A Case Study of Hospitality Services Consumption Pattern among International Students during Holiday in Malaysia

Nur Faizah Nordin
College Of Arts And Sciences,
Universiti Utara Malaysia
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
faizah16asma@yahoo.com

Abstract

Tourism is one of the major agenda in today's globalization era. The role played by the tourism industry is undoubtedly recognized by government and private bodies as one of the largest contributors to the economy of Malaysia. Hence, tourism education is identified as the main tool in propelling this service-based industry to remain competitive and at the forefront of other industries. The paper is aimed at identifying hospitality services consumption pattern among international students during holiday in Malaysia. Several independent variables have been identified such as place of choice, types of transportation mode, and partners during travel session. These variables have been known as the motivators in influencing the decision of choosing the travelling pattern during the holiday session. Samples are selected from the population in some nonrandom manner by convenience sampling from Graduate Management Centre, Management and Science University, Kuala Lumpur Central Campus in order to collect different views. This use of syndicated data helps the academic develop a fuller understanding of the key research questions and gives the practitioner a higher degree of confidence in the direction they take and in the future they anticipate. Recommendations and considerations for future research are offered in an effort to explain the behavior of international student travelers and to improve the competitive standing of hospitality service in Malaysia.

Keywords: Hospitality Service Consumptions, International Students, Tourism Education

I. Introduction

Tourism has been and will continue to be a key economic activity in Malaysia as it is in many countries in the coming decades. However, long term success of the tourism in Malaysia hinges on the country's ability to develop sustainable tourism and attract repeat visitors.
Hospitality refers to the relationship process between a guest and a host, and it also refers to the act or practice of being hospitable, that is, the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and goodwill. Hospitality frequently refers to the hospitality industry jobs for hotels, restaurants, casinos, catering, resorts, clubs and any other service position that deals with tourists.

Tourism industry is particularly made of three major components, the transport sector (includes air, water and surface transport), accommodation sector (Hotel, Motel, Guest Houses, Caravans, etc.) and the attraction sector (comprises manmade and natural attractions). (Mekonnen G/ Egziabher). On the other hand, the hotel-tourism industry offers a complex web of products and services for travel, that also includes leisure/vacations, travelers for business, and convention travel (Geron, 1997).

Tourism is one of the most important economic activities in the world today, because it directly generates services, products, foreign currency, employment and investments. In countries where tourism has become a flourishing service industry, it has a far-reaching economic and social impact on national development. International tourism also has complex linkages to other industries and to government development strategies and plans, which means that it affects the structure and diversity of other economic activities at the national and regional levels.

1. **Hospitality Service Workforce**

   The greatest needs of the hospitality and tourism industry in terms of human capital are recruitment of a quality workforce, retention and retraining. Institutions and hospitality and tourism organizations can work together on these areas to their mutual benefits. Investing in human capital pays off in repeat guests and increased profitability.

   The success or failure in providing hospitality often determines the success or failure of the organization. Capitalizing on the opportunity to provide hospitality is essential as failure may lead to directly affect the organization financial success.

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2. **Prospects For Tourism Growth**

   The rich and unique cultures, diverse natural environments and standards of service will continue to make destinations in the Asian and Pacific region attractive to international tourists. It is clear that the tourism industries of many countries in the region have been remarkably responsive to recent trends in demand. The prospects for tourism growth, however, will be driven by a number of factors, including globalization, the concomitant
The changing consumer preference of international tourists constitutes another aspect of globalization that is creating new challenges for developing countries. Providers of tourism services now try to gain a competitive advantage by catering for the individual needs of travelers. Tourists are actively changing their travel experience and values. The increased flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values. The increased travel experience, flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values.

The concept of new tourism includes ideas and practices related to responsible, green, alternative and sustainable tourism. Globalization has transmitted these ideas and practices worldwide, thus making the tourism industry more diversified and putting pressure on developing countries to create targeted, niche markets. An important source of tourism revenue is now based on identifying, developing and promoting niche markets. New niche markets are constantly being identified in an attempt to diversify the industry further.

