory and the variable of relative prices is measured by ratio of consumer price index between Thailand and the country of origin (Maeta, 2001). For another price element, there has been less attention on transportation costs in the literature due to the reason of lack of adequate measure of effective transportation costs (Kareem, 2005).

Income is another significant variable in explaining tourism demand (Hafiz, 1992; Ting Zhou et al, 2007; Norlida et al, 2008). Ting Zhou et al (2007) has stated that typical income measures include gross domestic product, gross national product and national disposable income measured in real, nominal, aggregate or per capita form, depending on data availability. According to Song et al (2004) as cited by Leah (2005)

concluded that consumers are more aware of exchange rates than destination costs of living for tourists and hence are driven to use the exchange rate as a proxy variable.

About the competition among neighbouring countries, this study employs the alternative destination as a variable, which is based on tourist arrivals. Most of the studies used tourism price at alternative destinations. According to Norlida et al (2008), the significant variable is tourism price at alternative tourism destinations. Ting Zhou et al (2007) concluded that the competition among different overseas destinations may call for the inclusion of variable that represents the cost of substitute destinations, which is substitute price.

Despite the fact that in the literature, annual data is often used, there has been increasing use of quarterly data in recent literature, which is in line with the increasing interest in the seasonality of global tourism flows (Li et al. 2005, cited in Kareem, 2005). The use of panel data technique will give us the avenue to address traditional econometric problems in cross-country regression such as unobserved country effects, outliers, dynamics and model uncertainty (Kareem, 2005). In terms of the estimation techniques, the log-linear regressions are the most frequently employed functional forms (Raymond, 2001; Kareem, 2005 and Leah, 2005). Based on the studies by Crouch (1994) and Witt and Witt (1995), 73 out of 97 studies on demand for tourism are based on the OLS regression (cited in Norlida et al., 2008). The study of Leah (2005) also used the OLS single-equation approach.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The modified Gravity Model is used to estimate tourist movement to Malaysia and its determinants. Based on the model, there are two types of factors. Firstly, the factors that attract the movement of international tourism, for instance, the types and quality of services offered by the tourism destination plus the level of marketing efforts done in promoting and attracting the tourists. This could be considered as the tourism supply. Secondly, the factors generate the movement of international tourism. For instance, the relative tourism price, substitute price, exchange rate and income. This could be considered as the tourism demand.

Furthermore, this paper aims to study the factors influencing the total tourist arrivals to Malaysia. Thus, theoretically, the gravity forces are the pulling factor, which pulls the objects toward it, similarly, in the context of tourism, the determinants that affect the total tourist arrivals are the gravity forces that pull and attract tourists to visit the desired tourism destination.

The quarterly data for the period of 1999-2009 are used in the study. The data of total tourist arrivals in Malaysia are obtained from the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia. Other than that, the data regarding the tourism price, income and exchange Rate of Malaysia and SEA4 were gathered from IMF, excluding the

income data for Singapore, which was obtained from the Statistics Department of Singapore. Furthermore, the data on alternative destinations for Singapore and Thailand were collected from the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

3.1 Research design

In this study, the neighboring countries will be proven to have an effect on the total tourist arrival which is either substitute or complementary effect. The unit of analysis in this study is the total tourist arrivals in Malaysia, which are based on the 4 selected South East Asian countries of origin (SEA4). Econometric models are constructed and estimated on these 4 significant countries of origin because these countries are the top 5 tourists generating markets in South East Asia for the total tourist arrivals in Malaysia.

Furthermore, Singapore and Thailand were chosen to be the alternative destinations because of the distance, which both are located nearer to Malaysia than other countries plus they are the top 3 tourism destinations in South East Asia. Thus, this factor could affect the decision of whether these neighboring countries are competing or complementary to Malaysia's tourist arrivals. The competing and complementary factors will be measured based on the trend of tourist arrivals between Malaysia and the neighboring countries. The competing factor will be determined when the trend of neighboring countries' tourist arrivals are negatively related to Malaysia's tourist arrivals, while the complementary factor will be determined when the trend of neighboring countries' tourist arrivals are positively related to Malaysia's tourist arrivals, based on the same time period.

3.2 Model specification

Most econometric analyses of tourism demand have used single-equation models. Take into consideration the differences between countries specific characteristics. Therefore, the explanatory variables are in the form of ratio between the visited country and country of origin.

The total tourist arrivals represent the volume of demand. It is a very important creator of revenue to a country because as the total tourist arrivals increase, the international tourist receipts will increase as well. This will increase the revenue from the tourism sector and strengthen the exchange rate of that country. The total tourist arrivals is measured based on the number of tourists that arrived in Malaysia per quarter from 1999-2009. The calculation of tourism price is based on the consumer price index (CPI) of the visited country divided by the CPI of the country of origin and the base year is 2005:

$$\text{Tourism Price} = \frac{\text{CPI visited destination}}{\text{CPI origin country}}$$

Norlida et al (2008) stated that tourism price proxies by the ratio of the cost of living in Malaysia relative to the individual country of the Asian7. It is expected that tourism price and arrivals will have a negative relationship. The income for Malaysia and SEA4 are expressed in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per national currency. The calculation of income is based on the GDP of the visited country divided by the GDP of the country of origin and it is quarterly from 1999–2009:

$$\text{Income} = \frac{\text{GDP visited destination}}{\text{GDP origin country}}$$

The exchange rate is the ratio of currency between the receiving country and the country of origin (Norlida et al, 2008). The exchange rate for Malaysia and SEA4 countries' currency per US dollar is taken quarterly in average from 1999–2009.

$$\text{Exchange rate} = \frac{\text{Currency receivin country}}{\text{Currency of the origin country}}$$

Alternative destinations refer to the neighbouring countries that are Singapore and Thailand, which could be either the competitor or complementary destinations to Malaysia. The selected alternative destinations are measured based on the quarterly tourist arrivals to each alternative country.

This study used the total tourist arrivals in Malaysia as a dependent variable. With regards to South East Asia's demand on tourism Malaysia, there are 4 groups of tourists to be examined, namely Indonesian, Filipino, Singaporean, and Thais. This reflect the 4 selected countries of origins from South East Asia region. The purpose of examining the 4 groups is to determine the competitor and complementary alternative destinations to Malaysia based on these countries of origins. In addition, there are four independent variables, which measured based on the relative or ratio between Malaysia and the countries of origin except for the alternative destinations.

The alternative destinations contain two countries, which are total tourist arrivals in Thailand (DT) and total tourist arrivals in Singapore (DS). Three groups of tourists will be taken each from DS and DT to represent the countries of origins. For DS, the three groups are total Indonesian tourist arrivals in Singapore (DSi), total Filipino tourist arrivals in Singapore (DSp), total Thailand tourist arrivals in Singapore (DSt) while for DT, they are total Indonesian tourist arrivals in Thailand (DTi), total Filipino tourist arrivals in Thailand (DTp), total Singaporean tourist arrivals in Thailand (DTs).

