

What draws you here? Intention of youth's participation in adventure tourism activities

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Abstract

Adventure tourism is one of the niche tourism concepts that recently attracts a substantial number of travellers. This kind of tourism is more likely related to high level of activities from which individuals draw personal satisfaction from some unusual sight, activity or accomplishment. Young people or specifically called as youth are those who involve more in this kind of activities as they act as a catalyst for tourism industry development and nowadays they are more into adventure tourism activities which they contributed about 86% in experiencing a new destination when they travel. This study investigated the push and pull motivation factors that influenced their intention towards adventure tourism. The results found that push and pull factors were both significantly influenced the intention to participate in adventure tourism. However, push factors resulted in being the strongest influencer in motivating the youth to be engaged in this type of activities. Hence, implications of these results suggest that the key attributes need to be investigated to understand the motivations in participating adventure tourism activities specifically among youth.

Keywords:

Adventure tourism, travel motivation, youth travellers, push and pull factors

1 Introduction

Adventure tourism can be viewed as one of the subsets of tourism that is rapidly growing in popularity (Price & O Driscoll, 2010) that involves the lowest influence on society and is closely connected to the whole natural surroundings which is an exploration for personal improvement through challenge and sacrifice, whereas nature is the setting for extremely personal experience (Wood, 2002). According to the World Youth Student Educational Travel Confederation (n.d), adventure tourism shapes a form of learning among youth travellers, where meeting people, interacting with local cultures while engaging in the local community activities and for that, adventure tourism requires high motivational determinants, highly challenging, prompt diverse and conflicting emotions, ranging from feelings of fear and risk to deep satisfaction and elation (Pomfret, 2016).

Recently, there has been an increased interest in adventure tourism across the globe (Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, 2012). Despite the increasing trend to participate in adventure tourism among travellers, this type of tourism is also associated with risk (Price & O Driscoll, 2010) and safety issues (Gardiner & Kwek, 2017). Many tourists have been reported to suffer injuries and even death during tourism activities. Adventure tourism, therefore, carries a risk for the participants as no amount of risk management can eliminate it, but the travellers' themselves have absolute right to expect that all the safety measures have been taken to eliminate avoidable risk. Hence, travellers' decision in selecting an adventure destination is significantly impacted by the safety precautions adopted by the host region (Bently, Meyer, Page & Chalmers, 2001). Lack of proper safety information leads to an increase in the numbers of accidents in adventure tourism activities (Smith & Espiner, 2007).

Adventure tourism is particularly famous among youth travellers who travel based on their motivations, needs, and behaviour. Such travellers are mostly limited in the budget but rich in time which means they can spend more time travelling and involve in more activities as compared to other tourists. Forbes Asia (2016) suggested that youth nowadays are more into adventure tourism activities which they contributed about 86% in experiencing a new destination when they travel. Travel motivation is the starting point for an effort to gain the knowledge of travel behaviour specifically in the adventure tourism among youth travellers. On the other hand, understanding on how exactly travel decisions are made is considered important especially for the travel businesses to communicate with potential travellers (Bieger & Laeser, 2002). Within this context, push and pull motivational factors are used to understand more about how and why travellers make travel decisions when they travel neither in domestic or international countries. These motivational factors, therefore, can influence their intention towards the adventure tourism activities.

This study, therefore, investigated on the determinants of youth travellers' motivation to participate in adventure tourism activities in Malaysia. Particularly, we looked at the push and pull factors that influenced the travellers to participate such

activities. Besides, we also evaluate the youth travellers' safety awareness as a mediating factor towards the relationships of the push and pull factors with their participation in adventure tourism.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Adventure tourism

Adventure tourism can be described as travelling to a destination to participate in the adventurous activities, and it is related to the top levels of activity which most of it is outdoor activities (Bently & Page, 2008). A continuous seeking of risk and uncertainty of results is related to adventure tourism, and it is well-known as an expedition that associated with several physical activities. According to Priest (1992) adventure tourism can be categorized based on four criteria: (1) an activity as adventure tourism which is the intention of taking part in the activities should be voluntary, (2) the activity must be conducted in a natural environment, (3) there should be danger attached when the activity in the natural environment, and (4) the activity should consist an element of uncertainty, impacted by the conditions of the risk and a tourist's level of capability. Also, physical energy, particular skills, participants must have a perception of a challenge, motivation and conquests, as well as the participants, seeking for new environments are the requirements for the challenging activities.