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A young person travelling for educational purposes is an ancient global phenomenon that has been practiced by many cultures for hundreds of centuries. Now in the 21st century, this phenomenon is a multi-billion dollar industry with millions of young people travelling outside of their home country. This phenomenon is a multi-billion dollar industry with millions of young people travelling outside of their home country.

Customer service is a process for providing significant value-added benefits to the supply chain in a cost-effective way. According to Janier L. Scott (2002), customer service is a series of activities designed to enhance the level of customer satisfaction that generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values. The increased travel experience, flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values. The increased travel experience, flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values. The increased travel experience, flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values. The increased travel experience, flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values. The increased travel experience, flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values. The increased travel experience, flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values. The increased travel experience, flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values. The increased travel experience, flexibility and independent nature of tourists has been generating demand for better quality, more value for money and greater mobility in the travel experience as they become more experienced travelers and change their behavior and values.
has met the customer expectation. Here, it can be seen that customer service are very essential in customer perceptions. As the front liners perform noteworthy service to the guest, this will attract them to maintain customer’s loyalty process. (Bernard J. La Londe, 1988).

Customer service may be provided by a person (e.g., sales and service representative), or by automated means called self-service. Examples of self-service are Internet sites. However, In the Internet era, a challenge has been to maintain and/or enhance the personal experience while making use of the efficiencies of online commerce.

Furthermore, the industry has been discussing issues range from tourist behavior, perceptions, and satisfaction, tourism marketing, tourism demand forecasting and modeling, hospitality management, service in hospitality, tourism and hospitality education, sustainable tourism, ecotourism and adventure tourism, social, cultural, and environmental impacts of tourism, government and tourism public policy, events tourism, tourism and war, and tourism, technology, and cyberspace. (Faulkner and Goeldner, 1998).

Achieving high levels of customer satisfaction requires that organizations continually monitor and examine the experiences, opinions, and suggestions of their customers and people who are potential customers. Improving service quality to meet customers’ standards is an ongoing part of doing business. In this way, customers drive the market and the organization. At the same time that organizations act to attract and satisfy customers, the customers themselves exercise ultimate influence. Their satisfaction depends on both their expectations and their treatment. Through their choices, customers decide which organizations survive and thrive, determine what goods and services are available, and shape how they are provided.

2. International Students

A mature, non-traditional, or adult student in tertiary education (at a university or a college) is normally classified as an (undergraduate) student who is at least 21–23 years old at the start of their course and usually having been out of the education system for at least two years. Mature students can also include students who have been out of the education system for decades, or students with no secondary education. Mature students also make up graduate and postgraduate populations by demographic of age.

Youth and student travel is an increasingly important segment of the global travel market, with young people tending to travel more frequently and for longer periods than their older counterparts. The youth and student travel industry has also expanded rapidly in recent decades, with a growing number of specialist travel professionals catering to an expanding market. It also has major growth potential as the international student population expands, their incomes rise and new markets are opened up in newly industrializing economies and in Central and Eastern Europe.

Although youth and student travel has been an important cornerstone of the international travel market for over 50
years, it is only the recent explosive growth of the international student population that has thrust this market into the spotlight. The importance of youth tourism as a field of interest for policymakers and researchers was first emphasized internationally in November 1991 with the first World Tourism Organisation (WTO) conference on youth tourism in Delhi.

However, youth tourism is more than an industry; it also has important educational and cultural functions. ISTC continues to support the wider benefits of travel for young people, working with UNESCO to promote international understanding through travel, and to ensure travel is accessible to all young people.

Despite its growing scope and importance, youth and student travel has not been studied in great detail in the past, arguably due to a combination of measurement problems and a misconception that youth and student travel markets are low value.

This development trajectory indicates the need to develop new products to meet the demands of this market. However, the youth and student market should not be viewed as a homogenous group in terms of their style of travel and their motivations.