The total tourist in Malaysia will be measured against the alternative destinations' tourist arrivals based on each of the selected country of origin. For example, with regards to the alternative destination of Singapore, only DSi, DSp, and DSt will be considered, while for alternative destination of Thailand, only DTi, DTp and DTs will be included, meaning that for every alternative destination, only 3 groups of tourist

to be measured because it is not relevant to put DSs (total Singaporean tourist arrivals in Singapore) in the model.

3.3 Model construction

$$TM = f(CPII, CPIP, CPIS, CPIT, II, IP, IS, IT, EXI, EXP, EXS, EXT, D)$$

With:

TM: Total tourist arrivals in Malaysia

CPI: Tourism price (CPI)

I: Income (GDP)

EX: Exchange rate

D = dummy variable for country of origin (SEA 4)

CPII: Relative CPI of Malaysia to Indonesia

II: Ratio of ringgit to rupiah (gdp)

EXI: Ratio of ringgit to rupiah (ex)

CPIP: Relative CPI of Malaysia to Philippines

IP: Ratio of ringgit to peso (gdp)

EXP: Ratio of ringgit to peso (ex)

CPIS: Relative CPI of Malaysia to Singapore

IS: Ratio of ringgit to Singapore dollar (gdp)

EXS: Ratio of ringgit to Singapore dollar (ex)

CPIT: Relative CPI of Malaysia to Thailand

IT: Ratio of ringgit to bath (gdp)

EXT: Ratio of ringgit to bath (ex)

The basic linear model:

$$TM = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (CPII) + \beta_2 (CPIP) + \beta_3 (CPIS) + \beta_4 (CPIT) + \beta_5 (II) + \beta_6 (IP) + \beta_7 (IS) + \beta_8 (IT) + \beta_9 (EXI) + \beta_{10} (EXP) + \beta_{11} (EXS) + \beta_{12} (EXT) + \beta_{13} (D) \quad (1)$$

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Econometric estimation

The models are estimated by using either panel least square with pooled effect, fixed effect model or random effect model. As shown in Table 1 below, the probability of dependent variable exceeds 0.05, which indicates that, the fixed effect model is insignificant. Therefore, null hypothesis is not rejected and the pooled effect model is chosen to be the best model. Since, the fixed effect model is insignificant, the Hausman test is deemed unnecessary to be performed.

Table 1. Redundant fixed effect test.

Model variable	Redundant fixed effect test		
	F-Statistic	d.f.	Prob.
TM	0.813645	(4,205)	0.5177

Table 2. The estimation of TM Model.

Panel least squares with none effect model		
TM		
Model variable	Coefficient	Prob
C	1086721.	0.6510
d(CPII)	-3909957.	0.0355
d(CPIP)	-8697543.	0.0157
d(CPIS)	-13070626	0.0036
d(CPIT)	-15143.13	0.0185
d(II)	3.20E+06	0.0889
d(IP)	1350194.	0.0457
d(IS)	2028387.	0.0315
d(IT)	33372176	0.0673
d(EXI)	-6.95E+06	0.0596
d(EXP)	1484075	0.0135
d(EXS)	2014816.	0.0416
d(EXT)	2569230	0.0399
d(DSi)	0.244099	0.0066
d(DSp)	0.628613	0.0034
d(DSt)	1.511133	0.027
d(DTi)	-1.100187	0.0442
d(DTp)	-0.391705	0.2468
d(DTs)	2.633487	0.0451
R ²	0.880919	
Adjust-R ²	0.821378	
SEE	505645.1	
F-stat	14.79529	
Prob F-stat	0.000000	
Sum squared	7.55E+12	
D.W stat	1.713181	
No of obs	42	

The regression begins with panel least squares with pooled effect model and the results are as listed in Table 2 below;

4.2 Tourism demand model

From the above TM model equation, all independent variables are found to be significant at 5% significance level except for D(II), D(IT), D(EXI). Overall, most of the independent variables are significant towards the dependent variable.

According to Table 2, it is found that D(CPII), D(CPIP), D(CPIS), D(CPIT) have a negative relationship with D(TM) which is in line with the economic theory. The relationship can be explained by the following situations; when 1% increase occurs in D(CPII), the D(TM) will decrease by 3.91 million tourists. Secondly, 1% increase in D(CPIP) will decrease the D(TM) by 8.70 million tourists. Thirdly, 1% increase in ratio of D(CPIS) will decrease the D(TM) by 13.07 million tourists. Lastly, 1% increase in ratio of D(CPIT), the D(TM) will decline by 15143 tourists.

With regards to income, all independent variables are positively related with D(TM) which follows the

economic theory. However, only D(IS) and D(IP) show the significance relationship with D(TM), while D(IT) and D(II) are not significant in explaining D(TM). The relationship can be explained as the D(IS) increases, it causes the D(TM) to increase by 2.03 million tourists and as the D(IP) increases, it leads to an increase in D(TM) by 1.35 million tourists.

The exchange rates should also have a positive relationship with the number of tourist arrivals (Norlida et al, 2008). All of the exchange rate variables show a correct positive sign of coefficient except for D(EXI) which is also not significant in explaining D(TM). The incorrect sign of coefficient for D(EXI) is because Indonesia is a low income country as compared to Malaysia, thus as the D(EXI) increases, the ratio of exchange rate is high and this leads to decrease of demand from Indonesian tourists. The relationship between the significant independent variables with D(TM) is explained by the following situations, when the D(EXP) increases, the D(TM) will increase by 1.48 million tourists. Secondly, as the D(EXS) increases, the D(TM) will increase by 2.02 million tourists. Lastly, when the D(EXT) increases, it will cause the increase of 2.57 million tourists in Malaysia.

The relationship between D(TM) with D(DT) and D(DS) will be analyzed by observing the sign of coefficient and comparison will be made on the total tourist from Indonesia that arrived in Thailand and Singapore. Based on Table 2, D(DSi) is significant at 5% significance level and it shows a positive sign which indicates that Singapore is a complementary tourism destination to Malaysia in terms of Indonesian tourist where 1 Indonesian tourist increases in D(DSi), 0.24 Indonesian tourist in D(TM) will also increase. In other words, when D(DSi) increases by 100 tourist, D(TM) will increase by 24 Indonesian tourists.

Furthermore, D(DTi) has the negative relationship with D(TM) which shows that Thailand is a substitute to Malaysia in terms of Indonesian tourists. The relationship can be explained as such that when there is an increase of 1 Indonesian tourist in D(DTi), thus the D(TM) will decrease by 1.10 tourists. In other words, when D(DTi) increases by 100 tourist, D(TM) will decrease by approximately 110 tourists.