Adventure tourism among youth travellers is not new; however, there is an increasing interest in this area. As stated by UNWTO (2016), adventure tourism has grown up to 65 percent between 2005 and 2012 and 4.4 percent increase in tourist arrivals in 2015. Hence, adventure tourism has become a trend among the travellers in both domestic and international countries. This increasing trend among youth travellers contributes an important part to the industry. The population of youth is growing more rapidly as they are increasing regarding frequency and distance as well as at a younger age than in the past (D'Anjou, 2004). World Tourism Organization (2016); therefore, suggested that youth travellers are the target group and the major source market for numerous travel and tourism destinations around the world. They also have highlighted that youth travel is high value because although they are financial are limited, they have ample time to spend longer in a destination than a typical tourist. Hence, young people are invariably at the leading edge of change and innovation, and the travel industry is no exception as it has grown faster than global travel (UNWTO, 2016).

2.2 Travel motivations and safety awareness

The need to understand tourist behaviour and decision-making process has seen some studies focused on tourists' motivation. According to Khuong & Ha (2014), tourists' behaviours are influenced by a variety of factors including cultural backgrounds social influences and perception. Motivation is a state of need or a condition that drives an individual towards certain types of activities that are seen as likely to bring satisfaction (Moutinho, 2000). Moreover, travel motivation relates to why people travel

(Hsu & Huang, 2008). Some researchers have introduced several types of motivation that motivate tourists to go to a destination which includes Maslow Hierarchy of Needs (1940, 1950), Plog's Theory (2006), Iso-Ahola Motivation Model (1989) and Herzberg Two-Factor Theory of Motivation (1959). These are the recent motivation theories that have been widely adapted by scholars. Hence, understanding travel motivation, therefore, becomes a key requisite to understand tourist destination choice and entire decision-making process (Reihanian, 2015).

The concept of travel motivation can be divided into two factors, which indicates that people travel because they are pushed and pulled to do so by some forces (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1981). Research by Wang (2016) highlighted that people travel because they are pushed into making travel decisions by internal and psychological forces and pulled by the external forces such as destination attributes. Push motivation is considered as psychological needs that drive an individual to travel, while pull motivation attracts the individual to a specific destination after push motivation has been initiated (Mohammad & Som, 2010). Examples of push factors include escape, rest, relaxation, prestige and self-esteem (Crompton, 1979) meanwhile, for the pull factors are climate, historical sites, scenic beauty and accessibility.

Other motives under push factors are experience and learning which is associated with the act of cultivating senses, and it is a fragment of the overall human experience to many people and phenomenon of lived experience. Challenges and adventure achievement are one of the push factors where it people participate in adventure tourism activities to get exposed to challenges and experience something new and unusual from what they always do in their daily lives. Apart from that, pull factors also include accessibility and location where it is one of the important requirements when people travel (Halsall, 1992). Accessibility in tourism is where external transport helps tourists to reach to a destination. Adventure and variety seeking are include in pull factors which It is an internal drive or motivating force that influence people to seek for information (Hirschman, 1980). Moreover, variety seeking is when people tend to switch from a choice that has been made to the new desire.

Another important factor to address among youth travellers is whether the safety awareness is a presence in deciding to participate in adventure tourism activities. When engaging with adventure tourism which related to high level of risk, safety awareness is important as it is the feeling when people get to know that they are safe with no harm will befall them, physically, mentally or emotionally (Maslow, 1943, 1987). According to Collier (1994), safety can be viewed as a state of being free from danger or more specifically, any method and device that control and prevent accidents. Safety awareness falls under two different principals which are occupational and public safety. Occupational safety is related to risks that come across in the areas where people work such as offices, construction site and retail facilities. Whereas for the public safety, it involves all the hazards in the home, in travel and recreation and other situations related. In contrast, Zheng (2003) stated that awareness in travelling is referred to the tourists' concern, attention and reaction to safety when they are engaging in the tourism

activities either adventure or non-adventure. As an addition, travel safety is related to travellers' personalities whereas those allocentric travellers are considered to have aggressive and energetic personalities. According to Lepp (2003), and Gibson (2008), when they travel or participate in adventure tourism activities, they will choose the destination without concerning their safety. They are the type of people that will look for unusual trips and love to experience new things in new place without safety concern (Chuang, 2004). Unlike for the females, elderly travellers as well as families whereas they will cancel their plans or trips if they find the destination is insecure as they are more concern on their safety awareness (Zheng & Zhang, 2002). Milman and Pizam (1995) suggested that a successful tourism destination must concern on the awareness first to have a positive image as awareness is a necessary condition and can help in stimulating the desire of the travellers to travel (Michie, 1986).