The case study will differentiate many characteristics of youth and student travellers according to how they define their style of travel, as well as other factors. This increases the need to develop products oriented specifically to those who prefer a particular travel style.

III. Methodology

1. Data Collection Methods

This study is classified as an exploratory research as it is discussing on a new issue being studied particularly at university level in Malaysia. There is very few direct reference resources that linked on the topic discussed and the researcher have to generate the information from the actual source through focus group which are the international students within the Graduate Management Centre, Management and Science University, Kuala Lumpur Central Campus and surrounding areas.

The data collection done is based on cross-sectional research. The research for this topic is done at a given period of time where samples are taken once in order to investigate the hospitality services consumption pattern among international students during holiday in Malaysia. Therefore it is considered to be a cross-sectional research. The stratified random sampling technique is used in this study to help the researcher in choosing the samples. Next, the method of convenience sampling is applied to draw the sample from each group.

IV. Analysis and Findings

International students not only contribute to a country’s economy by tuition fees and living costs but also through their travel behaviour. This study compiled a profile of the tertiary international student who travels within Malaysia during their study. From the
study, it is found that international students travel on a regular basis and, while they economized wherever they can on variables of accommodation and style of eating, they can spend between RM 397.81 to RM688.77 per holiday.

They do not use large travel overseas wholesalers as their choice of tourism product provider but use small regionally based operators. They spend most of their money on attractions, activities and transport and the main reasons they travel are to chill out, relax and have fun and also to participate in sightseeing.

From the findings it is discovered that the number of female variables are dominance which is three of the respondents. When asked on whether they have experience working in tourism industry, there is a balance between the number of experienced and no experience students for tourism students. On the other hand, there is a clear difference that the majority of the students have 3 years working experience in tourism industry. These situations imply that variables of experience working in tourism industry might be important in stimulating the students’ interest in choosing the dependent variable of place of travel or future intention.

This study also reveals that the student having friends or family members who are currently used to visit a destinations does not necessary motivates them to take up the place as their choice when travelling. When comparing the variable of level of income, these students have a better income than local students. It may explain the reason that these students tend to visit a destination for a longer period of time with higher spending limits. However, the response given might be influenced by the issue of sensitivity of question as the students are willing to reveal their actual income.

One of the important findings of this study is that newspaper, brochures, and other printed materials are proven to be the main source of gaining the information about the place of travel destinations. By the way, friends do play a role in persuading the students to choose the type of destination and activities conducted within the destinations. In other words, word of mouth communication is quite important to promote the destinations during their holiday session.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

At the end of the paper, the researcher has managed to address the objectives set at the beginning of the study. From the results shown in the data analysis report reveals the motivations, activities, destinations, information use, travel purchase and expenditure of youth and student travelers going abroad.

It is structured around key questions relating to young travelers, including their similarities and differences, destinations and motivations to travel, information-gathering, booking, spending and activities, and the kinds of benefits they gain from their travel experiences.

These questions were designed to reflect the ‘journey’ as a whole. The decision to travel is the focus of the first section, moving on to planning the trip, the trip
itself (or being ‘on the road’) and finally reflections on the trip, which asks what kinds of benefits, were gained from travelling.

The influence of holiday travel preferences and perceptions, which include travel planning, general criteria for choosing a holiday destination, products generally bought on vacation, and kinds of places generally visited on holiday.

These characteristics present a comprehensive picture of what is important to travelers and how general holiday travel preferences influence holiday destination and mode choice. The effects of travel preferences and perceptions on destination choice are accommodated by interacting preferences/perceptions with destination and trip characteristics.

According to recreation specialization theory, as individuals travel more, they refine their expectations and preferences until only a few destinations meet their needs (Bryan, 1977). Thus, the countries should emphasize climate-related benefits, countries who would like to encourage more families should downplay their large cities and instead present family friendly activities outside these areas, and countries who would like to capture the current food-related niche travel market should play up descriptions of their urban cores.

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