The relationship between D(TM) with D(DT) and D(DS) will be analyzed by observing the sign of coefficient and comparison will be made against the total tourist from Philippines that arrived in Thailand and Singapore. From the Table 2 above, D(DSp) is significant at 5% significance level and it shows a positive sign which indicates that Singapore is a complementary tourism destination to Malaysia where an increase of 1 Filipino tourist in D(DSp), will increase 0.63 tourist in D(TM). In other words, when D(DSp) increases by 100 tourists, D(TM) will increase by 63 Filipino tourists. In addition, D(DTp) has the negative relationship with D(TM) which shows that Thailand is a substitute to Malaysia, however, at 5% significance level, it is not significant in explaining D(TM).

The relationship between D(TM) with D(DT) will be analyzed by observing the sign of coefficient and

comparison will be made against the total tourist from Singapore that arrived in Thailand. Based on Table 2, D(DTs) is significant at 5% significance level and it shows a positive sign which proves that Thailand is a complementary tourism destination to Malaysia where an increase of 1 Singaporean tourist in D(DTs), will increase 2.63 tourist in D(TM). In other words, when D(DTs) increases by 100 tourists, D(TM) will increase by 263 Singaporean tourists.

The relationship between D(TM) with D(DS) will be analyzed by observing the sign of coefficient and comparison will be made against the total tourists from Thailand that arrived in Singapore.

Based on Table 2, D(DSt) is significant at 5% significance level with a positive sign which shows that Singapore is a complementary tourism destination to Malaysia, where an increase of 1 Thailander tourist in D(DSt), it will increase 1.51 tourist in D(TM). In other words, when D(DSt) increases by 100 tourists, D(TM) will increase by 151 Thailand tourists. With regards to autocorrelation and multicollinearity, the results show that there is no autocorrelation and multicollinearity problem.

5 CONCLUSION

Overall, most of the variables are significant in the tourism demand for Malaysia except for Indonesia, where income and exchange rate are not the factors that influenced the demand of Indonesian tourists on tourism Malaysia, whereas for Thailand, income is the only factor that does not influence the demand of Thai tourists on total tourism Malaysia plus the empirical results are consistent with the economic theory even though one of the findings (ratio of Ringgit to Rupiah) contradict the theory. Furthermore, it is proven that Tourism price is very significant in explaining Total Tourist Arrivals in Malaysia because all of the relative

CPI of Malaysia to SEA4 is significant at 5% significance level. In addition, Singapore is a complementary tourism destination to Malaysia whereas Thailand is a substitute tourism destination to Malaysia. Thus, the results from this study can be used as a guide in order to formulate relevant tourism policy for Malaysia

REFERENCES

- Chumni, M. 2001. Tourism demand model: determinants of Thailand's international tourist receipts.
- Crouch, G.I. 1994. The study of international tourism demand: a survey of practice. *Journal of Travel Research*, 32, 41-55.
- Hafiz, A.P. 1992. Demand for tourism in Malaysia.
- Kareem, and Idowu, O. 2005. A panel data analysis of demand for tourism in Africa. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, Vol. 2 No. 2; February 2011.
- Li, C., Song, H. and S.F., Witt 2005. Recent Developments in Econometric Modelling and Forecasting. *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 44, pp. 82-99.
- Mohd Hafiz, M.H., and Mohd Fauzi, M.H. 2010. Tourism demand in Malaysia: A cross-sectional pool time-series analysis. *International Journal of Trade, Economics and Finance*, Vol. 1, No. 1, June, 2010, 2010-023X.
- Norlida Hanim, M.S., Siong-Hook, L., Ramachandran, S., Ahmad, S., and Zaleha, M.N. 2008. Asian tourism demand for Malaysia: A bound test approach. *Contemporary Management Research*. Pages 351-368, Vol. 4, No. 4, December 2008.
- Raymond Y.C. Tse. 2001. Estimating the impact of economic factors on tourism: evidence from Hong Kong. *Tourism Economics*, 2001, 7 (3), 277-293.
- Sahely, L. 2005. Modelling tourism demand from major international markets to the ECCU.
- Song, H., Turner, L., 2000. Tourism Demand Forecasting.
- Witt, S.F., and Witt, C.A. 1995. Forecasting Tourism Demand: A Review of Empirical Research. *International Journal of Forecasting*, 11, 447-475.
- Zhou, T., Bonham, C., and Gangnes, B. 2007. Modeling the supply and demand for tourism: a fully identified VECM approach. Working Paper No. 07-17. July 20, 2007.

This page intentionally left blank

A synchronic investigation of the significance of foreign languages for the tourism trade in Malaysia

S.H. Chan, A.N. Abdullah & S. Rafik-Galea
Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The enormous growth of the tourism industry in Malaysia has made it a major revenue earner and the government aggressively promotes the industry. Research has helped the growth of the industry, providing relevant data input that can be used for effective decision making in terms of knowledge, wealth and human capital. A study was conceptualized to investigate the use and role of foreign languages which are particularly important in tourism-related workplaces. A discussion of the responses principally centre on foreign language ability, contact with foreign languages and visitors, cultural attributes of foreign language learning, pragmatic use of foreign languages, perception about training and readiness to work in tourism-related workplaces. The vibrant nature of the tourism trade necessitates keeping pace with rapid changes in the needs and wants of the industry. Synchronic data fits into the dynamics of change to better understand the state of the tourism industry.

Keywords: Tourism, foreign languages, training, synchronic data, dynamics

1 INTRODUCTION

According to the World Trade and Tourism Council (WTTC), tourism is the world's largest industry and is expected to increase and set new records (Gladstone, 1998). New enterprises such as budget airlines are helping the growth of tourism with slogans like *Everyone Can Fly* (Air Asia). This phenomenal growth in tourism has great impact on national economies and thus studies into this area warrants significance.

Malaysia charted 24.7 million tourists in 2011 and contributed to the national income to a tune of RM58.3 billion in 2011. Double digit growth arrivals were registered from countries such as Iran (20.1%), South Africa (19.1%), France (15.1%), Myanmar (12.6%), Taiwan (10.7%), China (10.6%), and Brunei (10.2%), (Ministry of Tourism Malaysia, 2012). As a result of the thriving tourism trade in Malaysia, there is a need for the broadening of the use of foreign languages to meet cross-cultural needs. Otherwise, the hospitality, travel and tourism industries can suffer from cultural tunnel vision (Shames and Glover, 1989). The tourism ecology appears to propose more dynamic moves in the use of foreign languages, including that of English, and also to suggest ways and means to further promote the growth of the industry.