Adventure tourism represents an interesting form of consumer behaviour. An understanding of how adventure travellers make their decisions to purchase or use tourism products allows adventure tourism businesses to optimise the effectiveness and efficiency of marketing activities (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2007). Alegre and Cladera (2006) have pointed out that several studies of consumer intentions, for instance, to make repeat purchases or visit a destination have focused on the factors that determine the intention. Hence, intention towards adventure tourism will involve those people who are seeking or love to participate in the adventurous activities such as hiking, diving, and paragliding. People who involve in this type of tourism are those with a high level of intention to go to unusual places as well as love to try something new.

3 Methodology

Descriptive research design using quantitative approach was used in this study. Youth respondents at several educational institutions in Selangor were targeted in the study, using snowball sampling to obtain information from respondents. The data were obtained by using self-administered online questionnaire (Qualtrics), using nominal and 7 point Likert scale was divided into four major sections which consist of Section A (demographic profile), Section B (push factors), Section C (pull factors), Section D (intention towards adventure tourism) and each section was then analysed using SPSS to answer the research objectives of the study which is to investigate on the determinants that influence youth travellers to participate in adventure tourism activities and the relationship between youth travel motivation and the intention towards participating in adventure tourism activities.

Cronbach's Alpha for all constructs were larger than 0.7. To determine the adequacy of each section of the instruments, the researcher used Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) to measure the number of sampling adequacy for factor analysis. Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regressions will be used whenever appropriate to the objectives, research questions and hypotheses of the study. For testing moderating variable (tourist's attitudes), the researcher has conducted a regression analysis using Baron and Kenny (1986), and Hayes (2013) approach.

4 Findings

4.1 Descriptive analysis

This study was participated by 388 with 41.5% male and 58.5 % female respondents. The highest percentage of respondents was from UiTM Shah Alam (41.1%) followed by MSU (24.8%), UNISEL (24.5%) and UiTM Puncak Alam (9.6%). Also, the students of Bachelor Degree (66%) have the highest percentage and it followed by the students from Diploma (20.6%) and Postgraduate/Master (13.4%). The most active students in participating adventure activities came from the age of 20 to 24 years old.

4.2 Push factors influence on the intention to participate in adventure tourism

Two elements under push factors were tested in this study. In Table 1, challenges and adventure achievement ($B = .405$, $\beta = .487$, $p = .000$) was found as the strongest element that influence youth intention towards adventure tourism followed by experience and learning ($B = .423$, $\beta = .467$, $p = .000$). Hence, the study found a significant relationship between push factors and intention towards adventure tourism activities ($B = .545$, $\beta = .548$, $p = .000$, see Table 1). Table 1 shows the multiple regression results for push factors.

Table 1: Multiple regression results for push factors

Variables	Model/Std β
Push Factors	.548***
Challenges and Adventure Achievement	.487***
Experience and Learning	.467***
R ²	.300

*** $p < .001$

4.3 Pull Factors towards the intention to participate in adventure tourism

Accessibility and location and adventure and variety seeking were tested under pull factors and the result found that adventure and variety seeking has the highest influence towards the intention to participate in adventure tourism activities ($B = .258$, $\beta = .399$, $p = .000$) followed by accessibility and location ($B = .290$, $\beta = .327$, $p = .000$). Examining the link between pull factors and the intention towards adventure tourism, the result showed a significant relationship ($B = .384$, $\beta = .435$, $p = .000$). Pull factors therefore, is slightly lower than push factors. Table 2 shows the multiple regression results for pull factors.