Any planning enterprise requires baseline data for decision making. To obtain the data, one approach is to engage personnel from the industry to give their views or perceptions about the use of foreign languages and

English in the industry. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine perceptions of tourism related personnel on the importance and use of foreign languages, including the English language

2 METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study was performed by means of a survey questionnaire. The study population comprised 100 executives and non-executive respondents from a variety of *tourism* related sectors. The respondents were selected from travel and tourism-related organizations by means of random and referred sampling. The researchers elicited information on the perceived language needs of tourism-related workers. Responses to the questionnaire would give some information that could direct content necessary for training with utilitarian orientations.

3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The data points to the importance and use of foreign languages for professional success in the tourism industry. This finding is supported by a considerable amount of similar opinions. Among them, "... it is difficult to learn, to understand what they want, what their needs are without the language". Another respondent

Table 1. Work experience and tourism sectors.

Years of work experience	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	41
5 to 10 years	38
11 to 15 years	10
16 to 20 years	8
More than 21 years	3

Table 2. Tourism sectors.

Sectors	Percentage (%)
Recreation, leisure and sports sector	45
Education tourism sector	20
Hospitality and service sectors	10
History and culture	8
Retail and entertainment	8
Airlines and transportation sector	5
Health and wellness	2
Agro based sectors	2

said that when she thinks of professional training, she thinks of language. An added opinion shows that people and language are knitted. To get closer to people, it would be much facilitated by language.

The findings are based on 100 respondents. Their background is varied and the respondents sampled reveal a varying range of experiences in the tourism industry (refer to table 1 below). The respondents in this study comprised 43 males and 57 females. Thirty-five percent were between the ages of 26 to 30 years and 26 % between 20 to 25 years. Ethnically, the data reveals a composition of 86 % Malay, 6% Chinese and 8% Indians, who are all Malaysians. The data revealed that 55% of the respondents received the highest level of education at the high school level or its equivalent. The rest of the respondents are 30% first degree holders, 11% diploma holders and 4% postgraduate degree holders. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents stated that their mother tongue is Malay and this is not surprising as the majority of the respondents are Malays. This is followed by 7% whose mother tongue is Tamil and 4% whose mother tongue is one of the Chinese dialects. Only one respondent maintained that his mother tongue is English.

A majority of the respondents (41%) had less than 5 years of working experience in tourism related sectors with 38% having between 5–10 years of experience, 10% had between 11–15 years experience in the field, 8% had between 16 to 20 years and only 3% of the sampled respondents had more than 21 years of experience in the industry. The respondents in this study came from various tourism or tourism related sectors namely 45% from the recreation, leisure and sports sector, 10%

from the hospitality and service sectors 8% from history and culture, 20% from education tourism sector, 8% retail and entertainment, 5% from the airlines and transportation sector and 2% from health and wellness and 2% from Agro based sectors.

With reference to foreign language learning, the respondents reported that they learnt foreign languages both through formal and informal settings. About 48% of the respondents maintained that they learnt a foreign language through a formal setting, 8% through informal settings. Forty-four percent said that they had learnt a foreign language in both formal and informal settings.

3.1 Language use and preferences

In understanding how the respondents situate themselves in terms of their affinity to acquire or use a foreign language, several questions ranging from interaction, preference, likes and dislikes were asked.

Many of the participants (74%) reported that they interacted quite frequently with foreign visitors and 26% reported that it was only done sometimes during the course of their work. This obviously shows that a foreign language or languages would have to be used to communicate with people from different cultures and language backgrounds.

In Malaysia, English is a widely used foreign language. As such, the survey investigated the ability of use with regard to this language. Findings showed that 46% of the respondents reported that they could speak English well (ranging from excellent to good) and 38% maintained that they only had average ability to speak in English. Only 11% reported that their spoken English is poor. With regard to their writing ability, it follows a similar trend. 46% reported that they could write well. 39% reported that they had an average ability while 11% claimed that they had poor writing ability. When it comes to listening ability, 64% claimed that they had good to excellent listening skills in English and 29% reported that they were in the average domain. Only 7% of them claimed that their listening skills were poor.

Compared to English, the respondents reported a higher proficiency in the use of the Malay language (98% – excellent in speaking; 91% – excellent in writing skills; 86% – listening skills). These figures are aligned to the ethnic background of the respondents. It follows that 16% of the respondents had fair to excellent spoken skills in Mandarin, 9% reported that their writing ability in Mandarin ranged from fair to excellent. With regard to reading in Mandarin, 11% reported that they had a fair to excellent command of the language. A fair to excellent listening ability was also reported by 13% of the sample. In Malaysia, it would appear that the dominant languages used in the tourism industry are the home languages aside from the use of English which is a global language. Other foreign languages such as Arabic, Japanese, Korean, German, Spanish and French, are low or negligible in terms of ability of their use.

Ability of foreign language use could be linked to likes and dislikes towards the languages. In this study, 99% of the respondents appear to like the English language the most, followed by the Malay language (98%), Mandarin (69%), Tamil (51%). Among the foreign languages, 71% of the respondents said that they liked the Japanese language. This is followed by Arabic (70%), Spanish (56%), German (55%), Thai (55%) and Vietnamese (49%). In the context of the 'likes', it could be said that the languages that are well-liked are probably languages that would be attractive to learn by the workforce in the tourism industry. Respondents were also of the opinion that foreign languages should be part of the school curriculum in Malaysia.

Respondents were asked about their interaction with foreign visitors. Almost all of them (96%) reported that they liked to interact with foreign visitors. However, many of them (70%) said that they do behave differently when interacting with foreign visitors. A large number of the respondents (66%) said that they were confident when dealing and interacting with foreign visitors. They were most confident when they speak using their mother tongue and this confidence translates to a preference to speak to others who can converse with them in their mother tongue. This revelation however, highlights a bias towards interaction defined by a particular language use. It would mean that the tourism workforce needs to have a larger linguistic repertoire of language ability and use so that they can interact more confidently with tourists from countries that do not speak the same language. This is affirmed by the respondents (98%) who stated that they wished they could speak a foreign language fluently. This is further supported by a question about anxiety in interacting with foreigners. A good number (37%) felt that they were anxious or ill at ease in this situation.

3.2 *Employer support and importance of foreign languages to the Malaysian tourism industry*

The employers are also seen to play a supportive and motivational role as to whether the employees in the tourism and tourism related sectors would learn foreign languages. With a background that shows healthy support from employers, employees appear to enjoy their tourism related work, with 93% of them reporting that they had opportunities to use foreign languages at work. When asked on the kind of knowledge they needed to be well-versed in order to function well in the industry. The list was as follows: local food (93%), local attractions (92%), well trained in foreign culture (86%), and international politics (77%). This hierarchy denotes an order of foreign languages needs and use. In more concrete terms, the languages that were deemed important to the Malaysian tourist industry were listed as: English (88%), Malay (78%), Mandarin (66%), Arabic (63%), Japanese (53%), Tamil (49%), French (49%), Spanish (46%), German (44%), Thai (41%) and Vietnamese (38%). Other languages were

considered to be not as important. These responses show that the English language is the main language of communication in the tourism industry and the Malay language is also quite widely used likely due to the large number of tourists that come from neighbouring countries who share the same language. The figures show the degree of intercultural contact that is very much connected to global and specific languages.

4 CONCLUSION

Tourism, like no other industry, contributes to the integration of different countries and people in the world community should be in the hands of culturally and communication-sensitive, educated and linguistically competent professionals. To achieve success in communication, often there is the need to know different languages in order to minimise misunderstanding regarding differences in values, attitudes and behaviours. However, more can be said about the efficacies of learning a foreign language. In addition to being sensitive to cultural norms and behaviours, learning a foreign language would also benefit personal and economic growth and educational development.

In a globalized world characterized by international links and intercultural connections resulting from tourism, linguistic skills are crucial for employment. There is perhaps no other industry in the world which is more exposed to cross cultural contacts than tourism (Gladstone, 1998). Organizations in the tourism industry have to take a serious view of cross cultural training. Industry standards are subject to corporate cultures. It has been claimed that companies with low levels of ethno-centrism are likely to be more open to cross-cultural training. A lower level of ethnocentrism would allow the filter to be lowered. This would indicate greater cultural awareness and personnel flexibility especially in linguistic diversity. The knowledge of foreign languages also increases job opportunities in many careers where knowing another language is a real asset.

In deriving a model for cross-cultural training, advocates of the self-awareness or human relations model of training (Gudykunst, 1977, Althen, 1981). In this model the assumption is that "the individual who understands himself better, will understand his own culture better and through this will have a basis for understanding another culture and consequently will be more effective" (Gladstone, 1998). The critical element in the expansion learning is not in the fullness with which one knows each culture but the degree to which the process of cross-cultural learning, communication and human relations can be mastered.

Baseline data could give rise to initiatives that could be taken to improve the state of foreign language use vis-à-vis local languages in the tourism industry. Aside from more practical aspects of language training, further directions could also be taken in terms of research to provide further enhancing of knowledge.

For example, more sociolinguistic studies of verbal encounters in pluralistic situations could provide opportunities to examine communication between different linguistic groups. Issues of linguistic accommodation, flexibility and enculturation is of prior importance to shape the tourism sector workforce so that it is adequately prepared and informed of new cultural settings to facilitate the fulfilment of wants and needs of the tourism industry. Communication acts situated in language proficiency function as instrumental, interpretative and expressive (Gladstone, 1998). These features augur well for the dynamic growth of the Malaysian tourism industry and bringing it to new heights in its achievements and potential.

REFERENCES

- Althen, G. (Ed.). 1981. *Learning across cultures*. Washington, DC: National Association for Foreign Student Affairs
- Gladstone, C. 1998. The study of cross-cultural communication of sojourning travel, tourism, and hospitality management. Implications for cross-cultural training', *Columbia University, USA*.
- Gudykunst, W.B., Hammer, M.R. & Wiseman, R.L. 1977. An analysis of an integrated approach to cross-cultural training. *International Journal of Intercultural-Relations* Vol 1: 2, pg 99–110
- Shames, G. & Glover, W. 1989. *World Class Service*. Yarmouth: Intercultural press
- Retrieved from <http://www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my>, Ministry of Tourism Malaysia, 2

Tourist friendly destination concept: Analysis in macro level perspectives

Ahmad Nazrin Aris Anuar

Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Habibah Ahmad, Hamzah Jusoh & Mohd Yusof Hussain

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: The growth of the tourism industry has called for a tourism destination to be more creative and innovative in offering niche tourism or more importantly, “Tourist Friendly Destination Concept” as a customer-oriented branding. However, studies that of such initiatives are quite limited and sector based, thus leaving gap of knowledge concerning the formation of tourist friendly destination concept. Therefore, the aim of this study is to develop a tourist friendly destination concept through macro level perspectives. The main objectives are i) to identify the factors influencing the formation of tourist friendly destination concept, ii) to develop a tourist friendly destination concept through macro level perspectives. Through this study, it found that five factors in macro level influencing the formation of tourist friendly destination concept. While in develop the of tourist friendly destination concept, tourism system approach is particularly useful with the relation of three aspects: product, activity and space. The implication of this study, it is an attempt to provide a general overview in macro level perspectives pertaining tourist friendly destination concept that can be used by tourism providers as stakeholders in managing of tourism destination.

Keywords: Creative, macro level, niche tourism, tourism system approach, tourist friendly destination concept

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism destination has been seen as a unique and a complex combination in the tourism system that includes services, resources (environment, nature, man-made: consists of sun, sea, landscape, culture and amenity), infrastructure, facilities and experience. Principally, the word of destination is taken from the Latin word *destinatio, onis* means a place or the end of the journey (Vukonic, 1997). Although in Malaysia, have many tourism destinations that offering a high quality of activity, space and product, but still have some tourism destination that failed to give a satisfactory outcome to the tourists. Therefore, a tourism destination must be more creative and unique in offering niche tourism or more importantly a customer-oriented branding. As such, a “Tourist Friendly Destination” positioning is therefore, vital. Even though there are many studies focusing on tourism destination, study on a tourist friendly destination concept which related with tourism destination is quite limited and leaving a gap of knowledge. Since there are no specific theories, concepts, frameworks or indicators in tourist friendly destination usage, thus create confusion what constitutes a tourist friendly destination concept. The tourism providers will therefore offer what they assumed to be friendly while on the other hand, the tourists feel it may be not. Therefore, this study is a concept paper

with the aim to develop a tourist friendly destination concept through a macro level perspective. The main objectives of this study are i) to identify the factors influencing the formation of tourist friendly destination concept, ii) to develop a tourist friendly destination concept through macro level perspectives.

2 FACTORS INFLUENCING FORMATION OF TOURIST FRIENDLY DESTINATION CONCEPT

2.1 *Shifting of tourism trends*

Tourism development has seen since in late of 90th and early twentieth century when the previous tourism only involved with the elites’ classes, has shifted to the concept of mass tourism and alternative tourism. Through previous studies has shown that the developments of tourism are resulted from changes in the “mass tourism” concept whereby the rigid travel package which later moved to the “alternative tourism” concept which has led to more interest and strong economic opportunities (Sleight, 1993; Weinstein, 1994; Buhalis, 2000). To cover the weaknesses as well as the negative image of mass tourism concept, the alternative tourism concept has been introduced in the 1980’s through the Alternative Tourism Conference

(Nash & Butler, 1990). In addition, Hamzah & Ismail (2003) stated that the alternative tourism concept promotes interaction between tourists and the local communities, and respect the environment. Therefore, through the principle of alternative tourism concept has been seen as one of reason how a tourist friendly destination concept will be formed, as part of a customer-oriented branding.