Table 2: Multiple regression results for pull factors

Variables	Model/Std β
Pull Factors	.435***
Adventure and Variety Seeking	.399***
Accessibility and Location	.327***
R ²	.189

*** $p < .001$

4.4 Relationship between safety awareness and intention toward adventure tourism and the moderating role of safety awareness

The multiple regression results showed that Safety Awareness explained 45.9% variance in intention toward adventure tourism. This large influence is supported with a strong beta coefficient (.459; $p < .001$) indicating that the youth tourists are aware of the safety precautions and that their intention is related to their safety awareness. In addition, safety awareness was also evidenced to contribute indirectly on the intention toward adventure tourism ($R^2 = .340$; $p < .001$). The significant indirect contribution confirms the moderating role of safety awareness. The larger beta coefficient also supported the moderating effect in the motivation (.546; $p < .001$).

5 Discussion and Conclusion

This study focused on youth travel motivation which includes push and pull factors that influenced their intention towards adventure tourism activities. The study found, there was a significant relationship between both travel motivations towards an intention to participate in adventure tourism activities as both of the values are significant. Also, the findings indicated that push factors influenced youth more towards the intention to involve in adventure tourism compared to the pull factors. As discussed, push factors represent the highest values in motivating the youth to go for adventure tourism activities as youth were motivated by their desire when they travel.

The findings of this study were consistent with the previous literature. The results identified two determinants of travel motivation that influenced and motivated the youth to participate in adventure tourism activities. The two determinants are Push Factors and Pull Factors. The motivational factors to influence Intention were originated by Crompton (1979). He has also revealed that people travel because they are pushed into making travel decisions by internal and psychological forces and pulled by the external forces such as destination attributes. By having these motivational factors, it will influence people's intention to go and participate in adventure tourism activities. In this study, the hypothetical model breaks down into two motivation constructs which are push factors and pull factors since most of the travel motivation studies have deal with these motivation (Wang, 2016).

Subsequently, push and pull motivation approaches have been widely accepted and used in numerous tourism studies, and this concept has become a representative theory

in the examination of tourist motivation (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Klenosky, 2002; Yuan & McDonald, 1990). Klenosky (2000) has also stated that this theory is a well-proven method to comprehend and analyse various travel motivations of different traveller groups as this study was focusing on youth. Hence, this study has confirmed the theory for the context of adventure tourism.

Specifically, the study examined two factors generated under the push motivational factors were experience and learning and challenges and adventure achievement. Among them, challenges and adventure achievement were the strongest factor that pushed youth travellers to participate in adventure tourism activities. This result indicated that most youths love to engage in challenging activities as for them when they perform adventure activities; they are achieving something higher for their self-development (WYSE Travel Confederation, n.d). Those with a high level of achievement will be more satisfied in jobs or activities that involve both high skill levels and difficult challenges (Eisenberger, Jones, Stinglhamber, Shanock & Randall, 2005). The other factor is experience and learning which indicated that youth travel for adventure activities to gain experience and learn something new as been cited by WYSE Travel Confederation (n.d) that youth travellers are the pioneers who are likely to discover new destinations and travel is a form of learning.

In pull motivation, two factors analysed were accessibility and location and adventure and variety seeking. Highest score under the pull factors was generated by adventure and variety seeking. The result discussed in the previous chapter indicated that youth nowadays are more into various types of adventure activities such as mountain climbing, boat race and hiking. They are young, and they have a high tendency in choosing and changing different preferences due to their young ages, new desires and novelty (Ratner, Kahn, & Kahneman, 1999). On the other hand, another factor under pull factors is accessibility and location. This factor has generated the lowest scores compared to other factors. Consequently, adventure travellers are not so particular with the accessibility of the destination that they go. They concern more on the activities provided by the destination. As according to Adventure Tourism Market Study (2013), adventure travellers were different from non-adventure travellers who use professional services, for instance, guides, tour operators or instructors. They are more independent and most of adventure travellers plan their trips on their own.

On the same note, this study has also added another important factor to influence intention and to moderate the roles of motivation on intention (i.e., Safety Awareness). To participate in adventure tourism, or specifically to have intention in adventure tourism, youth travellers' motivation is moderated by their safety awareness. There is limited research that has included safety awareness as a factor to influence intention. Therefore, this study calls for further investigation to expand new knowledge about the issue. As suggested by Bently and Page (2007) the importance of safety have been largely ignored and have received minimal attention in most of the tourism research.

Despite the findings, there were limitations that should be taken into account. This study suffered limited resources as well as the limited area of data collection. Lack of

cooperation from the youth was one of the limitations. Future research needed to extend the scope particularly in adventure tourism activities involving the youth generation.

6 About the authors

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