2.2 *Changes of tourist tastes*

The changes of tourists' tastes are a factor due to the changes of tourist's character, attitude and lifestyle in a tourism destination. This condition has changed due to the influence of the aspects: activity, product and space in tourism destination, which considered as an archaic, created a feeling bored and then give a negative perception. According to Lipman (2007) tourists will be boring if there are similarities in the product, space and activity at the tourism destination. For instance, due to changes in tourists' tastes, tour operators who are offering the 3S's concept (sun, sea and sand) has changed a marketing strategy by offering a new package which is more cheaper (Lipman, 2007), increased activities package and even change the whole concept totally in fulfilling the tourists' tastes (Jawardena, 2002). According to Lipman (2007), tourist will be increased if it derived from willingness to learn, exploring new experience and adding significance to their life. Therefore, these factors will influencing a formation of tourist friendly destination concept, which this concept enable tourists enjoy, and obtaining new knowledge, skill and experience.

2.3 *Increasing of travel capabilities*

According to Lipman (2007), this factor is influenced by an increasing of tourist's personal income, an introduction of low-cost carrier, convenient transportation network to tourism destination and supported by the information technology network, which is cheaper and valuable. The increase of the personal income was seen as a catalyst for the increased tourist ability to travel. Supported by the low cost carrier and use of information technology across borders, allows the middle and low class tourists to travel in tourism destination which formerly monopolized by the elite classes. In addition, the expansion of low cost carrier such as Air Asia in Malaysia and Indonesia, Jetstar Asia Airways in Singapore, has enhanced the tourist's ability to travel. From the expansion of low cost carrier has given a positive impact on the sub sectors in the tourism industry such as accommodation, entertainment and shopping, transportation, tourist attraction and others. The more products offered by the low cost carrier, the most significant changes in terms of product, activity and space that will be offered by the sub sectors. Moreover, the increase in the information technology usage has also shown an increase of tourists' ability to travel. Lipman (2007) also highlighted the concept of a Do-It-Yourself (DIY), has assisted the tourists' ability

to travel starting from ticketing, selection of accommodation until the choice of activity, product and space at the tourism destination. Therefore, this factor has seen as a factor in the formation of tourist friendly destination concept wherein tourists are more propensities toward the price sensitivity and value for money when selecting the tourism destination including the usage of the product, space and activity.

2.4 *Existence of Public-Private Partnership (PPP)*

Partnership agreements between public and private sectors are necessities in formation of tourist friendly destination concept. Lipman (2007) stated the PPP is required to increase the awareness through market-driven, researched basis and industry-led. As an example, the public sector contributes to the development of transportation such as transportation types of air, land and sea, to identify places of attractions such as a public park, building with cultural and historical characterization and finally to provide an infrastructure. Meanwhile, the private sectors invest in a tourism destination through the provision of accommodation, shopping locations and entertainment places such as shopping malls, sport complex, Meeting, Incentives, Conference and Exhibition (MICE) and theme parks. In fact, it was agreed by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) (2011), stated that PPP is needed as both sectors play their respective roles, for instance the public sector allocates the budget for infrastructure, facilities and services while the private sector promotes and prepare the human resource's skill in the tourism industry. Due to that, the role of the PPP has boosted the development of tourist friendly destination concept wherein the aspects of activity, product and space required fulfilling the tourist's supply and demand through a strategic partnership.

2.5 *Selection of destination and tourist motivation*

In selecting a tourism destination, it is too complex to elaborate because it involves the process of travel decision making. According to Dellart et al. (1998), the process of choosing a tourism destination involves the psychological and non-psychological factors, while Um & Crompton (1990) stated that the process of choosing a tourism destination involves personnel (push factor), destination characteristics (pull factor) and limitation factor. Therefore, in the formation of tourist friendly destination concept, the stakeholder must consider the elements in the selection of a tourism destination because each of these elements will probably meet the supply and demand as well as the tourist's motivation. In fact, Beerli & Martin (2004) stated that motivation is needed to bring tourists to their preferred destination, which meet a satisfactory. Nevertheless, Pizam et al. (1979) stated motivation can be defined as a set of desires that causes people to travel. In previous studies, to measuring the tourist motivation, a typology which often used is the push factor and pull factor (Crompton, 1979).

In fact, there are also other typologies in measuring the tourist's motivation such as internal and external factor (Uysal & Jurovski, 1994), intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Goodall, 1991). Therefore, in the development of a tourist friendly destination concept, the tourist motivation is needed through continuous research. The aspects of activity, product and space will be developed in tourist friendly destination concept and would meet the tourists' desires.

3 DEVELOPMENT OF TOURIST FRIENDLY DESTINATION CONCEPT

3.1 *Using tourism system approach*

Tourism can be regarded as an industry, but there are some researchers who agree and disagree with this perspective (Christie Mill & Morrison, 1985). It is because there is no universal definition regarding the terminology of tourism, and the tourism scholars have various perception or perspectives towards the understanding of tourism. However, tourism can be regarded as a system where it can be defined, analyzed, planned and organized integrative (Inskip, 1991). According to Bertalanffy (1968) and Chadwick (1978), the system can be termed as an element, which is correlated to each other. Based on the system theory in a global overview, organization is a system where each of components interacted with each other, including humans and processes (Scott, 1961; Thompson, 1967; Katz & Kahn, 1978) and the purpose of the interaction is to achieve a specific objective (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972). In previous studies, tourism can be classified as a system in which the elements closely related to each other. Gunn (1994) and Leiper (1989) stated that the system in tourism consisted of supply and demand aspects of tourist, transportation, tourist attraction, facilities, services, information and traveling promotion offered. On the other hand, Christie Mill & Morrison (1985) described the system in tourism has four parts, which are marketed, travel, destination and marketing, and to them, the system can be regarded as a spider's web which all parts will vibrate if only a part of it is touched. In addition, the previous studies showed that the tourism systems consist of three elements are essential and interconnected with each other: aspect of activity (Jenkins, 1980; Christie Mill & Morrison, 1985), the aspect of space (Urry, 2002; Clarke, 2005) and aspect of the product (Clarke, 2005). Walsh-Heron & Stevens (1990) stated that to produce a quality tourism destination, the combination aspects of places, activity and product are needed. Leiper (1990) stated that, the tourism system will provide a significant impact on tourism destination and Inskip (1991) described that a tourism destination has to be planned in detail via the tourism system technique. According to Murphy (1985), the use of a tourism system is flexible, and it can be used at any stage of study, types and perspectives (Tosun & Jenkins, 1998) and understanding of clear issues (Kapsar & Laesser, 1994).

3.2 *The role of space*

In clarifying the relationship between the roles of space in a tourist friendly destination concept, obviously the aspect of space will be influenced by the formation of tourism destination mainly in tourist friendly destination. Most of the tourism scholars have agreed on defining the tourism destination as a part of space segment or known as a tourist destination zone or tourist destination area (Vukonic, 1997). According to Hitrec (1995), destination as a place of attraction which is facilitated by space that meets the requirements of tourists, whereas Kaiser & Helber (1978) stated that the element of space should fulfill the primary motivation of tourists who makes them feel satisfied and will spend more time in that tourism destination. Even Vukonic (1997) stated that the more space is used; it will increase a satisfaction and attendance of tourist to the tourism destination. In addition, Hudson (1998) stated that a space, which is equipped with required facilities and infrastructures are needed in a tourism destination, especially in tourist friendly destination concept, which is customer-oriented branding. In fact, Hudson (1998) pointed out that facilities and services, which satisfy the tourists' needs and want like food and accommodation, are vital in extending a stay of the tourist in tourism destination. It shows that a space, which is equipped with infrastructure, facilities, accommodation, attraction and others, is essential to ensure a tourist friendly destination concept fulfills the supply and demand of tourist. In the development of tourist friendly destination concept, every space has its belongings whether on the government or private and even to the local community. The tourists expected in tourist friendly destination concept may include components of friendly public space and a maximum usage of space that can be utilized by tourists and local community.

3.3 *The role of activity*

The role of activity is vital in the development of tourist friendly destination concept. Even Gunn (1994) also stated element of activity in his tourism terminology. Mathieson & Wall (1982) also noted the role of activity in the development of tourism destination. Hence, the role of activity is significant in the development of tourist friendly destination concept. Therefore, Ritchie & Crouch (1999) described that the role of activity is not only influence by physiographic and culture, but it requires the creativity and initiative at all levels, especially among the stakeholders. It is because an element of activity will be influenced to the effectiveness of tourism attraction, especially a tourist friendly destination concept. Ritchie & Crouch (1999) stated that for developing activity, stakeholders need to play their role in grabbing on the strength of the resources, which offered at a destination. Similarly, the same situation must be appropriate in tourist friendly destination concept. Proposed activities for a tourist should take into accounts the aspects and features of tourist friendly destination concept.

3.4 The role of product

Previous studies have seen the destination as a product (McIntosh & Goeldner, 1990; Kozak, 2002; Yoon & Uysal, 2005) which forms a tourism destination. For example, Van Raaij (1986) state products in the tourism destination comprise of nature and man-made creations. The scenery, beaches, mountains, places and historical buildings can illustrate as a nature. Meanwhile, man-made creations can illustrate as an accommodation, transportation, infrastructure and others. Furthermore, Swarbrooke (1995) stated that products in a tourism destination can be categorized into four parts, namely (i) nature, (ii) man-made building structure (a base designed to attract tourists like the theme park, safari park, entertainment complex and others) (iii) man-made building structure (a location which is not designed as tourist attractions like the mosque, archeological historical buildings) and lastly (iv) major events like sports and festivals. Product can be defined as one that can be offered in the market that meets the supply and demand. It includes physical objects, services, places, organizations and so on (Kotler, 1994). In fact, according to Swarbrooke (1995) product is a combination of tangible goods and intangible services. On the other hand, Renaghan (1981) stated that the product is a combination of products and facilities as well as services while Kim (1998) explained that products in tourism include services and others like accommodation, food, transportation, local goods and entertainment. In addition, the product is an influence by the life cycle theory. Bakar (2003) and Butler (1980) stated that the life cycle is a concept that affects levels of supplies from the starting point to the declining point. It moves through four levels: introduction, development, maturity and decline (Butler, 1980; Bakar, 2003; Kurtz, 2010). In tourism, a product consists of several elements like activities, services, accommodations, food, transportation, local goods and entertainment. Instead, tourist friendly destination concept is a combination of tourism resources added with facilities and efficient services, which are, not burden the tourists. The strength of a product depends on the uniqueness, and a variety of product features offered in a tourist destination. Thus, by the uniqueness and creativity of a product in a tourist friendly destination concept, it will change the destination from a low yield to the high yield.

4 CONCLUSION

The tourist friendly destination is a concept, which satisfies the tourists through utilization and the relationship between aspects of activity, space and product without any interruption and difficulties starting from the resident until the selected tourism destination. Even though a concept of tourist friendly destination is quite limited, as no specific research has been done specifically in literature, theory, framework and indicators in the utilization of a tourist friendly destination

concept thus, leaving a gap of knowledge and confusion to the users. Through this study although it is a preliminary study and have not been tested empirically, the factors discussed in this paper are contributing the formation of tourist friendly destination concept with the relationship between the three aspects: activity, space and product in the tourism system approached. Therefore, the discussion in this study will open up more study related to tourist friendly destination concept as well as enable the stakeholders to manage a tourism destination according to the tourist friendly destination mechanism (three aspects in a tourism system) based on the demands and needs of tourists as a customer (customer oriented branding).

REFERENCES

- Bakar, Z. 2003. *Asas Pemasaran*. Selangor: Fajar Bakti.
- Bertalanffy, L.V. 1968. General system theory-a critical review. *General Systems* 7(1): 1-20.
- Beerli, A. & Martin, J.D. 2004. Tourists' characteristics and the perceived image of tourist destination: A quantitative analysis-a case study of Lanzarote, Spain. *Tour Manage* 2004 25(5): 623-626.
- Buhalis, D. 2000. Marketing the competitive destination of the future. *Tourism Management* 21: 97-116.
- Butler, R.W. 1980. The concept of a tourist area cycle of evolution: Implications for management of resources. *Canadian Geographer* 24(1): 5-12.
- Chadwick, G. 1978. *A System View Of Planning Towards A Theory Of The Urban And Regional Planning Process*. Oxford: Pegamon.
- Christie Mill, R. & Morrison, A.M. 1985. *The Tourism System*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
- Clarke, J. 2005. Marketing Management for Tourism. In Pender, L. & Sherpley, R (eds), *The Management of Tourism*: 102-118. London, California, New Delhi: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Crompton, J. 1979. Motivations for pleasure travel. *Annals of Tourism Research* 6: 408-424.
- Dellart, B.G.C., Etterma, F. & Lindh, C. 1998. Multi-faceted tourist travel decision: a constraint-based conceptual framework to describe tourist sequential choice of travel components. *Tourist Management* 19(4): 313-320.
- Goodall, B. 1991. Understanding holiday choice. In Cooper, C. (ed). *Progress In Tourism, Recreation And Hospitality Management*: 103-133. London: Belhaven
- Gunn, C.A. 1994. *Tourism Planning (3rd Edition)*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- Hamzah, A. & Ismail, H. N. 2003. As assessment of the socio-economic impact of the homestay programme at kampung Banghuris, Sepang, Selangor. Unpublished research report, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.
- Hitrec, T. 1995. Tourism destination: meaning, development, concept. In Wahab, S. & Pigram, J.J (eds), *Tourism, Development and growth: The challenge of sustainability*: 96. Great Britain: Routledge.
- Hudson, B.J. 1998. Waterfalls. Resources for tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 25(4): 958-973.
- Inskip, E. (1991). *Tourism Planning. An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*. New York: Von Nostrand Reinhold.
- Jawardena 2002. Mastering Carribean tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 14(2): 88-93.

- Jenkins, C.L. 1980. Tourism policies in developing countries: a critique. *International Journal of Tourism Management* 1(1): 36–48.
- Kaiser, C. & Helber, L. 1978. Tourism: planning and development. In Wahab, S. & Pigram, J.J. (eds). *Tourism, Development And Growth: The Challenge Of Sustainability*: 97. Great Britain: Routledge.
- Kapsar, C. & Laesser, C. 1994. System approach. In Witt, S.F. & Moutinho, L. (eds). *Tourism Marketing and Management Handbook (2nd Edition)*: 170–177. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall.
- Kast, F.E. & Rosenzweig, J.E. 1972. General system theory: application for organizations and management. *Academic of Management Journal* 15(4): 447–465.
- Katz, D. & Kahn, R.L. 1978. *The social psychology of organizations*. New York: John Wiley.
- Kim, H.B. 1998. Perceived attractiveness of Korean destination. *Annals of Tourism Research* 25(2): 340–361.
- Kotler, P. 1994. *Principles of Marketing (6th edition)*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
- Kozak, M. 2002. Comparative analysis of tourist motivation by nationality and destination. *Tourism Management* 23: 221–232.
- Kurtz, D.L. 2010. *Contemporary Marketing*. USA: South-Western Cengage Learning.
- Leiper 1989. Tourism and tourism systems. In Hall, C.M. (ed), *Tourism planning: Policies, Process And Relationship*: 50. England: Pearson Hall.
- Lipman, G. 2007. Tourism success stories and shooting stars. *Proceeding paper at World Tourism Conference, Kuala Lumpur*, 4–6 June.
- Mathieson, A. & Wall, G. 1982. *Tourism: Economic, Physical and Social Impacts*, Harlow: Longman.
- McIntosh, R.W. & Goeldner, C.R. 1990. *Tourism: Principles, Practices, Philosophies*. New York: Wiley.
- Murphy, P. E. 1985. *Tourism: A community approach*. London: Methuen.
- Nash, D. & Butler, R. 1990. Alternative Forms of Tourism. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. 9: 163–165.
- Pizam, Neumann & Reichel 1979. Tourism satisfaction. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 6: 195–197.
- Renaghan, L.M. 1981. A new marketing mix for the hospitality industry. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly* April: 31–35.
- Ritchie, J.R.B. & Crouch, G.I. 1999. Tourism, competitiveness and social prosperity. *Journal of Business Research* 44: 137–152.
- Scott, W.G. 1961. Organization theory: an overview and an appraisal. *Academic of Management Journal* 4: 7–26.
- Sleight, P. 1993. *Targeting Customers: How To Use Geodemographics And Lifestyle Data In Your Business*. NYC Publication: Henley On Thames.
- Swarbrooke, J. 1995. *The Development and Management of Visitor Attractions*. London: Butterworth Heinemann.
- Thompson, J.D. 1967. *Organization In Action*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Tosun & Jenkins 1998. Regional planning approaches to tourism development: the case of Turkey. *Tourism Management*. 17(7): 519–531.
- Um, S. & Crompton, J.L. 1990. Attitude determinants in tourism destination choice. *Annals of Tourism Research* 17(3): 432–448.
- Urry 2002. *The Tourist Gaze, (2nd Edition)*. London: Sage.
- Uysal, M. & Jurowski 1994. Testing the push and pull factors. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 21(4): 844–846.
- Van Raaij, W.F. 1986. Consumer research on tourism: mental and behavioral constructs. *Annual of Tourism Research* 13: 1–9.
- Vukonic, B. 1997. Selective tourism growth: Targeted tourism destination. In Wahab, S., Pigram, J.J. (eds), *Tourism, Development And Growth: The Challenge Of Sustainability*: 95–108. London: Routledge.
- Walsh-Heron, J. & Stevens, T. 1990. The management of visitors attractions. In Swarbrooke, J. (ed), *The development and management of visitors management of visitors attractions*: 3. London: Butterworth Heinemann.
- Weinstein, A. 1994. Market segmentation: using demographics, psychographic and other niche marketing technique to predict and model customer behavior. In Ibrahim, E.E. & Gill, J. (eds), *A positioning strategy for a tourist destination, based on analysis of customers' perception and satisfaction*. *Emerald* 23(2): 172–188.
- World Tourism Organization 2011. UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. <http://mkt.unwto.org/en/barometer> [02 December 2011].
- Yoon, Y. & Uysal, M. 2005. An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: a structural model. *Tourism Management*: 26: 45–46.

This page intentionally left blank

Globally the hospitality and tourism industry is evolving and undergoing radical changes. The past practices are now advancing through the rapid development of knowledge and skills acquired to adapt and create innovations in various ways. Hence, it is imperative that we have an understanding of the present issues so that we are able to remedy problems on the horizon.

Current Issues in Hospitality and Tourism: Research and Innovations is a compilation of research in the broad realm of hospitality and tourism. This book is divided into eight sections covering the following broad themes:

- Training and education (hospitality students learning);
- Organization and management (practical issues and current trends in the hotel, catering and tourism industry);
- Product and food innovation;
- Marketing;
- Islamic hospitality and tourism issues;
- Gastronomy;
- Current trends;
- Tourism

The contributions, from different parts of the globe, present a new outlook for future research, including theoretical revelations and innovations, environmental and cultural exploration aspects, tourist destinations and other recreation and ecotourism aspects of the hospitality and tourism industry. **Current Issues in Hospitality and Tourism: Research and Innovations** will be useful as a reference for academics, industry practitioners and policy makers, and for those with research interests in the fields of hotels, tourism, catering and gastronomy.



CRC Press
Taylor & Francis Group
an informa business
www.crcpress.com

6000 Broken Sound Parkway, NW
Suite 300, Boca Raton, FL 33487
Schipholweg 107C
2316 AC Leiden, NL
2 Park Square, Milton Park
Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN, UK



an **informa** business